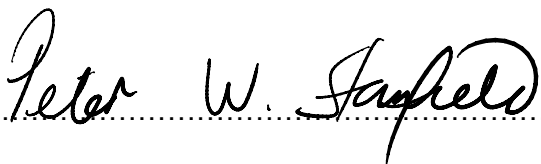


An Exploration of Place-Based TESOL

Submitted by Peter William Stanfield to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in TESOL, October 2012

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the assumption that classrooms are the most appropriate places for the Teaching of English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL) to adult learners in contemporary global society. It considers the success of postmodern general education curricula that systematically dissolve the boundaries between the classroom and the community and seeks to show why such a place-based approach might be particularly useful in transforming TESOL curricula which for the most part overlook informal learning. This study offers 15 successful non-mother tongue English users the opportunity to reflect on their language learning in two separate open-ended interviews. Subsequently, it analyses the range and properties of the places of their acquisition as they emerge from the interview data. The study finds that the classroom is an insufficient place because its social relations necessarily limit learner agency and generally render it ineffective for ESOL acquisition. This suggests the need to transform TESOL into a practice from within which quite new places of learning with more equal social relations emerge where English language can be effectively acquired. This study recommends that English language learners and teachers collaboratively negotiate opportunities for participation in real-world English speaking communities of practice in order to acquire language rapidly and thoroughly. It suggests that this might be achieved by transforming tertiary level English classrooms into laboratories for critical reflection where students are encouraged to discuss problems of significance to them and subsequently deliver real world solutions to the local community. This exploration of place-based TESOL employs Critical Discourse Analysis as its methodology and is situated within the critical paradigm of language education research.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my late mother Gwendolyn Elsie Beryl Stanfield. The daughter of a railway-man who rose through the ranks to become a steam locomotive driver, Gwen taught me early on through her words and deeds to disregard social status and value people for the quality of the lives they led, particularly their propensity to be kind to others. Throughout her life she refused to accept inequality as an inevitable condition of human societies. She challenged social injustice wherever she found it, whether in her local community, at national political level or indeed on the world stage. She would, I think, be pleased that the current work follows in this tradition of social critique.

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Introduction

1.1 The Problem of Place

This study seeks to explore the significance of the places in which the Teaching of English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL) occurs. This focus emerged from preliminary research which found that contemporary TESOL literature remains influenced by earlier techno-rational approaches (Bobbitt, 1924; Tyler, 1949) which largely ignore place as an element of curriculum design. This literature emphasizes needs analysis, accountability and standardized outcomes (Pinar, 1991) without questioning the classroom as the primary place for learning (Brumfit, 1984; Brown, 1995; White, 1998; Nunan, 1998). This assumption persists today (Richards, 2001; Nation & Macalister, 2010) and I seek to problematize it here for three reasons. Firstly, such assumptions are symptomatic of underlying prejudices (Gadamer, 1975) that must be reflected upon if professional practice is to be transformed (Densten & Gray, 2001). Secondly, it renders opaque the obvious fact that language learning is usually situated in a range of places, not only the classroom. Thirdly, it fails to perceive that places are socially constructed (Gruenewald, 2003; Fairclough, 1989) and give rise to contextually determined discourse which is *invested* (Fairclough, 1992: 72; Gruenewald, 2003b: 641) by the interests of dominant groups.

There are, however, several strands of *general education* curriculum literature that *do* bring the naturalness of the classroom into question. Researchers within the critical paradigm (Illich, 1970; Freire, 1972; Grundy, 1987; Young, 1989; Apple, 1990) have sought to understand how unequal power relations are embedded in institutionalized pedagogy. They recognize the need to extend learning beyond the classroom in order to circumvent the normative affect (Foucault, 1977) of educational institutions and allow a more equal society to emerge. There are also Reconceptual curriculum theorists, notably Pinar (1991), who explicitly note the absence of the concept of place in curriculum design and raise awareness of its significance. There are post-modern researchers who regard knowledge as irreducibly situated (Jameson, 1984) and emphasize non-institutional learning because it gives students access to a range of often incommensurable social practices, language forms and meanings (Pennycock, 1994). Pedagogues such as Slattery (2006) have systematically employed this post-modern perspective in general education showing how the dissolution of boundaries between the classroom and community can lead to transformed learning. Finally, there are emerging community-centred (Umphrey, 2007) and place-based (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) approaches which employ the concept of place as the organizing principle of curriculum

design, transforming classroom simulation of real-life, into meaningful learning experiences situated within the geography and community of teachers and learners (Sobel, 2004).

This study seeks to explore within a tertiary education institution in the United Arab Emirates and its immediate locale, how critical, post-modern and place-conscious perspectives (Gruenewald, 2003b) might transform TESOL practice. It takes a social constructivist perspective and is rooted in the critical research paradigm which holds that power relations in contemporary global society are radically unequal but can be reconstructed in more equal terms (Fairclough 1989; Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999).

1.2 Place within a Theory of Curriculum Discourse

The frequent failure of contemporary researchers to recognize the significance of place as a construct within TESOL pedagogy was identified during an early attempt to disentangle the semantics of the term *curriculum*. I discovered that it carries the following complex connotations;

- the *processes* of learning – the learner’s perspective, from the Latin infinitive ‘*currere*’
- the *trajectory* of learning – the observer’s perspective, from the nominative form of ‘*curre*’
- the *contents* of learning – what is to be learned; partially conflated with the Greek ‘*syllabus*’

Significantly for the current study, I also found that the suffix, ‘*cule*’, forms nouns from verbs in Latin to denote either;

- a *means* by which the action is performed, or
- a *place* appropriate to the action

I noted that these etymological strands are embedded in curriculum discourse respectively as;

- subjective *process*
- objective *product*
- a *means* to an end
- the *place* in which learning occurs

(Stanfield, 2009)

A literature review indicated that these strands were present to varying degrees in most curriculum discourse. However, depending on the intent of the curriculum designer, they tend to associate in primary pairs whilst the other elements are attenuated. This allowed me to identify *Transactional*, *Systemic*, *Re-constructional* and *Transformational* ideal-types which I placed in a Curriculum Potentialities Profile (CUPP) (Stanfield, 2009). I have subsequently

identified a Reconceptualizing ideal-type (Pinar, 1991) which I include in this study because it explicitly considers the construct of place. The *Transformational* ideal-type, however, is unique in not merely recognizing the importance of the construct of *place* in learning but also moving learning and the learner physically out of the classroom into the broader community.

1.3 The Significance of Place

Transactional and *Systemic* TESOL curricula and *Reconceptualizing* and *Re-constructional* general education curricula all assume that knowledge must first be recontextualized (Bernstein, 1996: 52) within the classroom (Richards, 2001: 1) if learning is to be effective. The consequential relegation of other places of learning to the 'null' curriculum (Eisner, 1985) by employing the term 'extra-curricular' tends to invalidate artistic, sporting, cultural and social learning conducted beyond the classroom. Hence, I see *Transformational* curricula which fully recognize such informal community-based learning as a significant lacuna within TESOL practice to be explored.

Foucault (1977) and Bernstein (1996) argue that the rationale for recontextualizing knowledge within educational institutions is not *education* but *regulation* of unequal distribution of power over knowledge. The key characteristic of transformative curricula on the other hand is an emphasis on a range of places of learning in the recognition that knowledge is best acquired through participating in the lived experiences (Charmaz; 2006) of others within a variety of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) such that boundaries between the college and community are dissolved (Slattery, 2006: 110). I choose the term *Transformative* for such curricula because by learning in a range of situations students will be exposed to contextually determined meanings beyond the regulative function of the classroom. This may allow students to resist the embedded values of global hegemonic TESOL practice by challenging its underlying power relations (Giroux, 1983). Indeed, the broad purpose of this study is to increase TESOL practitioners' awareness of the correspondence between discourse, ideology, politics and place (Gruenewald 2003b).

1.4 Situating Contemporary TESOL in a Critical Research Paradigm

To understand the significance of places of learning in TESOL I situate this study within the critical research paradigm. Critical language research demonstrates how unequal distribution of power in society is embedded in discourse as a set of unquestioned assumptions. Globalization, a ubiquitous metaphor of contemporary society (Gruenewald, 2003b), is an example of such naturalized discourse (Fairclough, 1992; Wallace, 2001) which has significance for TESOL.

The term *globalization* is a nominalization of the adjective 'global' from the noun 'globe' and names the process of the world-wide distribution of particular forms of economic, cultural, geographic and linguistic behaviour. Such nominalization disguises the agency of the primary social actors (Fairclough, 1992) who create and sustain this process. This back-grounding (van Leeuwen, 1996: 39) of agency creates the assumption that the global spread of contemporary capitalism and its inequalities is a quasi-natural phenomenon.

On the contrary, globalization is a profoundly sociological phenomenon; the outcome of the accumulated decisions of powerful social agents and the acquiescence of less powerful others. One of its effects is the undermining of representative national governments as they cede power to trans-national political institutions such as the European Community, NAFTA etc. (Bottery, 2003) and a few global corporate monopolies that wield interests of such magnitude that they can be characterized as free roving alternative states (Bottery, 1997). Hence, globalization does not redistribute power through more general provision of access to markets and diverse cultural goods but accumulates it to a few institutionally powerful people such as unelected committee chairpersons and chief executive officers.

The naturalized discourse of globalization also renders opaque the spatialisation of unequal power relations. Critical geography indicates that uneven economic and social development is not a side-effect but a necessary condition of capitalistic growth (Korten, 1995) which exploits resources in some places of the globe to create wealth for others elsewhere (Soja, 1989). This spatialisation of power relations precludes the use of force and enables the maintenance of hegemonic interests merely through the organization of space (Foucault, 1977). Whilst powerful capitalists can travel, invest and extract profits on a global stage many less powerful people have severe geographic restrictions placed upon them through bureaucratic constraints such as measures of linguistic competence and visa regulations.

The discourse of globalization also assumes that human beings have the capacity to think in global terms. However, people are always situated in a current place which determines how their identity and social relations emerge (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006: 211; Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 321; Gruenewald, 2003b). Global thought involves significant generalizations and Berry (1997) argues this shallowness is revealed in local attempts to turn it into action; as we can only act locally our decisions never map onto the place-determined aspirations of distant others. On the contrary, such decisions frequently rob them of agency, alienate them from the places in which they live, disrupt social relations and bring about anomie (William, 2002). The discourse of globalization thus naturalizes the imposition of hegemonic meanings from a geographical distance upon the un-empowered.

Crucially for transformative critical pedagogy, however, globalization also offers the potential for new ways of thinking about the world through interaction in the marginal places (Hooks, 1984) between global hegemonic interests and local needs, commonly known as glocalization (Robertson, 1995). One form is the parochialization of identity (Bottery, 1999) which occurs as individuals seek to compensate for loss of control over their needs occasioned by the globalizing actions of others and try to understand their lives within their immediate environment. This process should be regarded as a struggle for power at the cultural level and is partially manifested in language policy (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). The struggle over linguistic resources in contemporary global society occurs because much of the communication within economic relations takes place in English. As a result, governments in disparate parts of the world such as Malaysia, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates consider English language competence as a crucial skill for their citizens. English-medium teaching policies are often enforced across the curriculum in tertiary education and justified on democratic grounds because global forces (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) have led to English providing greater access to knowledge than indigenous languages (Shohamy, 2006). Policy makers however fail to question the *kind* of knowledge English acquisition makes available. Who produces it? What are their purposes and assumptions? How is it distributed and who will interpret and consume it (Fairclough, 1989)? As Fairclough points out, the homogenization of language, whether nationally or globally, is more an extension of the hegemony of socially powerful groups into the domain of linguistic behaviour than a matter of opportunity (1992a: 43).

1.5 Rationale for the Study

Interacting with such globalized linguistic hegemony are the young adults in tertiary institutions in the United Arab Emirates and across the world who have diverse purposes for learning English, which determine the levels of competency required for their localized needs (Graddol, 2006). How can TESOL professionals positioned at the intersection of economic, cultural and linguistic domination of their students by globalized capital (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) achieve linguistic glocalization, providing their students with the English language skills required in global society whilst honouring their diverse local interests? Shohamy suggests they might question English-medium policies, the myths of the native speaker, grammatical perfection and accent free speech (2006). However, this study seeks to explore another factor that may be preventing TESOL professionals from achieving glocalized practice; that is, the naturalized belief that college classrooms are the best places for TESOL to occur.

By positioning *place* as a construct in TESOL pedagogy within a critical perspective on contemporary global capitalism it becomes clear that TESOL professionals must scrutinize the interdependence between language, economics, politics, ideology and place (Gruenewald,

2003b) if they are to transform their practice. Learning the English language in the classroom gives access to only one community of practice (Wenger, 1998: 6; Gruenewald, 2008: 142) dominated by the meanings, values and assumptions inherent in educational institutions. Learning in a wider range of places provides access to broader sets of real-world communities (Gruenewald, 2008: 143) which not only offer purpose and motivation for language learning but also an extended range of contextually determined perspectives on economics, politics and societal power relations.

This study, therefore, seeks in the first stage of data collection and analysis to identify the assumptions participants make about the significance of their places of successful ESOL acquisition. In a subsequent stage it attempts to explore these assumptions and their significance for effective TESOL. It is based on the open reflections of 15 language learners about their overall ESOL acquisition processes and then focuses on the role their places of learning have had in their success. It neither romanticizes their local needs nor underestimates the power of those who are globalizing linguistic practice but recognizes learning as a complex interaction between the two (Wenger, 1998: 133). It seeks to explore if *Deschooling* (Illich, 1970) TESOL and redistributing it beyond the classrooms of formal educational institutions will enable young adults to acquire the English language competencies they need as global citizens, empower them with a critical awareness of place, and provide opportunities for them to act critically at the local level (Gruenewald, 2003b).

1.6 Research Questions

To achieve these purposes this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do a small sample of adult participants within a specific tertiary education institution and its immediate locale perceive the places where they learned English to be significant factors in their successful ESOL acquisition?
2. What specific places emerge from participant reflective discourse as being significant for effective ESOL acquisition?
3. What are the key properties of the places of learning that participants identify as contributing significantly to their effective ESOL acquisition?
4. How significantly do classrooms and other places within educational institutions contribute to ESOL acquisition and how do their properties compare and contrast to places in the community?
5. Do participants possess specifically critical awareness about the places of their ESOL learning?

1.7 Organization of the Study

There are 7 chapters in this study. The Introduction (1) describes the nature and significance of place-based learning, provides the rationale for the study and states the research questions. The Context (2) details aspects of national, local and institutional relevance. I have chosen to commit a discrete chapter to these issues in keeping with the place-based orientation of the study. The Literature Review (3) covers Curriculum, Methodological, Philosophical and Empirical work directly related to the study. The Methodology (4) describes the research framework and methodological components. It also gives details of the sample, data collection and analysis, discusses the ethical dimension of the study and operationalizes key terms. The Analysis (5) indicates the key properties of places of TESOL acquisition as they emerged from the data. These include categories of initial place awareness and the properties of the classroom, interim educational places and the community. It indicates the key contrasts between the ESOL acquisition properties of classroom and non-classroom places and notes the possible complementary relationship between them. It concludes with the incipiently critical properties of place awareness that emerged overall. The Discussion (6) considers the analytical findings in light of the literature and their consequences within the context of the study. The Conclusion (7) summarizes the key findings and recommends actions that might be taken at institutional and national levels. It confirms the usefulness of the chosen methodology and offers a working model of *place* in ESOL acquisition as a contribution to pedagogical knowledge and suggests avenues of research that might emerge from this model. Finally, the author reflects briefly on his learning journey occasioned by this study.

Context of the Study

2.1 Diversity and English

This study is conducted in a tertiary education institution in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE is a federation of seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Kaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain) located in the Arabian Gulf region neighbouring Oman to the east and north and Saudi Arabia to the west and south. The overall area is approximately 75,000 square kilometres with Abu Dhabi Emirate being by far the largest covering approximately 65,000 square kilometres. The Western Region of Abu Dhabi, known as Al Gharbia, is the immediate context of this study. It covers 75% of the land area of the UAE, has 9% of the population and produces 46% of the GDP of the country's economy. The UAE was formed as an oligarchy in 1971 upon gaining independence from the United Kingdom. Prior to independence the Emirates were inhabited by sparsely distributed but interconnected Arabic speaking people who lived through nomadism, fishing, pearling and trading according to the seasons. Trade occurred with other Arabian Peninsula peoples who inhabited areas now comprising the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. There was also extensive contact with the inhabitants of East Africa and the western seaboard of India.

Prior to independence, extensive oil and gas reserves were discovered and economic growth has been rapid since, leading to urbanization, population expansion and demographic change. The most recent complete census was administered in 2005 when the total population stood at 4,104,695 (Noack, 2009). Abu Dhabi was most populous (34.3%) with smaller Dubai having 31.8% of the population. Emiratis made up just 20.1% together with a diverse expatriate segment of 79.9% (Noack, 2009). The latter includes many from traditional trading partners such as India and Pakistan as well Arabic speaking countries including Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and GCC countries.

Interim results from the 2010 census indicate rapid population growth in the intervening period. The population was then estimated at 6 million, with 1.75 million from India, 1.25 million from Pakistan and 500,000 from Bangladesh. Those from China, the Philippines, Thailand, Korea, Afghanistan and Iran together comprise one million. Those from Europe, Australia, North Africa, East Africa and Latin America make up 500,000 (Groth & Sousa-Poza, 2012). The most recent estimate indicates a population of more than 8 million with the expatriate segment continuing to grow at an increasing rate (Groth & Sousa-Poza, 2012).

These statistics hint at the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the UAE population which has significance for English language learning and usage. Whilst Arabic speakers use standard Arabic alongside their dialects of origin in a diaglossic fashion (Lyons, 1981) the lingua franca of the UAE's cosmopolitan population is English (Maslamani, 2007). In light of the social coherence offered by English at the local level and the government's wish to empower the nation with access to increasingly Anglicized global knowledge, English is assigned as the medium of instruction at tertiary education level and is taught as a second language in the nation's schools.

2.2 English Language in UAE Education Institutions

Until 2005, English was taught as a compulsory foreign language to national pupils in UAE government schools from Grade 4 (c. 10 years of age) through to Grade 12 (c. 18-20 years of age) for about 6 hours per week. Since 2005 most schools have provided a similar number of hours from Grade 1 onwards (c. 7 years of age) such that 12 years of English instruction is common. Many children also receive English language teaching in Kindergarten (Wahdan, 2010).

However, English teaching in UAE schools has achieved mixed results. According to the National Admissions and Placements Office (NAPO, 2012) the Secondary School Certificate average for English is 75.78%. For Al Gharbia this is slightly lower at 74.36%. Such means appear satisfactory but the Secondary School Certificate is not well aligned to the Common Educational Proficiency Assessment (CEPA), an entry test which is required for all applicants to state-financed tertiary education institutions.

The CEPA assesses grammar and reading via multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and assigns a writing band to an essay via a standard rubric. The mean average of the CEPA MCQ for UAE national students is an index of 160.18 with a mean writing band of 2.87. Again for rural Al Gharbia the means are lower standing at 153.35 for MCQ and a band of 2.34 for writing (NAPO, 2012). Direct entry to degree studies is MCQ of 180 with writing band of 5.00 and consequently approximately 90% of Emirati public secondary school leavers must spend several semesters studying English at foundational level before entering degree programs (NAPO, 2012).

Whilst one might debate the soundness of an English medium language policy at tertiary level in this context (Shohamy, 2001 and 2006; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004) it remains government policy and efforts are being made to raise the standards of English teaching and learning in UAE schools. However, the need remains for foundational English study at tertiary level. Although many students in the Al Gharbia colleges and other government tertiary institutions graduate

successfully significant numbers fail because they cannot attain the required international benchmarks in spite of several years of foundational English language study (personal knowledge).

2.3 Al Gharbia Colleges

This study is conducted in Al Gharbia Colleges, part of the federation of Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) funded by the UAE government, and the present workplace of the researcher. These HCT colleges, established six years ago, are the most recent addition to the HCT federation and the first to provide tertiary education in Al Gharbia. They are tackling a specific set of challenges with regard to English language teaching and learning. Pre-independence economic relations and life styles have persisted longer in this region due to its geographical remoteness and security concerns related to the nation's mineral reserves which are located here. The inhabitants of the region have now settled into towns and villages although they retain many of their traditional values. Formal learning has penetrated society more slowly than elsewhere and the student who neglects quotidian familial intercourse in favour of study is not always respected by their household.

Previously, most students who qualified for undergraduate study migrated to the urban centres or travelled abroad, particularly to the United States. This option was primarily available to male students who in the UAE are allowed greater geographical mobility than females. The establishment of Al Gharbia HCT Colleges, therefore, offered the local female generation their first opportunity for post-secondary education. As might be expected, the number of Al Gharbia secondary school pupils admitted directly to undergraduate programs is below the national average standing at 2% compared to the national mean of 10% (NAPO, 2012).

The present study, emerging out of this context, is an attempt to explore the construct of *place* as a possible means of transforming the outcomes of foundational TESOL practice. It seeks to contribute to Emirati society by making direct entry to undergraduate study a reality for many more young people of the fast developing Al Gharbia region and improve TESOL practice in the UAE and MENA region as a whole.

Literature Review

Reading for this study fell into four main areas; curriculum theory, methodology, philosophy and empirical studies. Curriculum theory provided direct inspiration for the research project and I, therefore, begin with a review of approaches to TESOL curricula, including prior work of my own. This is followed by an assessment of the referenced methodological and philosophical works with regard to their critical and place-based potential. My purpose is to show how the present study emerged out of my critical reading of curriculum literature, how I sought authors who supported my place-based ideas and discovered a methodology and philosophical orientation that would enable me to explore them. Currently there is a paucity of empirical place-based TESOL studies but I conclude with a review of some that are available.

3.1 Curriculum Literature

3.1.1 Transactional TESOL Curricula

These are exemplified by Brown (1995) and draw on earlier curricula such as Anthony (1965), McKay (1978) and Richards & Rogers (1982) as well as upon Munby's discourse needs analysis (1978) and Bloom's taxonomies of language learning (1956). Transactional curricula are not necessarily simplistic models of learning. Indeed they often regard language learning as a dynamic system of interacting elements which include: *approach*, the principles and values that define needs and are employed to select content; *syllabus*, how selected content is organized; *techniques*, the teacher's performance; and *practice*, the learner's performance (Brown, 1995: ix & 4).

In this view, the approach of any curriculum can be defined by the manner in which three dichotomies of needs are resolved: language needs v. situational needs; objective needs v. subjective needs; content needs v. process needs (Brown, 1995). The multifarious elements of any specific curriculum will interact according to the approaches that result from such resolutions. These approaches can be placed on a cline at one end of which language, objective and content needs tend to associate. For example, the grammar-translation approach is rooted in language needs, regarding language as an object constituted by lexis and grammatical structures etc. which become the content of the syllabus. Teacher performance is then a matter of transmitting knowledge to students who memorize it, thus satisfying objective curriculum needs. At the opposite end of this cline, situational, subjective and process needs tend to associate. For example, the communicative approach recognizes the subjective needs of the learner to express intentions, focuses on the situations in which the learner is required to use the target language and regards topic and task as the organizing

principle of the syllabus. Teacher performance becomes facilitative and learner performance participative, thus fulfilling process and subjective needs.

However, there are several weaknesses in these models which undermine their claim to a systems view of curriculum. Whilst at one extreme they encompass language learning processes, their clear intent is to make TESOL curricula amenable to scientific rationalism (Brown, 1995; 35, 90) and are inexorably drawn toward pre-determined educational goals and learning outcomes (Brown, 1995: 104-105). Consequently, they emphasize language as a measurable object and render linear curricula in which ESOL is transmitted from teacher to student in a series of classroom transactions. This technicist or transmission approach (Kumaravadivelu, 2003: 8) positions the TESOL teacher as the omniscient 'knower' in the classroom from whom linguistic knowledge is thought to be channelled largely unchanged to the student.

Whilst such transactional curricula recognize TESOL practice as value driven and political rather than scientifically 'neutral' (Brown; 1995: 18, 78, 105), they fail to critically analyse the interests of its stakeholders and the unequal power relations of the classroom. Instead they rely on the curriculum developer to '*make the best of*' curricula power relations (Brown; 1995: 78) in an *ad hoc* manner. The embedded values of transactional curricula, however, may be exposed through the application of Critical Discourse Analysis. The following passage, for example, exhibits characteristics of interdiscursivity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough; 1999) in which corporate assumptions colonize educational discourse.

"In good teaching, presentation and practice may be indistinguishable... Nevertheless, we are in the language teaching business and can therefore profit from thinking about classroom activities in terms of these two distinct categories (Brown; 1995: 15, my emphases)..."

The use of business metaphor here indicates assumptions about language curricula conditioned by corporate practices which have become naturalized within curriculum discourse. This is particularly evident with regard to situational elements of curriculum design which are directly pertinent to an exploration of place-orientated TESOL. In particular, corporatized assumptions are illuminated in Brown's discussion of how to limit the situational needs identified for South-East Asians living in Florida in which he says:

"... Most people would consider the need to use language to find lodging or to buy food more important, or at least more urgent, than the need to read legal documents or the need to understand political speeches (Brown; 1995: 38)..."

This prioritization of basic physical need over access to knowledge about legal rights and participation in the power relations of society is consonant with corporate assumptions about consumerism and the cash nexus which are naturalized in such curriculum discourse (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Ambivalence is traced in the hedging statement ‘...*more important, or at least more urgent* (ibid.)...’ but choices between urgency and importance are indeed the political decisions language curriculum developers make, whether consciously or not. Whilst transactional theorists do not make their readers aware of how legal rights and power relations condition the manner in which we satisfy our urgent needs, critical approaches to TESOL would ensure that this relationship is brought to the fore rather than backgrounded (van Leeuwen, 1996).

With respect to place-based orientation, transactional approaches assume the classroom to be the default place for language learning, embedding teachers and students within it as naturalized subject positions to be inhabited (Brown; 1995: 179). Nowhere in the ‘...*overall approaches... that motivate... the curriculum...*’ (ibid.) are alternative places or positions beyond the classroom imagined as viable or valid for language learning.

3.1.2 Systems-view TESOL Curricula

Systems-view TESOL Curricula regard the language learning process as a network of interacting systems in which decisions made at one level affect other elements in the system (Richards, 2001: 215). They move somewhat closer to a critical perspective in that they tend to emphasize learning processes over objective content. They explicitly consider learner abilities and attitudes, such as decision making and investigative and reflective skills, to be primary curriculum drivers rather than merely quantifiable skills and knowledge (Stenhouse, 1975). They perceive how assumptions about pedagogical epistemology are embedded in a broader societal value matrix beyond educational institutions (Eisner: 1992, 302). However, they do not take a specifically critical stance by attempting to analyse stakeholder interests and power relations. Moreover, they too assume the classroom to be the natural place for language learning offering only the subject positions of teacher and learner and delimiting from the outset the curriculum to include only what knowledge, skills and values students learn in schools or educational systems (Richard; 2001, 1).

3.1.3 Re-constructional General Education Curricula

Re-constructional approaches give further emphasis to educational processes taking them toward a critical paradigm (McKernan, 2008). Arising out of R. S. Peters’ analytic philosophy of education (1966), Lawrence Stenhouse’s process model (1968, 1975 & 1983) and Elliott’s action research (1991) they firmly eschew pre-determined educational objectives as primary

curriculum drivers. Instead, they regard the curriculum as a cyclical process of action research into teaching and learning practices, experimental conduct of the curriculum and subsequent reflection and further improvement through on-going research.

Re-constructive curricula regard learning as a *situated* practice (McKernan, 2008; xvi); one in which decision making rights are devolved to the teacher (McKernan, 2008; xii) whose role is to create, through action-research inquiry, the enabling conditions that will foster in the learner reflection, critical capabilities, and the ability to imagine new realities (McKernan, 2008; 192). This devolution of knowledge creation to local stakeholders is likely to re-balance the power relations of the classroom in favour of the learner (Freire, 1972; 53). Noticeably, however, this re-constructive vision remains firmly rooted in the classroom, limited to the horizons of teachers and learners who appear to naturally reside there. Whilst recognizing the importance of critical theorists such as Freire, Apple and Giroux who seek to expose assumptions about values and power (McKernan, 2008; xiv) this approach does not appear to be cognizant of the contemporary emergence of *place* as an organizing principle of curriculum design.

3.1.4 Reconceptualizing General Education Curricula

Reconceptualizing curricula seek to move away from abstract, standardized learning outcomes that divorce knowledge from its context, toward learning situated in autobiography (Miller, 1988) history (Pinar, 1988) and place (Pinar, 1991). Importantly, Pinar noted two decades ago that,

“Place as a concept is largely absent in curriculum literature... as a specialized field... curriculum has tended towards the abstract... the formulation of principles of... development applicable anytime, anywhere (1991; 165).”

Whilst Pinar’s injunction to consider place as a key component of curricula has been taken up in some quarters of North American and European general education it has been more as a means of recontextualizing places to the classroom than resituating learning and the learner directly in the community (e.g. Hedegaard and Chaiklin, 2005). Nevertheless, I believe general education Reconceptualizing curricula must be seen as historical and intellectual precursors to contemporary Transformational curricula. Most pertinently, however, *place* as a construct has continued to be largely ignored in TESOL curriculum discourse to this day.

3.1.5 Transformational General Education Curricula

Contemporary Transformational curricula are rooted in postmodern philosophy and espouse a dialogic model (Gadamer, 1975) in which knowledge is regarded as, *“contested, constructed, tentative and emerging”* (Slattery, 2006; 123). The school becomes a dynamic community

committed to critical enquiry and social justice in which every student participates in the interpretation of their lived experiences (Slattery, 2006; 63, 109). Theorists espousing such curricula appreciate fully how this hermeneutic function of the school might threaten powerful people because the resultant learning outcomes are unlikely to confirm the values that maintain them in power (Slattery, 2006; 119). The vision of these curricula is fully consonant with the critical paradigm in that it sees knowledge as an effect of power (Foucault, 1972) and understanding as the process by which our '*sedimented perceptors*' (Slattery, 2006; 33, 143), the opaque, hegemonic assumptions of tradition and prejudice, are exposed (Gadamer, 1975).

Transformational curricula meaningfully combine a critical perspective with a place-based orientation because they see knowledge and identity as contested and emergent and reposition teaching and learning in specific places at the dynamic confluence of the past, present and future (Slattery, 2006; 64). This is an act Slattery terms *proleptic synthesis*, meaning the collapse of time and place into a permanently situated present. In this manner, transformational curricula are able to dissolve the borders between the school and community and bring about a qualitative focus on relationships rather than a quantitative focus on tests and the evaluation of standardized knowledge (Slattery, 2006; 110). Consequently, they include extensive place-based activities such as oral history projects, engaging seminars and provocative field experiences involving students, teachers and community members, as integral curriculum elements (*ibid*). Transformational curricula explicitly re-integrate meaning and context (Slattery, 2006; 293) because they regard language as the main factor in forming subjectivities and therefore see it as paramount that language learners simultaneously acquire literacy and the ability to understand and negotiate social systems (Slattery, 2006; 229-233).

The mutually informing combination of critical inquiry and place-based learning inherent to transformational curricula allows learners to bring critical understanding to bear on both their quotidian *and* school organized experiences of the world within a wide range of communities of practice. In TESOL, where functional literacy is commonly pursued through putatively 'value-free' instruction, the facilitation of critical literacy is crucial if TESOL is to achieve the transformative potential that should accrue to those who acquire a new language.

3.1.6 Critical Curriculum Theory

Transformational curricula which integrate critical theory and place-orientation into a post-modern vision have been derived from pedagogic practice (Slattery, 2006; 227-239). However, other researchers such as Apple (1990), Young (1989) and Grundy (1987) have arrived at a place-orientated approach through critical analysis of educational institutions.

Apple's analysis of the alienating effects of prevalent modes of production, distribution and consumption (1979: 2) leads him to regard the classroom as a crucial site for passionate resistance to hegemony (1990: 163-166). His resultant advocacy driven curriculum is similar to a re-constructural approach. The difficulty he notes is that critical discourse will be re-contextualized to the power relations of the school and denatured of its transformative power. The potential of directly applying critical approaches to learning within original power relations *beyond* the classroom is not considered by Apple. This is because like Young (1989) and Osberg and Biesta (2008) he regards society itself as being so thoroughly penetrated by hegemonic interests that it has become largely impervious to the influence of critical thinking. For these researchers this leaves the classroom, when in the hands of critical pedagogues, as one of the few remaining places where advocacy against hegemony can occur.

A third way between the horns of this dilemma is shown by Grundy (1987) and Young (1989) who exhibit an emergent place-orientation in their curriculum work. Grundy, like Apple, argues that in most cases the structural constraints in which schools operate prevent classroom-based critical enquiry (1987: 118). If, simultaneously, people are alienated from rational discourse in social institutions in general, then the teacher must seek quite new places suitable to such learning (Grundy, 1987: 119). As in transformational curricula, Young perceives that such places will emerge as the boundaries between school and society are dissolved. As a broad range of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) coalesce, learners will reinterpret the places they inhabit and become engaged in new kinds of learning activities not hitherto associated with conventional education or restricted to the classroom (Young, 1989: 32).

3.1.7 An Etymological Understanding of Curriculum

Informing this reading was an on-going etymological study in which I sought to fully grasp the concept of *curriculum*. I discovered that it is a complex term in which are embedded at least 4 interrelated meanings. By considering how various curriculum theorists emphasized or attenuated these meanings I developed a theory of curriculum types which is set out below. This application of etymological understanding to curriculum literature, led me to discover the lacuna of *place* as an organizing principle for curriculum design. This offered me a lens through which to further examine curriculum theory and became the inspiration for the present study.

To summarize my earlier findings, the term curriculum is founded on the Latin stem *currere*, the infinitive 'to run'. Hence, in curriculum terms it is the infinitival action of learning; a universal *process* which must be taken up and performed by each learner in an individual and locally subjective manner. The stem *currere* can also be nominalized as 'the course which is run'. These meanings can be combined as, 'the action of running the course of learning' and

are commonly noted in the literature (e.g. White, 1998). Previous studies, however, have not taken sufficient cognizance of the stem's suffix '*cule*' which is used in Latin to form nouns from verbs in order to denote either a means by which the action is performed or a *place* appropriate to the action (Dictionary.com, 2009). (See also, Stanfield, 2009).

Added to this complexity is the common tendency, particularly in North American usage (White, 1988), to conflate *curriculum* with the term *syllabus*, the latter stemming from a probable misspelling of the Greek *syttibos* (στυτύβας), a noun denoting the '*labels giving the table of contents of parchment scrolls*' (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2009). The use of *syllabus* in contemporary ecclesiastical and legal contexts denotes precisely this function (American Heritage Dictionary, 2009).

Thus, from the outset of its modern usage in the early 17th Century, the English term *curriculum* has offered the potential to express a complex range of ideas that include:

- *Process (Infinitive-subjective)*: the subjective experience of the *process* of traversing the course of learning.
- *Product (Nominative-objective)*:
 - the *course* of this learning; the trajectory of it seen as an object from an observer's perspective
 - a taxonomy of the *content* of such a course or its *syllabus*
- *Means (Means-Ends Symbiosis)*: the *means* by which learning might be achieved; the *resources* required, and the associated *ends*.
- *Place (Environmental Orientation)*: the *context* or *situation* within which learning occurs.

Having analysed the term curriculum in this manner, I then took up the systems view of curriculum and its cline from objective-language centred approach toward subjective-learner centred approach.

I considered different combinations of the four etymological aspects of curriculum as constituting the foundations upon which various curricula were based and delineated five ideal-types as set out below that might be placed on this cline.

3.1.7.1 Transactional Ideal-Type

This type of curriculum sees learning as a transaction through which a selected range of information or a discrete set of skills (e.g. language skills) is transferred in a largely linear fashion from teacher to student. It accords with what Freire has termed the 'banking' concept of education, where the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor

(1972: 58). It tends to emphasize means-ends orientation aimed at pre-determined educational outcomes (Brown, 1995), and enshrines teacher power over knowledge. In this case the *product* and *means* potentials of curriculum discourse are raised as a primary pair whilst the *process* and *place* potentials are attenuated.

3.1.7.2 Systemic Ideal-Type

Where learning is recognized as a complex cognitive process curricula tend to take on a *systems* approach. Learning is considered to be non-linear and its products are regarded more in terms of values and processes rather than as skills and information capable of simple transmission (Richards, 2001), although a means-ends orientation is often retained. In this case learning *processes* and the *means* necessary to enable them are profiled as the primary pair of curriculum potentials whilst *products* and the *place* of learning are attenuated.

3.1.7.3 Re-constructural Ideal-Type

Here predetermined educational outcomes are eschewed and learning is regarded as a relatively indeterminate process of critical inquiry. The purpose of education is considered to be the reconstruction of society through imaginative engagement with key contemporary issues. This ideal-type, however, remains rooted in tradition believing learning to be conditioned by universal rational laws inherent in extant forms of knowledge (McKernan, 2008). It, therefore, tends to raise the profile of both educational *process* and reconstructed objective *product* as the primary pair of curriculum potentials. Whilst regarding the intellectual capacity for rational thought as a key means of furthering knowledge, it more generally attenuates concern for the material *means* and *place* of learning.

3.1.7.4 Reconceptualizing Ideal-Type

This ideal-type focuses on the socio-psychological (Pinar, 1991) and autobiographical and historical (Miller, 1988) processes of learning and seeks to offer alternative views of experience by illuminating psychologically repressed consciousness. Dealing with critical issues such as racism, gender inequality and poverty, they are similar to reconstructural curricula. In addition, they anticipate transformational curricula in an explicit recognition of *place* as an organising construct. However, whilst both early (e.g. Pinar 1991) and contemporary forms (e.g. Hedegaard and Chaiklin, 2005) note the significance of the construct of place, they continue to situate the teacher, learner and learning processes within the classroom and recontextualize the discourse of real-world communities of practice to it. This puts them in an interim position on the cline after re-constructural curricula, as historical and intellectual precursors of transformational curricula.

3.1.7.5 Transformational Ideal-Type

Transformational curricula have emerged out of post-modern philosophy and refuse master narratives such as universal rational laws. They include religion and the transcendent in their remit (Slattery, 2006) and, importantly for the present study, regard knowledge as a mosaic of contextually determined meanings (Jameson, 1984). Hence, learning is considered to be inherently experiential. As a consequence, the *processes* of learning and the significance of the *places* where learning occurs become the emphasized primary pair of curriculum potentials with *products* and *means-ends* symbiosis being attenuated.

Reconceptualizing and Transformational curricula are thus of particular interest to this study because they significantly emphasize *place* as an organizing principle of curriculum design and bring an environmental orientation clearly into view. It was this discovery that led me to consider exploring a place-based orientation to TESOL as a research project that might help facilitate the transformation of TESOL practice.

3.2 Methodological Literature

I have shown how I discovered place-orientation in TESOL curriculum design as a significant lacuna for research. I now consider some key aspects of the methodology and orientation I have applied in order to enable me to explore it. In this section I first place Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in its historical context and then show how its emphasis on the need for learners to develop critical language awareness is directly related to its analysis of place. I have found Lave and Wenger's theory of situated learning important to my understanding of TESOL and I next briefly relate this to CDA. The purpose is to show how CDA extends the analytic power of Lave and Wenger's construct of *communities of practice* enabling us to more fully expose normative assumptions about place. Finally, I detail the key tenets of a place-based orientation toward educational research (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Umphrey, 2007) showing their complementary relationship to CDA.

3.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and Situated Learning Theory

Among the scholars considered to have lain the basis for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is Norman Fairclough (e.g. 1989, 1992a, 1992b, 1995, 2003 and Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). In his early work (1989) Fairclough used the term Critical Linguistics (CL) but what marked the start of a period of consolidation of several strands of this field into a more established CDA approach to research can be traced to a chance symposium in Amsterdam in January 1991 attended by Teun Van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo Van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak (Wodak & Meyer, 2005). Around this time Fairclough was using the term Text

Orientated Discourse Analysis (TODA) (1992a) and CDA has retained this dual orientation of relating text to discourse whilst further developing TODA into a tripartite methodology that not only situates text within the interrelated discourse processes of text production, distribution and consumption but also analyses how these processes are embedded in the broader social context.

One of Kress's contributions to CDA (1996) is to show that the representational resources made available through both formal and informal school discourse (see also Rampton, 1999) are embedded in the cultural, linguistic and social values of disparate communities within modern multicultural societies (1996: 16). Whilst his research suggests that pedagogic discourse remains essentially hegemonic, it recognizes the range of informal discourses multicultural societies make available to learners as an opportunity for them to access a variety of perspectives on the world with the potential this offers for on-going transformation of their knowledge and identity (1996). This is also likely to be the case within the diverse cultural and linguistic context of the current study.

Such an awareness of the relationship between the school and society leads CDA to be particularly critical of competency models of language learning such as Hymes (1972) and Candlin (1981, 1989) which foreground normative practice (Fairclough, 1992a: 83) and erroneously assume that the relationship between linguistic competence and social context is simple and transparent (Fairclough, 1992a). On the contrary, the context of language use is often marked by significant differences in power relations (e.g. teacher/student, college director/teaching faculty, college director/government official etc.) These social circumstances '*interpellate*' (Janks & Ivanic, 1992) us into discourse, often forcing us to accept dominating and dominated roles, in order for us to participate in it. Assuming normative language practices under these conditions is likely to reproduce existing power relations and prevent a critical understanding of them to arise.

The assumption that normative use of the English language is appropriate to the Western Region of Abu Dhabi, a relatively remote part of the Arabian Peninsula, may be less a matter of providing added socio-economic opportunity to its inhabitants than maintaining the hegemonic assumptions of those who already possess such standardized language (Fairclough, 1992a: 43). If TESOL in this region is reduced to mere language skills acquisition students may fail to realize how such values are embedded in the language they are acquiring. CDA considers such awareness an essential prerequisite for democratic citizenship (Fairclough, 1992: 90; Fairclough, 1992a: 12) and emancipatory action (Janks & Ivanic, 1992). Several exponents of CDA believe critical awareness of TESOL practice to be the most promising arena within which to initiate critical approaches to education in general as it is increasingly a site of ideological

investment (Fairclough, 1992a: 96) and hegemonic intervention (Fairclough, 1992b: 12; Fairclough, 1992a: 90; McKenzie, 1992: 226). However, such awareness must arise out of real-world discourse not contrived examples brought into the TESOL classroom (Clark, 1992). Therefore, an exploration of the specific *places* in which ESOL is acquired in the context of the present study is crucial.

A significant perspective on the nature and significance of context in language learning is Lave & Wenger's situated learning theory in which they raise questions about the relation of the school curriculum to the communities in which the knowledge that schools seek to teach is located (1991: 41). They take up this concern because they regard learning as a way of being in the world rather than merely coming to know about it from afar (1991: 24). In their view, learning necessarily implies constructing an identity through the lived experiences of participation in specific place-based practices (1991: 53). Their research into several specific communities indicates learning to be a process of gaining membership to a community of people who share a common practice from within which skills and knowledge and an associated discourse emerge. They show how a new member is first allowed to participate at the periphery of this *community of practice*, gradually taking on roles which carry more responsibility and risk, moving toward its centre in a process Lave & Wenger term *legitimate peripheral participation* (1991: 104-105). This understanding of learning raises further questions about the, "*socio-cultural organization of space into places of activity and the circulation of knowledgeable skill* (1991: 58, my emphases)." In other words, Lave and Wenger's research discovered how geographical *spaces* are interpreted into meaningful *places* through the activities that occur in them and the knowledge and identities that such activities produce. Such a view is fully consonant with Fairclough's critical understanding of place (1989) discussed below, the place- and community-based orientation to learning of Gruenewald & Smith (2008) and Umphrey (2007), and the critical geography of Soja (1989).

The theory of *legitimate peripheral participation* is highly relevant to TESOL practice because Lave and Wenger would regard the classroom-based language learner as legitimately peripheral but *inappropriately* kept by educational institutes from essential *participation* in communities of practice within the broader community (1991: 104). This is partly a result of the fact that TESOL itself has become a globalized community of practice constituted by a significant number of members who have themselves undergone a process similar to legitimate peripheral participation as they have moved from part-time casual work, to studying professional TESOL courses, on to full time positions and Master's qualifications through to management roles at local and international levels. In this manner the values of TESOL practice, particularly the assumption that the classroom is the natural place of language

learning, are established and maintained, having significant influence on ESOL acquisition around the globe.

The central importance of Lave & Wenger's situated learning theory to the present study is that it inalienably situates discourse, knowledge and identity within concrete situations and associated sets of social relationships in such a way that context and language are inextricably related. One never merely acquires sets of value-free skills, knowledge and language but must do so within the constraints imposed by specific groups of people. These constraints include local structures of power within the community of practice which are in turn penetrated by broader societal power relations.

Whilst Lave & Wenger do not pursue the inherent critical potential of their situated learning theory, CDA provides the tools to enable the researcher to make a detailed critical analysis of the *places* within which a community of practice conducts its activity and produces knowledge and social relations. CDA shows how members of a community of practice acquire specific mental constructs, what Fairclough terms *member resources* (MR), about the order of society which divide total social *space* into so many institutional *places* (Fairclough, 1989: 150). These mental constructs of social order distribute within each institutional space a set of ideal situation types which the member employs to interpret any actual situation in which she must participate (*ibid.*). Whilst the physical characteristics of the context of language use, and any prior discourse which remains present, carry cues to the nature of the situation the member finds herself in, these can only be operationalized and lead to social action through bringing MR to bear on them in an interpretative process (*ibid.*).

Van Leeuwen (1996) takes up this issue in a critical review of how social actors are represented in discourse showing how the linguistic features of a text are mapped onto the set of representations of the world (MR) a discourse member brings to this interpretative process (1996: 35). In particular, he shows not only that the array of representations available are contextually determined (1996: 34) but also that the manner in which these representations are semiotically mapped to linguistic features is itself highly contingent on culture, context and institutional situation (*ibid.*). The most pertinent example of this process is a common form of metonymical reference which van Leeuwen calls *spatialisation* (1996: 58) and which may be employed in certain situations to represent social actors by means of reference to the *place* with which they are associated (*ibid.*); for example, *coal miner* or *parliamentarian*. This has the effect of raising the importance of the context of social action and diminishing the importance of the individuality of the social actor. Social context and institutional situation, therefore, determine the extent to which representational resources and semiotic mapping to linguistic features are employed to characterize reality as either constituted by specific people, *places*

and actions within the *'flux of experience'* (van Leeuwen, 1996; 46) or by generic idealized classes of things hierarchically subdivided into species (ibid.).

The consequence of such critical discourse analysis of language context is that there are no inherent meanings to a spoken or written text but that its linguistic features are always processed with reference to the discourse members' typifications of the actual situation (Fairclough, 1989: 151). We must always answer the question, 'Where am I?' *before* we begin to participate in discourse. Our answer to this question will differ according to our common-sense assumptions about the order of society which are always partly determined by dominant ideologies and sets of power relations that have arisen out of institutional and societal processes of struggle (Fairclough, 1989: 140).

Schools and colleges are central institutional spaces in contemporary global society constituted by various ideal situation types such as the classroom, examination hall, corridor, cafeteria and playground etc. Whilst these places never conform exactly to their ideal type, they must inevitably limit behaviour and discourse to a given set of relationships and values. Conversely, acquisition occurring in a broad range of situations will enrich the exophoric references of discourse, expose the learner to the hermeneutic potential of other communities of practice and, with appropriate guidance from a critical pedagogue, accelerate the development of critical language awareness. In exploring ways in which ESOL learning might be distributed beyond the limiting situations offered by educational institutions, therefore, this study may challenge dominant ideologies.

3.2.2 Place-Based Literature

The hermeneutic relationship between discourse and its context, central to CDA, is also important for understanding the fundamental human practice of *place making*; the interpretative process of turning geographic *space* into inhabited *place* (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Soja, 1989). We now, therefore, turn to consider how the key tenets of a place-based orientation toward TESOL learning and educational research emerged from my reading as a confirming orientation to my developing project.

Having isolated *place* as an element of the term *curricula*, noted how it is overlooked in various curriculum types and identified it as a lacuna for exploration in language learning, I sought out literature that supported my view of *place* as a significant construct in understanding TESOL in contemporary global society. Searches revealed researchers such as Hedegaard and Chaiklin (2005) who are concerned with a cultural-historical approach tied radically to the local community. However, whilst their curriculum devolves power to teachers and students and enables them to focus on local interests and issues, learning remains largely centred on the

classroom with the associated risks of re-contextualization, denudation of deixical richness and consequent loss of critical awareness. What I was seeking was an orientation that not only brought local discourse *into* the classroom but also took teachers, learners and learning *out* into the community.

I discovered this in Gruenewald (2003a, 2003b & 2005), Gruenewald & Smith (2008) and Umphrey (2007) who are prominent contemporary voices of place-orientated and community-centred learning and research. Umphrey explains that parallel to Federal attempts in the United States to raise standards of contemporary education, for the past decade a new movement has emerged that goes by various names such as, service learning, civic education, place-based instruction, character education and community-centred teaching (2007: 56). The common purpose of this movement is to reconnect education to the real world through developing cross institutional relationships that form new communities of purpose (ibid.).

Like Slattery (2006: 109), Gruenewald and Smith believe that future social and environmental disintegration can only be avoided if both critical and environmental approaches to learning and research are reconciled (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: vii.). Because *place* as a construct has been largely overlooked, place-based research needs to be given extra emphasis to enable a balanced integration of the two paradigms (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: vii.). As Gruenewald puts it, we have to '*reinsert*' the land into our critical educational theories (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: 148). For the place and community orientated teacher it is the narrow, standardized nature of modern education, dislocated from and in disregard of local community life that critical educators have to take account of (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: 142). Umphrey's experience shows how student participation in research activities in places such as museums, libraries, action committees, galleries, parks, research hospitals, book groups, non-profit associations, businesses, historical societies, wildlife refuges and churches can forge new relationships between the school and community (2007). His approach, though not explicitly espousing critical theory, is based on the acronym ALERT which includes several items of critical interest.

Ask – compelling questions; those which can only be answered by research in the real world.

Listen – review previous research in order to refine and focus the original question

Explore – stay open to different perspectives as you approach the study

Reflect – the core of education, where we seek to make meaning of our experiences

Teach – engaging students in the act of teaching as a source of learning (Umphrey, 2007: 17)

In practice Umphrey employs this research style agenda for all learners irrespective of their age and educational development to facilitate critical enquiry through community-centred learning that directly tackles local issues of disadvantage and from which emerge extensive student driven projects that form public records of new knowledge (2007: 108).

Gruenewald, on the other hand, explicitly integrates critical theory with a place-based orientation through the dual concepts of *de-colonization* and *re-inhabitation* (2008: vii & 2003b: 8). He defines the former as resistance to local and global processes that privilege some people through the oppression of others and the latter as learning to live in communities and regions through reformed sustainable relationships. In other words, he sees the need for human beings to re-interpret geographic *spaces* such that they come to inhabit institutional *places* which are characterized by transformed and more equal social relationships.

The appropriateness of critical theory to place-based education is openly debated (Bowers, 2008; Greenwood, 2008; Smith, 2008; Stevenson, 2008). Bowers in particular points out the danger of penetrating a place-based perspective with the critical theory of advanced capitalist academia in that it might lead to the imposition of ethnocentric values on less powerful cultures (Bowers, 2008: 152). However, place-based education which takes the learner out of the classroom into a wide variety of active communities of practice will inevitably transform social relations and act as a catalyst for cultural dynamism. We can ensure that critical measures to empower others through place-based experiences do not have counter-productive consequences by ensuring that the learners retain sufficient agency over cultural change as it occurs. This can be achieved by emphasizing the additional voice that learners acquire through place-based TESOL learning experiences.

Importantly, Gruenewald's perspective is consonant with how I have chosen to situate TESOL in the context of contemporary globalization in that he views place-based education as,

"...the educational counterpart of a broader movement toward reclaiming the significance of the local in the global age" (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: xiii)

Gruenewald's emphasis here, confirms my findings that whilst efforts are being made to understand how a local orientation can alleviate the negative consequences of globalization in economic, political and cultural fields, little has been attempted with regard to the globalization of education and language learning (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: xiv.).

Gruenewald makes it clear why such neglect may have occurred. Firstly, because the narrative of globalization has gone unquestioned, education has become a global business, and educational discourse has been *colonized* by that of the corporation (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). Gruenewald's place based approach employs the term *colonized* which is also central to

CDA, and is the textual aspect of the process of *interdiscursivity* (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) a specific example of which we noted in Brown's (1995: 15) curriculum discourse above (see 3.1.1 above). Secondly, agents of globalization have effectively linked it with the narrative of social justice and equity, leading to the erroneous belief that the spread of schooling and higher education will *necessarily* bring about more equitable distribution of knowledge and social opportunity (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: xv; Gruenewald, 2003b). Thirdly, the power of media corporations has effectively constructed children and youth as consumers of a stream of ever-new hi-tech products manufactured mostly by cheap labour in deregulated working environments across the globe (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: xv.). Fourthly and directly related to TESOL, the necessity of relocating beyond one's birthplace, increasingly across international and linguistic borders, in order to earn a living means that we have come merely to *reside* in pre-interpreted places rather than *inhabit* those of our own making (ibid.). Gruenewald goes on to show how the consequent lack of focus on *place* in education has diminished human adaptability and undermined effective patterns of community reliance which are being replaced by distant, centralized institutions which homogenize local responses to the environment and threaten the health and security of our species (2008: xiv).

To counteract such threats to both social and environmental security, educators must take up a place-oriented approach which, directly comparable to Slattery's dialogic curriculum (2006), seeks to break out of the isolation of the classroom and transform education into a local collaborative effort (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: xx). Rather than being satisfied with *placeless* curricula (Gruenewald, 2003b: 8) which focus primarily on acquiring standardized knowledge produced at a distance, place-based education aims to systematically provide opportunities for students to create their own knowledge by engaging with the local community (Gruenewald and Smith 2008: xvi; Umphrey, 2007: 71).

Knapp suggests a useful taxonomy of elements that must be present in such contextual teaching and learning: developing self-regulated learners; anchoring teaching and learning in students' life contexts; teaching and learning in multiple contexts; using problem-based learning; using interdependent learning groups and assessing students' progress through authentic assessments (2008: 23). Such an approach re-integrates young people with their environment, allows them to *re-inhabit* it, leads them to question the forces that have previously shaped it, and readies them for democratic participation through self-regulated and interdependent learning processes (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: xx). I see, therefore, a strong relationship of complementarity between place-orientated education and the critical paradigm of discourse analysis. A place-orientated TESOL curriculum facilitated by a critical pedagogue will enable students to experience issues of social injustice at first hand in the local

community. In doing so, it will not only expose the language learner to contextually appropriate language but also illuminate social issues in all their specificity through analysis of the discourse in which they must inevitably participate (Bowers, 2008).

In summary, the inherent hermeneutic relationship between place and discourse, and the complementarity of place-orientation and the critical paradigm suggest CDA together with a place-based approach will provide the methodological tools and orientation to explore *place* as a significant construct in a local context of globalized TESOL practice.

3.3 Philosophical Literature

In stressing the manner in which place significantly influences both the general learning processes of TESOL acquisition and the specific language features acquired (Knapp, 2008: 23), place-oriented TESOL presents several challenges to prevalent educational philosophies that are based on representational epistemology and regard education primarily as the transmission of objective knowledge from teacher to student. In this section of the literature review, therefore, I turn to a necessarily brief consideration of the primary philosophical sources which have led me toward both a critical and place-orientated approach to understanding TESOL acquisition.

Firstly, I relate the social determinism of Foucauldian discourse (Foucault, 1977; 2002) to educational philosophy (Bernstein, 1996) which to some extent corrects it. Secondly, I follow up on Bernstein's more interactive perspective on society and discourse in a review of some key features of dialogic philosophy (Gadamer, 1975). Thirdly, I go on to consider deconstruction (Derrida, 2001; Osberg and Biesta, 2008) and its epistemological and ontological emergentism which explicitly takes account of place in learning. In conclusion, I show how a dual epistemological and ontological emergentist view of TESOL is fully consonant with CDA and confirms the reflective approach to methodology (Giroux, 1988; Densten & Grey, 2001) taken in this paper.

3.3.1 Foucault and Bernstein; Discourse, Pedagogy and Place

Foucault's philosophy is consonant with both a place-orientated approach and CDA in that he regards discourse as a social *place* (2002: 107) constructed by hegemonic power (1977: 103). According to Foucault, a primary manner in which hegemony operates through discourse, a theoretical perspective I employ throughout this study, is to distribute within social place a limited range of subject positions which interlocutors must inhabit (2007: 107). As a result, they are obliged to participate in an existing set of social relations in order to act in the world.

In this respect, Foucault takes an emergentist approach because for him subject positions cannot exist beyond historically situated discourse (2002: 30) but are, rather, brought into play within on-going discursive events themselves (2002: 103).

As a consequence of the fact that the positions from which we can approach the world are determined by hegemonic discourse practices, Foucault metaphorizes the mind as a semio-logical surface upon which dominant agents inscribe their power (1977: 103). Such inscription is not merely a subconscious effect of power but also, as Foucault shows in his analysis of the discourse of the French Ideologues, in many cases a deliberate tactic (1977: 103 & 167). Quoting Servan, he shows how conscious control over discourse can become simultaneously control over the mental, social and physical behaviour of non-dominant members of society (1977: 103; see also van Dijk, 1966).

Importantly for this educational study, Foucault applies this view to *discipline* as a central construct for understanding how such hegemony is maintained. In doing so he shows how discourse, knowledge and identity emerge from within four characteristics of bureaucratic society which is cellular, organic, genetic and combinatorial (1977: 167). By this he means that human behaviour in modern society is, respectively, spatially distributed, carefully coded, accumulated over time and practiced within a social hierarchy (ibid). As a consequence, modern bureaucratic societies function through the prescription of movement, drawing up of tables, imposition of repeated forms of exercise and the arrangement of tactics between hierarchies (ibid.)

It is the cellular prescription of movement, the division of the world into so many institutional places and the provision of permissions to inhabit them that is most pertinent for this place-orientated study. Certain institutional spaces offer specific subject positions from within which to act and therefore limit the participant to a given discourse and lexis with which to represent the world and associated sets of power relations. This is fully consonant with Fairclough's methodological approach to place discussed above (1989: 150). In view of the hegemonic consequences of *place* in this discourse perspective, the axiological assumption that students and teachers must *necessarily* inhabit the classrooms of educational institutions has to be interrogated. Indeed, Foucault takes up this issue directly; for him the isolation of students and teachers into places such as schools and colleges does not have primarily an educative function but rather a regulative one, which, in Foucault's own words is,

"...inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or adjacent part, but as a mechanism that is inherent to it..." (1977: 176)

Within the hegemonically regulated social spaces of schools and colleges, discourse, knowledge and identity can only emerge through a matrix of surveillance which combines controls over time, space and activity in the '*tactical arrangement*' (Foucault, 1977: 167) of the curriculum which is exemplified by the examination (Foucault, 1977: 184-192).

Bernstein's educational philosophy takes a similar view when postulating a '*pedagogic device*' (1996) which determines instructional discourse of the classroom to be embedded in and largely determined by the regulative discourse of educational institutions (1996). The function of these institutions is to de-locate discourses from real world communities of practice and re-locate them in pedagogic practice (Bernstein, 1996: 46). The purpose is to appropriate other discourses in order for them to be transmitted by teachers and acquired by students (Bernstein, 1996: 47). However, such a process is selective at every level of transformation of the original discourse, from the most abstract to actual applications in the classroom (Bernstein, 1996: 49). Such selection is based on the socio-cultural assumptions of the pedagogizing agents such that the actual function of the school becomes to provide a '*symbolic ruler for consciousness*' (Bernstein, 1996: 50), the inscription of dominant values on the mind, as we saw in Foucault. Bernstein terms this process '*recontextualizing*' (1966: 52), a term I use throughout this paper and which is the textual manifestation of what CDA terms '*interdiscursivity*' (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) defined as the manner in which orders of discourse ideologically appropriate or colonize each other (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 63) such that power struggles are internalized in discourse (ibid.)

In pedagogic discourse, such recontextualization embeds power arrangements as '*models of the learner, the teacher and their relations*' (Bernstein, 1996: 49), determining the subject positions available for them to inhabit. Hence the learner emerges as a pedagogical subject, inducted into hegemonic behaviours and rhetoric and constrained by socially acceptable genres that limit the sets of meaning that can be expressed (Christie, 1995: 241).

However, unlike Foucault in his earlier writings that we have considered, Bernstein extends this analysis beyond a purely determinative position. In his 1990 work he shows how certain discourses are tightly classified, in which case the subject positions within them will be highly restricted whereas, on the other hand, more open discourse will offer a greater variety of voices. Crucial for the present paper, however, is the fact that the message of any given discursive event is always *framed* by the place in which it occurs which will determine the degree to which voices external to the discourse may participate. In cases where a discourse fails to dominate or fully expropriate the others present a '*potential discursive gap*' (Bernstein, 1996: 44) may arise in which the assumptions of the dominant discourse are partially exposed.

This potential gap may arise more often in pedagogic discourse than elsewhere because, as we have seen, in its effort to regulate knowledge, educational discourse is forced into an irreducibly interdiscursive approach. The very process of pedagogizing the learner may, therefore, reveal the values upon which regulative educational discourse is founded and threaten powerful interests (Bernstein, 1996: 45). Indeed, discursive gaps frequently open up in educational institutions, being partly revealed in counter-cultures opposed to the official curriculum, which is why institutes of higher education often become sites of social change and in some cases revolution. Indeed a postmodern approach to CDA sees all discursive events to some extent as being a moment in the struggle over whether the social world is maintained as it is or transformed (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 32) and it is to this more dialectic approach to discourse that we now turn.

3.3.2 Dialogic Philosophy and Place

Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (1975) whilst in no sense summative of his life-long philosophical work is a *magnum opus* that expounds his dialogic philosophy. This is pertinent to the present study because like dialogic (Slattery, 2006) and place-orientated (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) curricula it regards knowledge, discourse and identity as emerging from concrete situations (Gadamer, 1975: 18-19). For Gadamer the induction of young people into the practical knowledge of society, the *phronesis* of the *sensus communis* (ibid.) is at least as important as the acquisition of abstract scientific knowledge. In this respect, he regards any dichotomy between *inductivism* and *deductivism* as false. Rather, he perceives both understanding that is acquired through the application of universal statements, and that which is acquired through the consideration of the specificities of life, as being fused in the lived experiences of people in the world (1975: 34-35). Participation in each unique hermeneutic event (visual, plastic or dramatic art, literature or quotidian discourse) is simultaneously a situated encounter with universals and a specific contribution to their social prefabrication (1975: 85). This is an epistemological perspective taken up by the contemporary grounded theorist Charmaz who uses Peirce's (1958, 1992) term *abductive reasoning* for this fusion in which the researcher considers all possible explanations for the data, forms hypotheses and then checks them against the data in a cyclical process (Charmaz, 2006: 103-104). According to Gadamer, the common hermeneutic reality of daily life is similar; although we tend to approach the world with *singular* anticipatory fore-meanings, we must still compare these to our concrete experiences in a constant task of understanding (Gadamer, 1975: 270). In this manner each one of us works out of a meaning horizon (Gadamer, 1975: 370) formed by a matrix of prejudices which amongst other things determines that we ask certain questions about the world and not others (ibid.). Understanding occurs when we achieve, through

language, a temporary situated fusion of our own meaning horizon with that of our interlocutors (ibid.). In Gadamer's words,

"To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were (1975: 371)."

For Gadamer, then, all understanding is transformative. It is not only when understanding fails to occur, when our anticipations are not met and meaning horizons do not fuse sufficiently, that our prejudgments must be brought into question. Rather, in quotidian hermeneutic processes, as we open up reality through questioning the world from within our historical meaning horizon we are constantly forced to reconsider our prejudices about the world and shift our horizon (Gadamer, 1975: 370). In other words Gadamer perceives Bernstein's potential discursive gap as being ever present in our daily discursive practices.

Gadamer argues that whilst such hermeneutic processes of understanding necessarily *interpellate* (Janks & Ivanic, 1992) us into normative conventional discourse behind which lie hegemonic interests, it does not preclude critique (1975: 350-351). On the contrary, language, although always situated in and to varying degrees determined by unique dialogic events, offers a virtual cognitive site, a parallel universe, in which human reason can take a critical stance and question the prejudices which constitute its present knowledge of the world (ibid.).

Gadamer's epistemology is, however, not only transformative with inherent critical potential, it is also emergent in nature. The necessarily hermeneutic process of understanding ensures that we do not first conceive of the world and then put it into words but rather that our conceptions emerge out of unique situated discourse (1975: 370.). Gadamer's dialogic approach leads him not only to an emergent epistemology but also to an emergent and place-orientated ontological perspective. He regards identity as an incomplete process (1975: 301) of becoming self-evident from within the *places*; family, society and state, in which a person exists (1975: 278). Hence, dialogic philosophy provides a critical and to some extent place-orientated foundation for the study of TESOL discourses.

3.3.3 Deconstructionism and Place

In a more radical fashion than Gadamer, Derrida's (2001) deconstructionist philosophy also regards knowledge and identity as emerging from discourse (2001: 8-9; 11). Like Gadamer, Derrida believes that the meanings of the world and self are neither to be found before nor after but *in* the discursive act itself which differentiates the individual and things in the world from the totality of possibilities (2001: 12). Osberg and Biesta (2008) take up this radical dual emergentist approach and explicitly relate it to *place*.

Osberg and Biesta see both knowledge and identity as simultaneous events that *'take place'* (2008: 321). Like the critical geographer Soja (1989) they seek to unpack the opaque assumptions embedded in this common phrase by showing how identity emerges as people literally *take place*, in the sense of possessing *space*. As we have seen, this occurs through a hermeneutic process of bringing socially constructed assumptions to bear on the interpretation of the *spaces* into which we emerge and thus transforming them into meaningful *places* with the associated social relations inherent to them. Hence, neither knowledge nor identity are fixed entities that we can represent as types within universal classes of things to be learned but unique temporal experiences shaped by the places into which they emerge (Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 321). This must, therefore, be the case with ESOL acquisition; if linguistic knowledge and the identity of the language learner are contingent on the *places* in which they come into being TESOL curricula should be designed not on the basis of fixed language content and pre-determined outcomes or even planned teaching and learning processes but by a systematic consideration of the *places* into which language learning emerges (Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 323).

Therefore, as a necessary corollary of Derrida's emergentist philosophy, Osberg and Biesta believe that *place* should be the primary organizing principle of the curriculum (2008: 323) and they go on to explore the fundamental nature of the *places* into which knowledge and self must emerge. Quoting Caputo (1987: 289) who closely echoes Derrida, they see such places as being characterized by *'disruption, irruption and solicitation'* (Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 323) which must exhibit different assumptions about the world to that of learners and teachers and expose them to the challenge of otherness (Biesta 2006: 97; see also Rampton, 1999: 331). This should lead to a curriculum that is provocative and charged with difficulties (Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 325) much like the dialogic curriculum proposed by Slattery (2006). In contrast to this, the conventional contemporary classroom is more like a *'magic womb'* (Illich, 1970: 32) in which experience of ordinary life is suspended until the learner is appropriately formed ready to be delivered into a pre-interpreted society. As such, it is largely isolated from conflict and struggle, and knowledge created in the crucible of real life communities of practice is re-contextualized, bowdlerized and abstracted into generalizations ready for consumption and memorization. At its most extreme, it is a place most likely to reproduce knowledge and identities rather than bring about a transformed vision of the world and self.

And yet, as we noted above with the nascent place orientation of some critical curriculum theorists such as Grundy (1989) and Young (1987) there appears to be a double bind here. The world beyond the classroom is also increasingly homogenized and divested of difference, with public *space* being hermeneutically transformed by hegemonic groups into private *places* such

as the shopping mall and cinema dominated by commercial interests and values (Biesta, 2006: 113). In a corrective to a place-orientated approach to learning, which seeks to break out of the classroom, Osberg and Biesta's solution to this double bind is to regard the classroom as the last remaining refuge for true learning; fully exploiting the inherent interdiscursivity of pedagogic discourse it seeks a positive transformation of Illich's magic womb from a place of incarceration into a public and worldly place that expands the gaps between discourses and incorporates difference, otherness, provocation and difficulty in order for new knowledge and people to emerge (Osberg & Biesta, 2008: 324).

However, as we have seen, such a refuge, even reshaped under the guidance of a critical pedagogue, will still be threatened by hegemonic recontextualizing forces that only allow discourse, knowledge and identity to emerge in the specific place of the classroom with all the deixical, linguistic and relational limitations associated with it. In this respect, I believe Osberg and Biesta's dichotomy between the classroom and the community is a false one. Rather, if we wish new identities and discourse to emerge with sustainable and just social relations we must create entirely *new places* by bringing about the interpenetration of the classroom by the community and the community by the classroom. To achieve this, members from a broad range of communities of practice must participate in curriculum activities with students and teachers, whilst students and teachers along with other stakeholders of educational institutions such as administrative officers and managers must take on roles in the community that have hitherto not been possible from such subject positions. Such dissolution of boundaries between the places of educational institutions and the public places of the community will reinterpret space into *new places* from within which transformative educational processes, identities and discourse can emerge.

Derived from Derrida's construct of *difference* (2001) Osberg and Biesta's understanding that discourse, knowledge and identity necessarily emerge through places of disturbance (2008: 323) is fully consonant with CDA. Fairclough shows how it is generally only when the relationship between the discourse member and her interpretative resources (MR) is problematic that the axiological assumptions that drive social practice are exposed (1989: 165). This occurs at certain points of time and place in discourse production and interpretation where interlocutors hesitate, reformulate or hedge as they struggle to appropriate actual discursive events to their normative assumptions. Such points of difficulty or '*cruces*' (Fairclough, 1992: 230) illuminate practices that would otherwise remain naturalized in discourse and go unnoticed (*ibid.*) and provide opportunities for us to transform our beliefs about the world and shift our meaning horizon.

Such a view of emergence as a disturbance is also consistent with the reflective data collection method employed in this paper. I have asked participants to reflect openly on their ESOL acquisition processes, so they might subsequently have the opportunity to confront their own views on the specific issue of place-based acquisition. In this way I may have problematized their assumptions and directed them toward professional development and perhaps a transformed view of their learning (Giroux, 1988).

3.4 Empirical Literature

3.4.1 Place-based TESOL Studies

There are few empirical studies dealing directly with place-based ESOL acquisition. The only paper available to me at the time of writing is an early one by Blackburn (1971). Inspired by her own place-based experience of learning French, Blackburn turned to the community beyond the classroom in her fieldwork experiments with ESOL students in the US. She encouraged her students to use a tripartite approach of reading about contemporary issues at home, discussing them in the classroom and venturing into the community to interview people in the places they inhabited. She found that this complementary place relationship provided students with intrinsic motivation, improved the accuracy of their writing, freed them from authoritative views on social issues and encouraged them toward a critical approach to learning (1971: 253). Her experiences led her to conclude that the community was the best language laboratory available for TESOL (1971: 251). Blackburn's focus on social issues combined with attempts at breaking down the barriers between classroom and community is consistent with Freire's critical pedagogy (1972) which invites learners to be active and critical participants in their society and challenge unequal social relations (Izadinia, 2009). The interpenetration of classroom and community learning she proposed foreshadows by four decades the work of Slattery (2006), Gruenewald & Smith (2003; 2008), Sobel (2004) and Umphrey (2006). I also refer to Lam's (2000) case study of internet learning and identity formation with reference to the virtual places that emerge in the study. However, to the best of my knowledge no specifically place-based empirical TESOL studies have previously been conducted in the UAE or MENA region.

I, therefore, draw on Canagarajah's critical study (1993) of Sri Lankan learners' complex forms of opposition to classroom learning. There is also a collection of studies that deals with power relations in TESOL classrooms in the Middle East (Wachob, 2009). This is directly relevant to research question 4 which seeks to understand the properties of the TESOL classroom in relation to the broader community. Chapters 2 & 3 of this collection specifically deal with inequality of agency over the allocation of space in TESOL classrooms. Kim (2009: 17-36)

explicitly regards the lack of space for learning English amongst African refugees in Egypt as a key determining factor in their success or failure. Jackson (2009: 37-54) considers power over the arrangement of space in TESOL classrooms to be significant for acquisition because of its influence on affective variables. Chapters 4 & 5 consider inequality of agency over topic and learning processes something highly pertinent to the current study which finds increased learner agency a key characteristic of place-based learning. Fairly (2009: 55-74) follows Apple (1979), McKernan (2008), Slattery (2006) and Osberg and Biesta (2008) in regarding the classroom as the prime place for critically orientated discussion. Matbouli (2009: 75-96) directly considers the degree and nature of student agency over learning processes in TESOL classrooms of the region. She shows how this is emerging differently according to gender but continues to be situated within traditional views of the teacher's overall authority and power over knowledge. This is a perspective which confirms the findings of this study with regard to the relatively low levels of student agency within TESOL classrooms of the region.

The weakness of these studies, however, revealed in the collection's title, is that it tends to situate critical pedagogy '*squarely in the classroom*' (Wachob, 2009: 1). In its introduction Izadinia (2009: 8), in acknowledgment of the seminal work of Freire (1972), notes that value change can only come about when inequality is challenged both in the classroom and the broader society. However, the classroom focus of the volume tends to lead to this being overlooked and a failure to enunciate how the classroom, being embedded in broader hegemonic sociological values, will always tend to limit critical approaches. The current paper is partly an attempt to rebalance this and show that critical pedagogy becomes transformational only when it is combined with a curriculum that has a place-based organizing principle that can dissolve the boundary between the classroom and the local community and create a wholly new range of places.

3.4.2 Place-based General Education Studies

Due to this general lack of specifically TESOL oriented empirical studies I have turned to place-based *general education* studies to better understand this approach and how it might be applied to TESOL.

A North American school of place-based education emerged in the early 1990s, partly influenced by the Orion Society established in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1992, and has grown rapidly in the last decade. Whilst much has been written about its purposes and benefits (e.g. Sobel, 2004; McLaughlin & Blank, 2004; Gruenewald; 2003) few empirical studies have been conducted to gauge its effect. Those that exist are mostly longitudinal institutional

case studies. For example, Sorensen (2008) describes the STAR (Service to All Relations) school project that was initiated near Flagstaff, Arizona in 2001. This gives detailed accounts of curriculum projects that led Native American children out of their classrooms into the rural community to investigate specific historic events from their own perspective. Handing agency to the learners in this manner led to them becoming '*meaning makers for the community*' (Sorensen, 2008: 51) as they reinterpreted history through drama and writing. It brought about intrinsic motivation, retention of knowledge, increased self-worth and a desire for life-long learning. Bartsch (2008) describes urban community-based projects at Skowhegan High School in Maine that brought about similar outcomes. In order to prevent youth flight from the town, students were given agency within the community to investigate the reasons for the collapse of local industries. As in Sorensen, this led to deep learning, re-interpretation of social processes and student empowerment. Neither study, however, provides significant quantitative or qualitative data to support its claims.

Dubel & Sobel (2008) offer a more balanced case study that discusses and interprets qualitative data arising out of their successful attempts to integrate place-based approaches into status quo teacher training at the Education Department of Antioch New England Graduate School. Leading students out of the classroom, for example into the local landscape, offered them agency to develop their own projects and enabled them to investigate the geological and social history of slate mining in collaboration with academic and commercial stakeholders. This not only facilitated effective learning of geological and sociological content but also brought about high levels of motivation, critical thinking, reinterpretation of knowledge and increased communication skills. Cameron (2008) provides a focused case study of his own experiences in place-responsive education with undergraduate and postgraduate students in universities in Australia. His focus on enabling his students to critically reflect (2008: 295) on the nature of places of learning is consonant with the current study. Moreover, his ability to reflect on his own attempt to penetrate established educational institutions with place-based approaches gives significant insight into the conflicts of interests that exist between the Academy and those who seek to critically reinterpret the status of the classroom (2008: 303). Morris (2008) presents a similar attempt to establish a centre of community based leadership explicitly situated in the process of economic globalization and notes similar conflicts of interests between undervalued informal learning and bureaucratized formal learning.

An important European initiative is the Life in Place (LIP) project based in the University of Oulu Finland, led by Professor Leena Syrjala. The work of the LIP team seeks to investigate how people might re-inhabit rural places in diverse ways. In common with the present study, it

focuses on facilitating this process by understanding the nature of student agency over learning (Lanas, 2011), and discovering how increased agency can enable them to reinterpret place through language.

A common concern of all these empirical studies is the relationship between classroom, community, discourse and place. A common finding is that increased learner agency is a determining characteristic of place-based education and that this is highly facilitative of learning. This is fully consonant with the current study. However, the complex relationship between place, language and learning, and the long term nature of place-based learning outcomes tend to lead researchers toward descriptive, longitudinal case studies. I believe there is also a need for more immediate cross-sectional research that provides firm, data-driven evidence of the importance of *place* in education in order to confirm the experiences described by place-oriented pedagogues. The present study in relation to ESOL seeks to address this need through discourse analysis.

3.4.3 Classroom, Community and Interim Educational Studies

Several researchers have recognized fundamental differences between ESOL learners' discourse in the classroom and the community. For example, van Lier (1982) shows how self-correction in the community often transmutes into correction by an omniscient teacher within the unequal power relations of the TESOL classroom. Van Lier recommends that teachers postpone error correction in order to more closely imitate real life contexts of use (1982: 167). Rampton et al, (2002) argue that etic approaches to classroom discourse taken by Conversation Analysis (Schegloff, 1977; Duff, 2002) can only be explicated through an emic understanding of how they contrast to discourse in the community. This confirms the view of the current study which regards the classrooms of Al Gharbia as a set of places embedded in local, national and global economic and cultural processes and reaffirms the need for the sociological level of Critical Discourse Analysis. Field & Spence (2000), who researched into the importance of informal learning in Northern Ireland, confirm the findings of this study that the interpenetration of classroom-based formal learning and community-based informal learning is likely to lead to the most efficacious learning processes.

Others have confirmed the construct of Interim Educational Places and identified a lack of research into the language acquisition that occurs there. For example, Johnson (1983) argued that the informal, social, language-acquisition environment at school should be viewed as a manipulable variable by researchers (1983: 57). Rampton has noted that the school classroom is only one of numerous spaces available within educational institutions for the negotiation of identity and culture (2002: 378) and undertaken research into language acquisition that occurs

in the Interim Educational place of the school playground (1999). This understanding of the place-based emergentism of identity and the dynamism of culture within schools and colleges has been available for several decades. For example, Fathman (1976) confirms the complementary relationship between classroom learning and Interim Educational places that emerges from the current study by showing how the greatest rates of English acquisition occur when TESOL syllabi are integrated into the whole school program including extracurricular activities (1976: 440) in settings where the use of English is encouraged for the purposes of meaningful and effective communication (1976: 433). In spite of this early evidence for the effectiveness of place-based ESOL acquisition the classroom has remained dominant. How and why the classroom has become naturalized within global TESOL practice in this fashion emerges in the following analysis and discussion.

Methodology

4.1 Aims

This study has five aims. The first aim is to assess the level of awareness participants have of the significance of the places in which their ESOL acquisition occurred. The second aim is to identify the specific places participants regard as important for their ESOL acquisition. The third aim is to identify some of the key properties exhibited by these places. The fourth aim is to assess the role in ESOL acquisition of the classroom and other places within educational institutions and understand how they relate to places within the broader community. The fifth aim is to assess the level of critical awareness participants possess about the places in which their acquisition processes occurred.

4.2 Research Framework

4.2.1 Philosophical Orientation

This study is orientated toward post-modernism, which tolerates multiple, incommensurate meanings (Derrida, 1967; Slattery, 2006), and social constructivism (Popper, 1959; Kuhn, 1962; Berger & Luckman, 1967; Blumer, 1969; Gadamer, 1975) which seeks to explain how such meanings emerge out of social interaction. It takes the position that human beings are defined by, "*being-in-the-world*" with others (Heidegger, 1962: 78) and interactively symbolize their experience (Blumer, 1969) such that their identities are shaped from within the specific places they inhabit (Gruenewald, 2003a; Osberg & Biesta, 2008). It regards epistemology and ontology as emergent within the horizon (Gadamer, 1975) of these existing social structures. Social structures are cross-sectional views of processes that emerge out of quotidian experience. In them lie infinite possibilities for the transformation of society, culture, meaning and identity (Gadamer, 1975; Derrida, 1967; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Discourse is the primary interface between these social structures and the processes that give rise to them. The manner of our participation in discourse determines whether we live unquestioning lives and reproduce (Foucault, 1972) *being-in-the-world-with-others* or re-engage with the infinite (Gadamer, 1975: 106; Derrida, 2001) and exploit the gap between the meanings language makes available and those yet to be thought (Bernstein, 1996). Whilst language is the most developed semiotic system we possess (Eggins, 2004) this study shows how it both enables and limits the meanings we can express in specific places and thus mediates our existence. How TESOL practice in particular is approached would appear to be of crucial importance. Does it merely lead to the reproduction of ideas and relationships or does it raise awareness of the possible new forms of existence that may emerge from the acquisition of another

language? The philosophical concern of this paper is, thus, the degree to which the places in which ESOL is acquired determine learning to be a normative or transformational experience.

4.2.2 Theoretical Orientation

This paper takes relativist, qualitative and interpretative stances toward educational research. It regards English language education as a value driven practice (Pring, 2004) and TESOL research as sociological investigation into pedagogic modes of "*being-in-the-world*" (Heidegger, 1962: 88).

4.2.2.1 Relative Stance

Limited objectivity (Popper, 2002) might be achieved with regard to the nomothetic patterning of pedagogic practice (e.g. scheduling, regulation of movement, organization of space, and standardization of information) but to access the deep seated values upon which TESOL practice is based needs a different approach. Such values evolve over generations as human beings interact within their world, symbolize meaning (Blumer, 1967) and deposit an axiological layer of largely sub-consciousness beliefs. Such assumptions about education are relative to various human groups; e.g. nations, religious communities, social classes and institutions etc. and the various communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) within them. The aims of educational research are, therefore, to bring these relative sets of assumptions to consciousness, enable educators to critically reflect on them and in turn transform the practices to which they relate. The consequence of this axiological relativity for educational researchers is that as members of specific communities of practice themselves, they have no objective ground from which to work. Their responsibility lies in an on-going effort to become explicitly aware of their own beliefs about the world, recognize the relativity of their assumptions and state them as clearly as possible in their work.

4.2.2.2 Qualitative Stance

Quantifying the distribution of certain values across a population of teachers and students, as measured on a survey instrument for example, might indicate their conscious perceptions about what motivates their practice. However, to enable the identification, description, and interpretation of their axiological assumptions and to allow for transformational reflection, qualitative language-based data are required. Language does not provide precise definitions of our ideas about the world but prototypical (Aitchison, 1987) resources (words, lexical phrases, rhetorical structures, schemata etc.) which cue our meanings largely through the assumptions they encapsulate. This characteristic of language not only frees us from having to constantly re-define our relationship to the world and each other in each interaction but also offers the

possibility, through critical linguistic analysis (Fairclough, 1989) of discovering *within* the discourse of participants the assumptions that drive their educational practice.

4.2.2.3 Interpretative Stance

The forgoing indicates educational research to be characteristically interpretative. Through the hermeneutic process of making the researcher's axiology explicit and bringing this to bear on the linguistic data we expose and make sense of the beliefs, values and assumptions upon which TESOL practitioners act. Qualitative educational research is, thus, an attempt to fuse the meaning horizons (Gadamer, 1975) of participants with that of the researcher in an effort to understand the values that drive educational practice and, through critical reflection, create new knowledge that might transform them.

4.3 Methodological Components

This section describes the three complementary methodological components employed in this study and their implications for data collection and analysis. These are;

- An exploratory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006; Shields & Hassan, 2006; Creswell, 2006 & 2009)
- Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1992a, 1992b; Van Leeuwen, 1996; Van Dijk, 1996 & 2003, Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999)
- Place-Based Education (Gruenewald, 2003a & 2003b; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Umphrey, 2007)

In addition, this section briefly operationalizes some key terms so they can be understood with reference to this study in a consistent manner.

4.3.1 An Exploratory Approach

Exploratory research examines newly identified problems through the study of a relatively small sample group. In general it employs qualitative approaches using text collected from in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2009), field research, semi-structured interviews, focus groups (Shields & Hassan, 2006: 316) and documents and archives (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 161-168; Charmaz, 2006: 37; Shields & Hassan, 2006: 316).

Exploratory research seeks to discover the significant characteristics of a problem that might be investigated further. It proceeds from a loosely defined working hypothesis that may or may not be supported by the research (Shields & Hassan, 2006: 320). It may be orientated toward immediate outcomes or to those that indicate further development. It may be employed after an extensive quantitative study has established general findings, in order to

explore the lived experiences (Charmaz, 2006; 166) of a few individual cases (Creswell, 2009: 12). Alternatively, it may focus on identifying key variables for use in studies of large representative samples that employ quantitative statistical methods with a view to producing more generalized findings (Creswell, 2009: 12). Qualitative oriented researchers may wish to conduct a range of intensive exploratory studies grounded in several different contexts so that the aggregated findings can be used to generate explanatory and predictive theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001; Charmaz, 2006).

Exploratory methods are appropriate when a problem has not yet been investigated with regard to a sample group (Creswell, 2006: 16) of a specific community of practice (Wenger, 1998). The latter case applies to the present study which seeks to understand how emerging place-based approaches in general education (Umphrey, 2007; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) might be applied to a particular TESOL community of practice, something which to the best of my knowledge has yet to be attempted. To maximize the exploratory nature of this study it employs open ended interviews in which participants are asked to reflect freely on their English language learning experiences.

4.3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is the central methodological component of this study and this section describes its characteristics and explains its relevance.

I have situated the exploration of place-based TESOL within the discourse of globalization because the assumptions of TESOL practitioners are determined by global economic and cultural processes (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). I make the axiological assumption that these processes distribute power over wealth, knowledge and space in a radically inequitable fashion.

I have, therefore, identified CDA as relevant for three reasons. Firstly, it is specifically critical in nature, in that its core interest is in the relationship between language and power (Fairclough, 1989). Secondly, it focuses on language as social practice. Thirdly, it views context as crucial in the meaningful analysis of language (Wodak & Meyer, 2005). The first two characteristics make CDA an appropriate methodology for research into institutional discourses, such as school and college based TESOL, because they possess potential for struggle over power (Wodak & Meyer, 2005: 2). The third characteristic is specifically appropriate for research primarily concerned with the places of learning.

Critical Discourse Analysis is a tripartite methodology that seeks to illuminate how ideological assumptions about unequal power relations are embedded in texts through the processes of text production, distribution and consumption and how these in turn are determined by broader social conditions. This multi-layered approach has enabled the researcher to expose, describe, interpret and explain the assumptions TESOL practitioners and students make about their places of learning.

This methodology consists of the following levels:

- *Textual Level - Descriptive*
 - Describes the formal properties of the text
 - *allows us to analyse the explicit ideologies embedded in text*
- *Discourse Practice Level - Interpretative*
 - Relates the text to the processes of production, distribution and consumption
 - *allows us to interpret the cognitive processes of discourse participants in order to analyse implicit ideologies embedded in text*
- *Social Practice Level - Explanatory*
 - Explains the social determination of discourse processes
 - *allows us to perceive interests that give rise to those ideologies embedded in text and discourse*

(Adapted from Fairclough, 1989 and Clark, 1992)

4.3.2.1 Textual Level

Any given text is constituted by signs that cue meanings and trace the social interactions and contexts upon which these meanings depend (Fairclough, 1989: 24; 1992a: 72; Eggins, 2004: 7; Halliday & Hassan, 1985: 111). Texts must, therefore, be distributed to members of discourse communities who share assumptions and situational frames of reference (Halliday & Hassan, 1985) which they can bring to the interpretative process. To discover these assumptions, Fairclough proposes ten questions we might employ to interrogate text at the level of vocabulary, grammar and textual structure (1989: 110-111). I have attempted to adapt these to discover how the construct of *place* is embedded in participant discourse.

Vocabulary

1. What experiential value is given to place; how is place ideated?
 - a. How is place demarcated?
 - b. What classification schemes are used to represent place?
 - c. Are ideologically contested words used to represent place?
 - d. Is the construct of place reworded or over-worded?
 - e. What ideologically significant meaning relations (synonymy, hyponymy, synecdoche, antonymy & homonymy) are given to place?
2. What relational values do words have?
 - a. Are euphemistic expressions used to represent place?
 - b. Are markedly formal or informal words used to represent place?
3. What expressive (subjective) values do words referring to place have? How is the subject positioned with regard to place?
4. What metaphors are used to represent place?

Grammar

5. What experiential values do grammatical features have; how do they ideate place?
 - a. How is transitivity negotiated; i.e. what types of process and participant predominate in the treatment of place?
 - b. Are the types of processes related to place what they seem?
 - c. Is agency toward place unclear?
 - d. Is place nominalized?
 - e. Are sentences which deal with place active or passive?
 - f. Are sentences that deal with place positive or negative?
6. What relational values do the grammatical features concerning place have?
 - a. What modes (declarative, grammatical questions, imperatives, modals and conditionals) are used in association with place?
 - b. Is grammatical metaphor used with regard to place?
 - c. Are the pronouns 'we', 'they' & 'you' used in relation to place and if so, how?
7. What expressive (subjective) values do grammatical features concerning place have?
 - a. Are there significant grammatical features of expressive modality that position the subject in certain ways toward place?
8. How are simple sentences that deal with place linked together?
 - a. What logical connectors are used to connect sentences that deal with place?
 - b. Are complex sentences that deal with place characterized by coordination or subordination?

- c. Is parataxis used in the treatment of place?
- d. What endophoric means are used for referring to place; what exophoric means are used for referring to place?

Textual Structures

- 9. What interactional conventions are used with regard to place?
 - a. Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others when place is spoken about?
- 10. What larger-scale structures does the text have with regard to place?

(After Fairclough, 1989: 110-111)

I have attempted to apply items 1 – 8 of this framework directly to participant discourse and allow place awareness, the significant places of acquisition and their properties to emerge in order to answer the research questions.

Item 9 deals with the power structure of turn taking but as all data was similarly structured around co-constructed reflective interviews this has not been applied directly in the analysis. It is, however, of methodological concern because whilst I aimed to draw out reflections about place and consciously sought to offer long turns to interlocutors, allowing them to continue to the maximum, my limited and well intentioned input became an intervening factor in the emergent discourse. A characteristic example of this was in an early interview when Saif employed the term 'environment' which I immediately noted as an *in vivo* term with place-based potential and took up in the ensuing reflections. It is not clear that Saif would have thematized this term as he did in subsequent discourse if I had not focused on it in this manner. Becoming aware of my overt influence over discourse in an early interview enabled me to consciously try to avoid subsequent occurrences although my presence and any interjections would have continued to determine participant reflections to some extent.

With respect to question 10, the larger scale structure of the discourse, an interview form was decided by the researcher. Participants may have preferred to provide written data or recorded monologues produced in private. These alternative forms of data may have offered greater agency over their participation and affected the manner in which the places of their ESOL acquisition emerged within the discourse. Perhaps a range of data collection processes should have been encouraged and this will be addressed in future research.

4.3.2.2 Discourse Practice Level

At the textual level of methodology we have seen that formal features of a text have what Fairclough (1989: 140), roughly following Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Hassan, 1985; Eggins, 2004), calls experiential (field), relational (tenor), expressive (subject) or connective (logical) values and these in turn relate the text to social practice as content (knowledge and beliefs), social relationships and identities (Fairclough, 1989: 140). However, the manner in which textual features realize these elements of social practice cannot be directly extrapolated from the text but has to be interpreted according to its context of situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). CDA therefore situates text within the processes of text production, distribution, consumption and interpretation.

The methodology employed here seeks to achieve this interpretative understanding by using the prominent features of the textual analysis above to provisionally indicate the possible assumptions about place that participants bring to their initial open reflections. These indicators formed the basis of follow up interviews which explicitly sought to explore participant assumptions about place in-depth. This second round of interviews sought to confirm or discount provisionally indicated assumptions as well as allow others to emerge. The aim was to establish a set of properties adequate to describe participant assumptions about place in TESOL acquisition.

4.3.2.3 Social Practice Level

Having brought to light and described the assumptions made about place at the textual and discourse level the third level of Critical Discourse Analysis is concerned with explaining what sets of interests in society have given rise to these assumptions. In order to achieve this I have conducted a brief sociological analysis at the institutional, local and national political levels.

The key issues to be considered are the sets of interests in the college; managerial, faculty, staff and students etc. These interests have been set against the backdrop of the sets of interests in the local community; familial, commercial and business etc. which in turn have been related to the nature of the national cultural and political order.

4.3.3 Place-Based Perspective

Place-Based education regards the human being as fundamentally a 'place-maker' and employs place as a construct for social analysis (Gruenewald, 2003b). It recognizes the manner in which geographical spaces acquire symbolic meanings for social actors and how this interpretative process creates *places* that determine their behaviour; their physical proximity

to each other, their movement, social relations, access to discourses and indeed, whether they speak or stay silent in various contexts of situation (Van Dijk 1996, 2003).

In keeping with CDA, some place-based education theorists consider that global space has been colonized (Gruenewald & Smith; 2008) and hence turned into a set of places that perpetuate powerful interests. For them place-based curricula create an awareness of this colonization and enable communities to re-inhabit their geography (Gruenewald & Smith: 2008) going beyond tacit occupation of other peoples' places to become conscious place-makers in their own right. Such a place-based orientation uniquely complements CDA because it explicitly recognizes how dominant discourses colonize other discourses in order to invest them with powerful interests (Fairclough, 1992a: 72; Gruenewald, 2003b: 641). Like CDA, therefore, place-based education regards *place* as a social construction (Fairclough, 1989: 50-51; Gruenewald, 2003b: 626).

This study methodologically weds CDA with a place-based perspective by conducting a critical analysis of TESOL learner discourse whilst maintaining a focus on the key tenets of place-based sociological theory which are: human beings as 'place-makers'; place as sociologically constructed space; the colonization of places by hegemonic interest and the re-inhabitation of place through critical awareness of the process of place-making.

4.4 Sampling Strategy

This study sought to gain in-depth understanding of the awareness adult learners of ESOL have of the significance of their places of learning through intensive discourse analysis. It was impracticable for a single researcher to attempt this with the whole student-teacher population of the institutional context. Moreover, in order to achieve the stated exploratory aims, it was sufficient to collect data from a relatively small sample of participants. This study is, therefore, limited to 5 successful young adult students of ESOL within Al Gharbia Colleges, 5 successful learners of ESOL among the teaching faculty and, in keeping with a place-based orientation, 5 successful learners of ESOL from among prominent persons in the locale.

For both methodological and practical reasons I have chosen participants that might be termed 'successful' language learners. Methodologically, participants who can effectively use ESOL in their studies, teaching, professional tasks and everyday interactions will have experienced various successful learning processes. It is these processes I wish to explore with particular reference to how the *places* in which they occurred may have contributed to their success. Practically, as I am not proficient in Arabic which is the mother tongue of most of the participants, selecting proficient users of English allowed me to collect data of sufficient quality without the need for translation. However, I have not applied benchmarked criteria to the

participants' English ability. Participants needed only to be willing and linguistically able to reflect in spoken English on their ESOL learning processes. Although this is a limitation of the study, I do not wish to measure the value added to learning by an intervention made between a pre- and post-test of language ability and therefore such a broad measure is adequate for the exploratory purposes of the study.

4.4.1 The Participants and Places of Interview

The pseudonyms and gender of the three segments of the sample are laid out below.

- 5 English teaching faculty
 - 3 female (Eva, Maha & Saeeda)
 - 2 male (Ghareeb & Hadi)
- 5 speakers of English in the local community
 - 2 females (Budoor & Fakhra)
 - 3 males (Ghaleb, Mohammed & Saif)
- 5 current HCT students in Western Region HCT Colleges
 - 3 females (Delilah, Mariam & Shamsa)
 - 2 males (Abdullah & Khalil)

(8 females/7 males)

More detailed descriptions of each participant can be found at Appendix 1.

4.4.2 Interview Statistics

A total of 30 interviews, 2 each with 15 different participants, were conducted. The total number of transcribed words was approximately 119, 750. The total elapsed time of interview recordings was approximately 10 hours. The length of individual interviews ranged from 11 to 48 minutes.

4.5 Data Collection

In the first instance this study attempted to appraise levels of awareness, so initial approaches avoided reference to the construct of place of learning in ESOL to prevent falsely raising awareness and becoming an intervening variable. Two separate rounds of interviews were therefore conducted; a general reflection followed by a specifically place-based one. The initial reflective interviews were recorded on a laptop computer using Audacity software, subsequently transcribed and saved in Microsoft Word documents. There was no prefabricated protocol. I merely prompted each participant to tell me freely about their experience of learning English. I was confident that places would emerge from these

reflections as learning must always 'take place' somewhere. I rarely needed to intervene to maintain the reflective process as participants spoke at length and with alacrity. My interventions were mainly to pause and focus reflection at junctures where places of learning emerged but without specifically mentioning them.

After the initial interview, preliminary analyses of the data were made and these were taken to the second interviews as points of reference for further exploration. In the early cases such as Saif, Ghaleb and Mohammed, these analyses were thorough and far ranging and shaped the way I approached all subsequent analyses. In later cases, such as Budoor, Hadi and Eva and the 3 female students Mariam, Shamsa and Delilah, preliminary analysis took the form of brief notes of specific places and their properties that had emerged from initial interviews. This shift in process occurred for both methodological and practical reasons. Firstly, I was able to carry the overall structure of analysis achieved at length from the earlier interviews in my head. Secondly, it was necessary to press ahead with pre-arranged interviews and not delay unduly by conducting time consuming extensive preliminary analysis at the risk of losing the commitment of participants to my research.

The purpose of the second round was to explore the properties of places that were mentioned in the first interviews as well as to allow others to emerge. In addition, these second interviews specifically sought to explore any extant critical awareness of the significance of place in participant discourse. At this stage I had already established the level of general awareness of place and, therefore, explicit treatment of this construct was no longer an intervening variable but fully legitimate with reference to answering my final critically orientated research question (5).

4.5.1 The Socially Constructed Nature of Interviews

I am aware of issues concerning the validity and reliability of interview data in qualitative studies (e.g. deMarrais, 2004; Brenner, 2006). I do not consider what arises in interview interactions as transparently representing the interlocutor's values and beliefs (Alvesson, 2003). Rather, I regard the interviews upon which this study is based as temporized co-constructions (Roulston; 2011a; 2011b: 89) which illuminate such values and beliefs in complex ways determined by the emerging roles of the researcher and participants, which in turn are conditioned by, among other things, expectations raised by the places in which they occur.

A good example of such co-construction occurred in Shamsa's second interview when we sought to clarify what she meant by 'real life';

Researcher: ... *um you said that you want to implement English in real life (yes) yeah ... how does real life different from the classroom? Wh... what's (er) different between studying English in the classroom and in real life? What do you mean by real life?*

Shamsa: *er, real life I mean when for example I er if I travel to the foreign country that's all environment around me they speak English (yeah). They don't understand Arabic so that make me more stronger to er to built what I learn. To get er new experience from them, know their culture know if I er by you know by implement by see it by eyes*

Researcher: *yeah, by living it (not er, not)*

Shamsa: *yes, by living it (um, um). Not er at learning in classroom for example grammar something any text (yeah) that's what I mean*

Researcher: *not learning about language but using it (yes) in, in (that's what) the real life*

Shamsa: *that's what I want to say*

Researcher: *you agree with that, you give me the thumbs up for that one*

Shamsa: *yes - laughing*

Allowing ideas to emerge and be confirmed in this manner is sufficient for the current exploratory purposes and well supported by the grounding of the study which recognizes all discourse as being emergent within specific place-based social interaction.

I evaluate the participant reflections of this study as valid. The grounds for this claim are not romantic (Silverman, 2000; Alvesson, 2003: 16) but based on the fact that the opportunity this research offered participants to reflect on their learning processes was taken up with a self-focused fascination that frankly surprised me. These qualitative data are not replicable truths but honest attempts on the part of the researcher and participants to make sense of their learning experiences. As such they feed back into their lives in a manner likely to increase awareness of the significance of the places where they teach, learn and work and provide a logical basis for professional development.

4.5.2 Transcription System

I transcribed the recordings verbatim including pronunciation, syntactical and lexical errors. I attempted to indicate overlapping speech to a certain extent (as in the example above) by arranging the text in separate blocks for participant and interviewer and putting any overlapping interjections in brackets and in italic font. Otherwise the arrangement of paragraphs, sentences and other features is arbitrary; (see Appendix 2).

4.6 Data Analysis

A manual process of analysis was used working through the data in Microsoft word documents to discover all the *meaningful chunks* (Miller, 1956; Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992; Lewis, 1993) which refer to the places of learning in ESOL. All pertinent chunks were placed into categories and given descriptive labels. These labels use gerundives where possible in order to engender a sense of social interaction and maintain a focus on the agency of the participant (Charmaz, 2006).

Manual document search and coding was used rather than computer applications because, whilst this was time consuming and required considerable powers of concentration, it kept the researcher close to the data and helped avoid fragmented analyses (Locke, 2001) which might lose sight of the meaning inherent in the textual coherence of the participants' whole reflections. It enabled me to constantly compare (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) data within and across interviews.

The analytic process took on an approach similar to certain aspects of the constant comparative method of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 105-115; see also, Locke, 2001: 100-107). I used an *abductive* reasoning process (Peirce, 1958; Charmaz, 2006: 104) which simultaneously integrated inductive and deductive reasoning to develop a theory about the data grounded in the context of research. My initial categorization of data was always to some extent deductive because I inevitably brought my own axiological assumptions to the analytic process. However, I sought to make these assumptions explicit and maintain theoretical agnosticism (Henwood and Pigeon, 2003) by holding them in abeyance along with all other feasible explanations of the data as analysis progressed. I then continued to compare subsequent data with initial provisional categories trying to account for incoming data, making the categories increasingly saturated or subsuming them into new categories that emerged from on-going theorization. I generated a spiral of deduction, induction and further deduction which converted the texts of the data into theoretical concepts (Charmaz, 2006: 61); (see Appendix 3).

The relevant grammatical and lexical features of the data were coded through applying the first 8 points of the CDA framework. They were then provisionally categorized into groups that appeared to have similar functions with regard to place; e.g. representing place as a natural rather than a sociological phenomenon, ascribing agency toward place etc. As all the data to be analysed possess the textual structure of open reflective discourse, points 9-10 of the CDA framework, control over turn taking and large scale structure of the text, are not applied directly but considered for their methodological consequences.

4.7 Ethical Dimensions

After they had accepted initial informal requests, I provided participants with a written outline of my study and a consent form which assured anonymity and confidentiality and made it plain that they were free to withdraw from the project at any time. All participants signed this consent form and retained a copy whilst I retained a second signed copy. I also submitted a Certificate of Ethical Research and received its approval from the University of Exeter. An example of the consent form and the Certificate of Ethical Research are attached at Appendix 5.

4.7.1 Reflective Methodology

The reflective methodology helps ensure that a positive ethical dimension is structured into the study such that students, faculty and local stakeholders benefit from their participation. By employing open ended data collection methods the researcher invited participants to reflect deeply on their practices. Such reflection is acknowledged as a key method toward significant professional development (Densten & Gray 2001) and should lead to better future practices in teaching, learning and working within the context of the study.

4.7.2 Member Checking

The personal language learning experiences of the participants are at the core of this research and it was therefore ethically responsible to check the findings with them. This was done in brief e-mails sent after the completion of the analysis and discussion sections which asked participants to say if they disagree or agree with 7 brief statements about the main themes of the findings. Six (40%) of the participants responded; (see Appendix 4). In some cases informal face to face member checking interviews also took place (Eva, Ghareeb, Hadi and Maha). The claim that the reflective data collection method offers an inherent ethical dimension likely to increase professional development was confirmed by these participants. Other confirmations and caveats are reported in the conclusions section.

4.7.3 Potential Conflict of Interests

There was a concern that the institutional role of the researcher may come into conflict with the interests of the participants because I am the Chair of the foundations program and a prominent member of the management team in the institutional context. I have decision making power over a wide range of student affairs. Whilst the students in the sample do not report to me directly their willingness to reflect openly on issues relating to the places of their ESOL acquisition may be compromised by my elevated standing in the institution and the future power I may have over their siblings. I also have considerable decision making power over faculty members that might intervene in the nature and quality of their reflective data. A similar situation may pertain to the sample of local professional persons in that my position might be perceived as having influence over the future of their children and the development of the community in general.

These conflicts of interest were alleviated by the general level of openness exhibited in my institution. Relations between the Chair and faculty are based on a transparent appraisal system and a management principle of *'do not ask anyone to do what you are not prepared to do yourself'* (Quirke, 2012) and collaborative strategic planning (Edge, 2002). A student council is elected each semester. Members may attend management meetings and their views are taken account of. I also teach classes and relate in culturally appropriate ways to students who consistently give highly satisfactory appraisals of my work. Local stakeholders frequently meet to align the curriculum with local needs in similar transparent relationships.

This amelioration notwithstanding, effort has been made to prevent my position becoming an intervening variable in the study. I have stressed my role as a researcher and explicitly stated that information acquired will under no circumstances influence my decision making about individual students or faculty in the institution. The conduct of in-depth interviews has encouraged faculty and external stakeholders to choose the context of the interview in order to alter normative institutional power relations and influence the emerging discourse in favour of the participant. This was not possible with student participants, particularly females, for cultural reasons who were interviewed in my open office.

4.7.4 Challenges

The challenges of this study were both methodological and practical. Methodologically, the difficulty was to remain open to all modes of interpreting the data. Whilst the framework is critical and place-based I have made efforts to allow disconfirming data to emerge noting in particular the relative effectiveness of some tertiary classrooms. I have also taken care not to allow the issue of place to seep into the initial interviews. This was difficult because my

interest in place-based study had become known. I therefore chose relatively recent appointments and faculty outside my department who were less likely to be aware of my research topic.

Another issue was to manage the large amount of data generated by 30 interviews (119,750 words). This was achieved by focusing closely on the research questions and developing saturated properties that adequately accounted for the data (McLellan, et. al., 2003).

Several categories of place and their properties such as virtual places and the potential facilitative link between place-based ESOL practice and cultural change have only been dealt with lightly due to word count limitations. Geographic Place Demarcation also emerged as a significant category widely distributed throughout the data. This has significance in respect of the global context in which the study is situated and I conducted a considerable amount of analysis in this area. However, it has been completely excised from the final draft due to word limit constraints and because its relevance may be somewhat tangential to the research questions. It is considered as an avenue for further study in the final chapter.

Practically, an issue that may have arisen was the unavailability or unwillingness of initial participants to be involved in follow up interviews. In fact I was able to secure commitments from initial participants for further involvement in the study by keeping them informed of my progress through e-mail and developing a general interest in the project. All initial participants willingly offered a second interview. The response to member checking requests was less comprehensive although it tends to confirm the key findings.

4.8 Operationalization of Key Terms

4.8.1 Place

This study defines place as, 'interpreted space' (Gruenewald, 2003). In doing so it recognizes Euclidian space as mathematically definable but insists that every geographical location always possess a variety of socially constructed meanings for its inhabitants who divide it into so many institutional places (Fairclough, 1989: 150-151). Consequently, it regards the interrogation of place, "Where am I?", as the inevitable initial act in the production, distribution and consumption of text (ibid.). It therefore considers place as a primary determining factor of discourse.

4.8.2 Subject

In the grammatical sections of analysis I have found both Foucault's discourse perspective (1977; 2002) and Eggins' understanding of the subject in English (2004) to offer considerable insight into participant discourse. I take the Foucauldian view that subject positions are a limited set of places made available in socially constructed discourse that participants *must* occupy if they are to achieve interpretable communication. Eggins (2004) shows how these positions are constituted by three properties; direct agentive action which allows the participant to carry out the transitivity process and become the Actor; predication, which enables the participant to become the grammatical subject about whom something is predicated; thematization, which fronts the participant in the phrase and allows them to become thematic subject. Discourse participants can, therefore, inhabit subject positions creatively by selectively occupying these tripartite layers in order to enhance their own agency or attenuate that of others.

4.8.3 Text

Whilst text may be constituted by any set of physical objects employed in semiosis, for the purposes of this study the term is delimited to arrangements of the orthographic and phonemic signs of writing and speech made coherent by virtue of their endophoric organization and exophoric reference to their context of use (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). It is, thus, considered to be inherently situated.

4.8.4 Context

This study defines context at three levels after Malinowski (1935), Halliday and Hassan (1985) and Fairclough (1989). Firstly, the context of *situation*; the immediate social practices language is being employed to accomplish which are traced explicitly in the endophoric systems of the text (Eggins, 2004: 7). Secondly, the set of institutional places delimited within any society (Fairclough, 1989: 150-151). Thirdly, the context of *culture* within which these specific practices and institutional places are embedded (Malinowski, 1935). All three levels interactively provide the exophoric system of reference, the indexicality (Ochs, 1990) or δείξις (deixis) which enables adequate interpretation of text to occur.

4.8.5 Discourse

Discourse is defined as the interrelated processes of production, distribution and consumption (interpretation) of texts (Fairclough, 1989).

4.8.6 Cruce

These are points in discourse which exhibit the participant's difficulty in selecting linguistic elements (lexis, participant role and process, mode etc.) to express meaning (Fairclough, 1992: 230). These may be signposted by repetition, self-correction, selection of multiple and opposing elements, hesitation, hedging, marked juxtaposition of clausal elements, wry smiles and laughter, grammatical metaphor etc. Cruces break open the normally smooth mapping of linguistic features to semantic intent achieved by the participant. They create interstices that often reveal the set of values and axiological assumptions available to the discourse producer, which at these points prove inadequate and must be consciously reflected upon and creatively applied to meet the specific challenge encountered in the discourse situation.

4.8.7 Hegemony

Hegemony is defined as the economic, cultural and geographical dominance of powerful persons and groups over less powerful others. This paper takes Gramsci's view (1971) that hegemony is not a static set of relationships but characterized by on-going tactical and strategic responses by powerful interests to emergent challenges from dominated people and groups.

4.8.8 Ideology

Ideology is defined as the penetration of social practices by the axiological assumptions of hegemonic persons and groups. It is implicit in all communicative acts (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) and primarily enabled by the *naturalization* of discourse (Fairclough, 1989) whereby hegemonic axiology is presented as given whilst its source is rendered opaque. This paper assumes all discourse to be, to varying degrees, ideologically *invested* (Fairclough, 1992: 72) in this manner.

Analysis of Place in TESOL Acquisition

This chapter addresses each research question in turn as the methodology is applied to the data. Firstly, it categorizes *Initial Place Awareness* and illustrates its properties through key excerpts from the first of each pair of interviews. Secondly, it identifies and categorizes the significant places of ESOL acquisition that emerge from the full data set. Thirdly, it defines the properties of these significant places and exemplifies them. Fourthly, it considers the differences between classroom and community places of ESOL acquisition through contrastive analysis of key passages. Fifthly, it identifies two categories of incipiently *Critical Place Awareness* that emerged after participants were informed of the place-orientated nature of the study.

5.1 Categories of Initial Place Awareness

Three primary categories of *Initial Place Awareness* emerge along with their constituent sub-categories. The table below sets these out in order of potential criticality from the top downwards. The subcategories of Incipient Critical Awareness, multiple voice and agentic awareness, show the greatest critical potential. Certain subcategories of Environmental Awareness offer limited critical potential, whilst Participative Awareness is mostly confined to an uncritical aggregation of places of learning. However, the sub-category ‘Being Differentially Aware of the Facilitative Properties of Place’ which revealed the domain of places within educational institutions other than classrooms, which I have termed Interim Educational places, has a certain degree of critical potential. This is indicated by an arrow leading into Holistic awareness; an awareness of all the properties of place in ESOL acquisition which is exhibited by some participants. The relationship of Holistic Awareness to the other categories is indicated diagrammatically by its vertical positioning and its inclusion of more critical levels of place awareness is shown by a returning arrow.

Initial Place Awareness

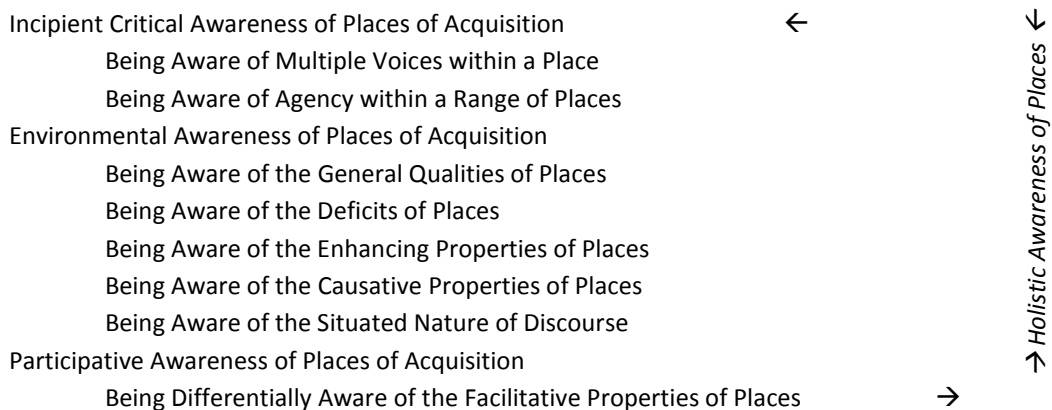


Figure 1 - Initial Place Awareness

5.1.1 Incipient Critical Awareness

An explicitly critical understanding of the interests vested in the places of ESOL acquisition is not exhibited in the first or second data set. However, two sub-categories emerge which suggest an *incipient* critical awareness of place. Although there are few instances of these categories, I deal with them first to thematize the contrast that exists between a ubiquitous awareness of the range of places in which ESOL is acquired and the general failure to critically analyse their social relations.

5.1.1.1 Being Aware of Multiple Voices within a Place

The communicative classroom emerges as a significant place of ESOL acquisition and one of its properties is a relativistic mode of teaching. Fakhra became aware of this at tertiary level as illustrated in the following reflection about her teacher's attitude toward the meaning of the books she was reading;

"...she was clear to us ... use your own imagination ... live the lines OK. Try to read the words behind the lines... it's like a game ... she was encouraging us ... give me what you have ... no, no, there is nothing wrong about any of your explanations ... it is the way you see and you read the lines ..."

Most other participants consider that they were transacted to learn in the classroom as determined by their teacher. Fakhra's teacher, however, relinquishes such agency over meaning making, handing it to Fakhra which is shown by the fact that Fakhra participates fully in the transitivity processes of *use, live, try, read, give* and *see* with the teacher retaining control only over the process of *encouraging* the learner. This *encouragement* dynamic emerges in subsequent analyses as a key property of the effective ESOL classroom as well as of non-classroom places within the school.

Fakhra's teacher recognizes multiplicity of meaning, stating that *"...there is nothing wrong about any of your explanations..."* This hermeneutic perspective is contrary to the properties of many classrooms described in the data which foster rote learning and memorization. Fakhra possesses an awareness of her tertiary classroom as a place where she is free to make her own meanings. She is the only participant in the study to exhibit such emergent critical awareness in the first interview. More generally Fakhra's reflections do not show a critical perspective but rather assume the classroom to be the natural place of English learning as in the following;

Interviewer: *...How important you know is it? Is it 50/50? Is the classroom much more important? Was all the other... were all the other things more important? I mean do you see what I'm...*

Fakhra: *Yeah*

Interviewer: *Trying to get at?*

Fakhra: *For me, OK, the right thing should be... the school should be number one.*

Note that the interviewer refers to the 'classroom' but Fakhra responds using the term 'school' as a whole-to-part synecdoche which equates the classroom with the school as institution, suggesting that Fakhra assumes the classroom to be the primary place of learning within it. This is partly confirmed by the modalization of the phrase which renders opaque those who have determined that the classroom *should* be the primary place of learning. This suggests that the classroom and its social relations are mostly embedded into Fakhra's response without critical analysis; that is to say it is naturalized in her reflective discourse.

5.1.1.2 Being Aware of Agency within a Range of Places

More than a third of the participants are consciously aware of their own agency and that of others over a range of places of TESOL acquisition, within the classroom, non-classroom educational places and the community. A typical example is Ghaleb who, having been sent to the United States by the UAE government for his tertiary education, deliberately exploited service encounters such as immigration formalities, school registration and meal ordering for acquisition purposes. He also chose to place himself in an American home, a decision consonant with the grammatical choices he makes which suggests he consciously sought to inhabit places in order to further his ESOL acquisition. For example, he states that after attending language school during the day;

'...I came back there [the home] having conversation with them [the family] twenty minutes, half an hour, one hour...'

The choice of progressive aspect suggests active participation in the daily life and associated language use of the host family. Ghaleb exhibits sufficient agency within the host home to be able to complement school learning with participation in a familial community of practice. Similar agency occurs in places beyond the home. For example he says;

'...when I go to any place or I spoke to ... someone else... and he was pronouncing a ... word that I don't know it I write it down...'

This discourse about ESOL acquisition in the community selects the first person pronoun which positions Ghaleb as the theme, subject and Actor in a combination of material (*go*) and verbal (*spoke*) processes indicating agency over his own movement toward place, and decision to speak and record his learning. This active involvement in learning is further shown by the negated *mental* process (*don't know*), which is immediately militated against by his *material* action of writing as an act of knowing. Ghaleb summarizes his approach by stating, *'I am the manager for myself – for good or bad...'* and wherever he finds himself he is able to apply this

agency effectively, even in a coffee shop where taking notes during a conversation might appear as marked behaviour.

Mohamed also shows considerable agency over a range of places in the United States. Speaking of his learning experiences in the university classroom he states that;

"...you start getting the sense of agility you know in understanding how to ... stimulate those words, translate them mentally and then you have them on your daily interactions ..."

Whilst the content of the university curriculum ('those words') is determined by educational agents Mohamed has full control over a series of material and mental processes; 'getting', 'understanding', 'stimulating' and 'translating' which saturate the discourse. As a consequence, he gains possession of the language not only for academic purposes but also for use in daily interactions within the broader community. This transferability of language learning between different discourse communities is typical of participants who exhibit such agentic awareness.

Such place awareness is not restricted to participants who acquired English abroad. Fakhra, who remained in the UAE, reveals considerable agency over a range of places including not only her communicative classroom but also shopping malls and non-classroom places within the university. In reflecting on this she says;

"...I was pushing myself to go to the English and like open conversation with the people ... not only in the shopping even in the university I met many ... of instructors ... who was not teaching me, like stopping them, open conversation with them, I start talking to them..."

She uses the simple past form (*I met*) to indicate that casual contact with her instructors is an existential consequence of her decision to attend university rather than one she has direct control over. This is in contrast to the manner in which her exploitation of these encounters is embedded. Here she employs the progressive aspect followed by infinitives and gerundives (*pushing myself to go... to open; stopping them ... to open, to start talking*) which trace her active agency over ESOL acquisition during service encounters and casual conversation in interm educational places. Such agency is also exhibited in the home which she deliberately penetrates with learning from the university in order to facilitate her acquisition. Speaking of how she chose project topics she says;

"...I didn't pick any subject; I used to ... pick subjects... in purpose ... that ... I can involve my family in ..."

Active agency is realized through paratactic negative and positive phrases (*I didn't pick... I used to pick*) and is emphasized by modalization (*can involve*) indicating Fakhra's power to include family members in her learning.

Agentive awareness is not limited to the participant's own agency or to positive forms. Maha for example shows an understanding of the depleted agency of her teacher within the Arabic language classroom as traced in the following narrative;

"...I wanted to speak ... in Arabic to ... interact in Arabic but ... he [the Arabic teacher] didn't give me the chance. I mean it's not his fault he was told to do [it] this way..."

Maha perceives the agency of her male teacher to be determined by the social relations of the school whose agents ('they') are able to arrange the curriculum such that he must teach in a language-focused rather than communicative mode. These agents are embedded in the passive phrase '*...he was told...*' and, as there is no subsequent 'by' phrase, they remain opaque. She uses a macro narrative technique at this point to augment her micro linguistic resources in order to achieve her incipiently critical perspective; (see 6.4 below).

An awareness of ESOL acquisition in a range of places that inscribe a circle through the classroom, interim places within the school, the community and back to the home is a widely distributed characteristic of participant reflections. What makes the discourse of Ghaleb, Mohamed, Fakhra and Maha insipiently *critical* is its appreciation of the manner in which their own agency and that of others is embedded in these places of acquisition. Criticality, however, remains incipient because the determining agents and their interests are not fully identified or analyzed.

5.1.2 Environmental Place Awareness

Maintaining *criticality* as the main criteria for hierarchizing types of initial place awareness, the next category to be considered is Being Environmentally Aware. This consists of a general category and four sub-categories.

5.1.2.1 Being Aware of the Qualities of Places of ESOL Acquisition

Environmental awareness is an understanding that places of learning have certain properties that may or may not facilitate ESOL acquisition. This is a less critical perception than the foregoing categories because it assumes the properties of learning environments to be given by generally opaque agents. For example Saif suggests that ESOL learners;

"...need an environment, a proper environment to learn..."

This nominalization of *environment* into a hyponym of all learning situations naturalizes the significant places of ESOL acquisition and renders opaque the agency of others who have pre-interpreted them. When speaking about the classroom Saif further suggests;

"...if they can control the environment you know during the time they are in ... school they are not allowed to speak a word in Arabic..."

Whilst Saif is critical of the classroom learning environments he has experienced he accepts their existence *per se* and assumes that the agents of the school should have control over the language policies within them. In a similar fashion Ghareeb talks about, “...an English language environment...” without differentiating between the range of communities of practice available within this hyponym and the associated interests vested in them.

Within this overall category of environmental awareness, which generally tends to limit critical understanding of place, four sub-categories emerge which exhibit degrees of critical potential.

5.1.2.2 Being Aware of the Deficits of Place

Five of the participants (33%) exhibit Deficit Awareness of place. In particular, they recognize the limitations of rural settings over cosmopolitan centres. Abdullah, who is a resident of the Western Region, was inspired toward ESOL acquisition by a friend who visited from foreign capitals. His acquisition was supported by frequent real-life visits to the cosmopolitan centres of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. However, Abdullah’s primary mode of achieving high levels of competence was through global participation in the virtual world of on-line gaming which allowed his locally based participation to be penetrated by a largely urban set of international gamers from across a range of ethnic and cultural domains. The power of cyberspace to offer legitimate peripheral participation in a wide range of English speaking communities of practice compared to the limitations imposed within the rural context of the study may offer significant opportunities for ESOL acquisition, in particular for the less geographically mobile female learners.

Similarly, Hadi, who was reared in a remote town in Iran, was inspired toward English learning through a family member who visited him from the capital city. Largely as a result, Hadi went on to pursue English acquisition in ever increasing geographical and ethnic circles. Khalil also overcame the local ESOL acquisition deficits of the Western Region through socializing in Abu Dhabi City and Dubai and through collaborative learning with an international set of students in the otherwise rural city of Al-Ain. Eva, who was brought up in the Western Region, gained significant ESOL through summer schools in a major city of the Middle East. Ghareeb is also acutely aware of the limitations for ESOL acquisition of his birth place, a French speaking village in the Middle East, and recognizes both the linguistic and socio-cultural contributions study in a large urban centre of the US afforded him. Whilst the interests of rural and urban populations remain unanalysed the distinction made on the basis of facilitative and non-facilitative properties, offers some potential for a critical interrogation of the places of ESOL acquisition.

5.1.2.3 Being Aware of the Enhancing Properties of Place

Three of the above participants recognized that whilst some places lacked facilitating properties, others enabled them to achieve the life enhancements they sought. Eva found that the properties of service encounters in the community, reading and watching TV at home and summer school in a foreign university facilitated the ESOL competence she required to gain the high level employment she believed would enhance her life. Ghareeb too, in spite of arriving in the US with no English, found that engaging in language school study as well as in conversation at work in the college cafeteria, dormitory, on the sports field and his roommate's home facilitated the rapid acquisition of English that he believed would enhance his life. Hadi transformed his life by developing his ESOL acquisition processes in a broad range of academic, social and geographic domains. When asked what the single most important factor of his ESOL acquisition was, Hadi exemplifies this category by stating;

"...you know I've thought about it over and over again ... I always have the same answer... as a child I wanted to live differently from the way people were in my area... I want to be a different person ... I soon realized that English was probably one of the best ways ... to a different kind of life I hoped for ... and I was right you know..."

This reflection reveals the structure of this category which is based on the interactive relationship between place, language and identity. A shift in place is facilitated by the acquisition of English which in turn increases social and geographic mobility. This enables participation in different sets of communities of practice facilitating further acquisition and bringing about an altered identity. Awareness of such a dynamic may lead to the critical interrogation of this relationship between place, language and desired forms of identity.

5.1.2.4 Being Aware of the Causative Properties of Place

Three participants reveal an awareness of the causative properties of place. For example, referring to the period after studying in the United States Saif says;

"...my language is not that good as before because of the environment..."

Back home and at work in the education sector of the Western Region, Saif noticed deterioration in his ESOL competency because English was no longer the main medium of communication in these environments. In contrast Ghaleb found, upon return, that his work in the Western Region as a health sector manager retained aspects of a cosmopolitan environment that were facilitative of language maintenance. In confirmation of this Fakhra says that the *"...environment effect in your learning..."*, noting the causative relation between her father's participation in commercial communities of practice in the UAE and his acquisition of both Urdu and Farsi.

5.1.2.5 Being Aware of the Situated Nature of Discourse

This category emerged from initial analysis of Saif's reflections which employ the nominalization of language as *'a practice'* suggesting that it cannot be disassociated from its social context. Subsequently Mariam came to exemplify it, showing a nuanced environmental awareness of the discursive forms distinct to particular *situations*. This is illustrated in her first interview where she reflects on her work placement experiences;

"...I saw from work placement that I need to learn English because I will communicate with other nationality ... I will communicate with other companies..., I need to have ... good English ... to know ... what ... word they will use ... in their situation..."

Mariam was allocated work experience in the local hospital where her participation in a cosmopolitan work force not only required her to use English in general but also brought about a clear awareness that different contexts of situation determine the precise range of English she will have to acquire if she is to communicate effectively.

5.1.3 Being Participatively Aware

Two thirds of the study's participants show a participative awareness of place in the first interviews. They are adroit, non-critical exploiters of place, able to synthesize learning gained through participation in a range of places within the school and community. Budoor illustrates this type well. Although she acquired little English in school, in the first interview she is not ready to criticize her teachers, but instead emphasizes how she fully exploited watching movies at home with her siblings and socializing with her Indian neighbours. Her eclectic approach to place is typified in the following reflection about the Higher Colleges of Technology;

"...in the HCT there were so many points that helped me to learn English... as I told you the communication especially and the environment also ... stories and videos and the English structures and everything..."

Although Budoor found the English only policy of the colleges awkward at first, she accepted it as another point of procedure in her ESOL acquisition. Whether watching movies in the home or the college classroom, reading stories in her room, conversing with neighbours or receiving language-focused instruction in the classroom, she is able to utilize all places without openly interrogating them.

5.1.3.1 Being Differentially Aware of the Facilitative Properties of Place

A sub-category of participative place awareness that will be shown to be highly significant in the context of the present study is Differentiating Awareness. This category is represented by Saeeda who is aware of the degrees of ESOL facilitation available in the classroom, other

places within educational institutions and the community. Classroom acquisition is stressful for her because it emphasizes accuracy rather than meaningful communication. She perceives the need for message-focused participation in the 'real' world but this is also stressful due to the interlocutors' inability to compensate for her learner status. In the first interview where she reflects on the most important properties of place in ESOL acquisition, she indicates an interim place that avoids both extremes;

"... the most important thing is ... stress... free learning of English... as many opportunities as possible for students to practice in ... real situations ... like... the canteen ... where ... they use it for real purpose..."

The construct of *real life*, or here *real situations*, is commonly distributed throughout the data and as discussed below (5.3.2.1) bifurcates the classroom from the community. However, what emerges in Saeeda's reflection is neither a classroom nor a community place but the interim place of the canteen; a context of situation within the educational institution in which purposive language use is made available in an acquisition rich and risk free environment. From this passage emerged the category of '*interim educational places*' which is one of the three broad domains of place in the study. It is described later in this chapter and illustrated from Saeeda's second interview in which I followed up and confirmed this postulate.

5.1.3.2 Being Holistically Aware of the Properties of Place

Finally, a category that is present across Critical, Environmental and Participative awareness is Holistic Awareness. More than a third of the participants exhibit this, being overtly aware of the interactive flow of learning that occurs through participation in the classroom, interim educational places and the broader community. It is represented by Delilah who when asked what the main place of her learning was, the school, social life or the college classroom, hesitated, replying;

"...I don't know... it's a whole thing laughing..."

Laughter indicates mild embarrassment at offering an inconclusive reply and an appeal for me to understand this difficulty because she regards her acquisition as situated in a continuum of places including school, college, interim educational places, the home, work and social life. This continuum is metaphorized by Fakhra as a '*loop*' expanding over the various contexts of her learning as her competence increases. Similarly, Mohamed metaphorizes it as a '*process chain of learning*' in which there is a synergistic relationship between participation in the academy and a wide variety of places within the broader community.

5.2 Properties of the Broad Domains of Place

An extensive range of places of ESOL acquisition emerges from the data. These fall into three broad domains; the Classroom, Interim Educational Places and the Community. Within each domain certain specific places are demarcated. The table below summarizes this range and gives some examples. Each domain is analysed in detail below.

The Broad Domains of Place

Classrooms

- Non-Communicative Classrooms
 - *Primary Classrooms*
 - *Secondary Classrooms*
 - *Tertiary Classrooms*
- Communicative Classrooms
 - *Secondary Classrooms*
 - *Tertiary Classrooms*

Interim Educational Places

- Non-Classroom Places
 - *Formal e.g. library*
 - *Informal e.g. corridors*
- Peripheral Places
 - *Formal e.g. work placement*
 - *Informal e.g. sports fields*

Community Places

- Home
- Work
- Service Encounters *e.g. clinic*
- Social Meeting Places *e.g. café*
- Virtual Places *e.g. Google*
- Places of Recreation *e.g. campsite*
- Places of Entertainment *e.g. cinema*
- Cultural Places *e.g. art gallery*
- Industrial Places *e.g. oil field*
- International Places *e.g. Int. Fair*

Figure 2 - The Broad Domains of Place

5.2.1 The Classroom

The Properties of Classrooms

School Classrooms

- The Basics
- Non-Participative
- Use of Arabic
- The Safe Zone
- Instrumentalism
- Opaque Processes and Participants
- Non-Communicative
 - *Negative Expressive Values*
- Communicative
 - *Positive Expressive Values*

Tertiary Classrooms

- Increased Student Participation
- Encouragement
- Student Teacher Friendship
- Increased Student Agency over Topic & Task
- Self-Expression Focused Learning
- Communicative
 - *Positive Expressive Values*

Figure 3 - The Properties of Classrooms

5.2.1.1 The School Classroom

In the context of the study, the school classroom is defined as that within government administered Primary and Secondary schools within the UAE and other countries as well as those within local and international private language schools. All fifteen (100%) of the participants consider Primary and Secondary school classrooms to have formed a part of their ESOL acquisition processes.

5.2.1.1.1 The Basics

Within the context of the study, school classrooms have only provided *'the basics'* of English to the majority of participants. This *in vivo* term stems from Fakhra, Mohamed and Saeeda who stated the following about their ESOL acquisition in school classrooms;

"...they were teaching us like the basics... [Fakhra]"

"...We had ... chance ... to practice some ... of ... I would call it basic ... structures ...of the English language... [Mohamed]"

"...I only know some ... basic ... vocabulary... [Saeeda]"

Elsewhere the term is implied as in Shamsa's statement;

"...my English in ... school it's ... very simple..."

Indeed, upon reflection Fakhra claims that she gained *"...less than the basics..."* from her school classroom for her future acquisition and others claim a similar minimal experience recounting;

"...whenever it was the classes I never learned anything to be honest... [Abdullah]"

"...nothing that much ... could help me in ... school... [Delilah]"

"...after finish high school... I know maybe 'what's your name?'" ... [Khalil]"

Such outcomes are dismal but the following emerging classroom properties suggest areas of practice that might be addressed in order to significantly improve them.

5.2.1.1.2 Non-Participation

A key property that has determined these poor outcomes is a non-participative approach to teaching and learning. For example, Saif criticizes the lack of a 'practical' approach to his school learning complaining that;

"... [the teachers] are ... feeding the student ... not giving them the ... opportunity to participate ..."

The 'feeding' metaphor indicates transactional learning which seeks to transmit knowledge in a linear fashion from the teacher to the learner. Saif believes that this is inadequate and that ESOL acquisition in the classroom requires interactive participation by students. Similarly, Eva states that her school ESOL learning took place only through passive literacy skills. She advises secondary school pupils in the Western Region to frequently visit communicative tertiary classrooms to raise their awareness of future ESOL challenges and *'shock'* them into participating actively in their school classrooms.

5.2.1.1.3 Using Arabic

A corollary to non-participation is the common property of Arabic use in school classrooms. Saeeda says definitively that her English language classroom, “...*was not communicative by any means...*” with learning occurring through grammatical rules and reading comprehension that was sometimes taught in Arabic. The case is equally extreme with Budoor who states;

“...we were not influenced by our teachers to participate or to even ... say a few words in English. All our communication was in Arabic...”

Arabic use in English classes seems to occur for two main reasons. Firstly, pupils lack basic communicative skills in English which constrains school teachers to explain tasks and maintain discipline through the Arabic medium. This is illustrated by Abdullah who explains;

“... there was like no learning ... teacher doesn't speak in ... English all the time because students never listen and keep playing... if he tell them ... 'quiet' or something they don't even know what ... so ... almost like it's an Arabic class...”

There is a negative cycle here of the inability to comprehend basic instructions, unruly behaviour and consequent failure to acquire ESOL.

Secondly, the English language competence of school teachers is sometimes regarded as inadequate. A typical example is Hadi, who says;

“...school teachers basically didn't ... speak English ... because they taught grammar translation ... that's how they learnt it and that's how they taught for years...”

This suggests that non-participative ESOL classrooms where mother tongue language is used as a medium of instruction are not only ineffective but can also lead to inappropriate methods being reproduced between generations of learners.

5.2.1.1.4 The 'Safe Zone'

Arabic use is partly due to low risk, low challenge ESOL classroom environments. These places arise and are maintained when students and teachers subconsciously answer the discourse determining interrogative, 'Where am I?' with, 'I am in a learning situation.' As Fakhra reflects, the classroom is;

“...the safe zone ... [the pupils] know you [the teacher] will understand them...but outside they will make the effort ... to make the people understand them (emphases added).”

Transition in pronominal reference through *you*, *they* and *them* indicates how participants and processes change in the shift from classroom to community situated ESOL acquisition. In the classroom the students passively assume the teacher understands. In the community the students actively engage in meaningful tasks to ensure various interlocutors understand them. In the latter case students are channelled to adapt their current linguistic resources to the

context of situation and rapidly acquire further necessary resources. In analysis of Saeeda's initial place awareness above, we perceived how interim educational places offer an effective ESOL learning environment demarcated between the classroom 'safe zone' and such high risk, high challenge situations within the broader community.

5.2.1.1.5 Instrumentalism

Non-participative, low risk, transactional school ESOL classrooms have an instrumental approach toward learning. This is evidenced by the frequent interdiscursivity of participant discourse and technological metaphor where *language* is, for example, considered as a 'tool'. Fakhra specifically situates this metaphor in the school classroom saying that pupils;

"...need to apply ... the language tools that they learn in the classroom in ... real life..."

This metaphorization restricts the ESOL classroom to instrumental, language-focused learning whilst assuming the community beyond to be the realm of message-focused acquisition. This cordoning off of the classroom from putatively 'real' places within the community is central to participant beliefs about their acquisition process and is dealt with in detail below.

Instrumentalism is inherent in forms of classroom motivation. This is exemplified by Khalil who, when asked why he never improved his English at school, states;

"...because of the teacher's problem no us... we want to ... but teachers not push us ... this is problem... in school... but in university we do work hard but teachers help us..."

The shift in process from 'push' in the school to 'help' in the university indicates a transition from extrinsic to intrinsic motivational forms. In the school teachers are expected to exert external pressure whereas in the university they are expected to encourage learning processes which are already occurring within the student's own cognitive behaviour. Instrumental motivation is also revealed in the evaluative function of the school English teacher which, as Saeeda explains, is often 'to listen, observe and pay attention to mistakes' rather than to encourage message-focused participation.

5.2.1.1.6 Opaque Processes and Participants

The classroom data generally embeds learning, teachers and pupils in generic terms. The processes of learning being referred to as 'exercises' or 'practice' etc. whilst teachers and pupils are referred to as 'they' or through the generic nominalizations 'the teachers/the pupils', less often as 'he/she' and rarely by their given names. This tends to render agency over ESOL learning opaque, failing to interrogate the power relations of educational institutions. However, there is a range of such opacity across the discourse. The extreme end of opaque

processes is exemplified by Mariam who when pressed to specifically describe the activities in her school classroom reflects;

"...nothing ... special or ... unique that happened; as ... usually class, studying..."

Mariam fails to interrogate the agency behind the nominalizations of *class* and *studying* and the blandness of her response indicates low levels of interest in classroom events. At the other extreme, teacher agency is highly transparent in Maha's reflections which refer to several of her school teachers by name and is marked by heightened interest and motivation.

5.2.1.1.7 Negative Expressive Qualities

Non-participative, instrumental approaches associated with largely opaque agency often lead participants to assign negative expressive qualities to the school classroom. For Abdullah it is *'boring... just another lesson'* whilst Ghareeb metaphorizes his lack of agency as;

"... a burden ... I have to learn this ... so it's ... on the back of your mind. You're always thinking ... I have to learn something..."

The quasi modal *'have to'* indicates the pressure of opaque external agents forcing him to learn. This lack of ownership over learning is experienced as a psychological weight he feels constrained to bear and yet which does not facilitate his ESOL acquisition to any extent.

5.2.1.1.8 Communicative and Non-Communicative School Classrooms

A distinction between non-communicative and communicative classrooms emerges which offers an important corrective to an entirely negative view of school classrooms in Al Gharbia. Even when the teacher remains the prime agent, communicative classrooms *can* provide effective acquisition, if their properties are shifted away from an instrumental focus on language toward tasks in which the learner participates for their intrinsic value. Maha experienced this in the contrast between her English and Arabic lessons;

... the English lesson was the coolest of all ... I used to just run away from the Arabic lesson because ... I didn't want to analyse I wanted to... interact ... he [Arabic teacher] didn't give me the chance... but my English teacher was into music and into ... telling us stories. Actually she was telling us stories and she was talking, she was talking..."

There is a strong contrast between a non-interactive focus on linguistic elements and experiencing meaning through communication. Maha makes the lack of student agency in her non-communicative Arabic classroom explicit in her choice of transitivity processes and participants as in the following;

"...It was just the teacher there in the middle of the classroom and him he knows everything and a kind of disrespect to the students when you got just someone like in authority and telling you look I know it all and you just take what I'm giving you..."

Here, the teacher's presence goes un-interrogated. He is perceived as being merely (*just*) existent (*there*), centre stage as the omniscient subject whose agency, shown by his participation in the majority of transitivity processes (*being, knowing, telling and giving*) is overwhelming. The students on the other hand participate in the single process of 'taking', as passive recipients of the teacher's pre-existing knowledge, in transactional learning. Such power relations are not facilitative of language learning because they bring about opposition marked by negation and disengagement as in the subsequent passage;

"... and we don't, we don't take it we just switch off..."

The pronominal *we*, places the collective student body in full tripartite subject position over for the act of refusal. However, the phrase is coordinated with *and* rather than contrasted with *but* making the students' refusal to receive the authoritarian teacher's knowledge a default position; the inevitable norm rather than the exception, significantly denuding student agency within the non-communicative classroom. The default response is disengagement (*switch off*) and non-participation with a consequent lack of ESOL acquisition.

5.2.1.1.8.1 Positive Expressive Values

Contrary to this, Maha attributes positive expressive values (*coolest*) to her communicative English classes where the teacher worked with music, stories and spoken communication for the intrinsic value of the messages they carry. However, even here grammatical analysis indicates that much agency remains with the teacher. Consider the following for example;

"... [the] variety she brought in the classroom wasn't just music. Sometimes we had ... magazines ... we had to cut up some pictures ... it was art ... it wasn't ... just the language ... it was... the variety she brought in the classroom that made a big difference..."

The teacher remains the primary participant in the process of bringing variety to the classroom. The students have little or no agency over this. For example, the possessive '*we had ... magazines*' is a grammatical metaphor for the passive, '*we were given magazines*.' This is borne out by the subsequent quasi modal '*we had to cut up*', which opaquely gives the teacher agency over prescribing the task of extraction of pictures from magazines.

The negative effect of limited student agency, however, is ameliorated in communicative teaching by meaningful relationships with the teacher which facilitates participation. Whilst Maha considers non-communicative teaching disrespectful, communicative teaching is perceived as '*...teaching us from [the] heart ...*' The emotional appeal of her teacher led Maha away from instrumental learning toward participation and the associated positive expressive values contributed toward a transformative experience that brought about a life-long fascination with English language and culture.

5.2.1.2 Tertiary Classrooms

Eleven (73%) of the participants refer to their university classroom learning experiences and seven (46%) regard them as significant for their ESOL acquisition. These include the United Arab Emirates University and Zayed University in the UAE, universities within the MENA region and the United States. One participant, Maha, refers to a classroom in a teacher training college in the MENA region as a place of ESOL acquisition. Four of the participants (26%) refer to classrooms within the Higher Colleges of Technology of the UAE.

5.2.1.2.1 Increased Student Participation in Transitivity Processes

Tertiary classrooms in the study are often characterized by communicative properties in which the teacher participates in fewer transitivity processes and the student is incrementally encouraged to participate in more. A good illustration of this is Mariam, who reflects;

“...my teacher ... start to give us more practice ... he encourage me ... he start to tell me write more... My writing is increase ...also in the speaking we start sitting in ... groups ... speaking with each other in English ... in the beginning we cannot understand what he say ... but ... we start getting the information ... maybe I ... was a shying student so I can't talk just listen but ... after one semester I'm start sharing my ideas...”

The processes in which the teacher participates, ‘give’ and ‘tell,’ are conditioned by ‘start’, indicating that he is seeking to initiate behaviour change in the learner. The initiation of new learning processes is shared, with the student increasingly being *encouraged* to participate in more of them (‘sitting’, ‘speaking’, ‘getting’ & ‘sharing’) as agency over her own learning increases.

5.2.1.2.2 Encouragement

This dynamic where the teacher retains agency primarily over the verbal process of encouragement and increasingly relinquishes decision making rights to the learner is a key property of effective tertiary classrooms noted above and is well illustrated by Khalil in the United Arab Emirates University;

“...in school ... we want to [work hard] ... but teachers not push us ... but in university we do work hard but teachers help us... he encouragement [sic] every day to do this work...”

In school Khalil metaphorizes his learning as physical force, indicating a place where extrinsic motivation is primary. In contrast, he attributes the transitivity processes of ‘help’ and ‘encourage’ to the university teacher, indicating intrinsic motivation. This systematic differential choice of transitivity processes leaves a trace of social relations which are more equitable in the university than in the school. If secondary school pupils were given such enhanced agency perhaps school ESOL acquisition would be more effective.

Such encouragement stems from the advisory agency of the teacher which in Shamsa's case was specifically place-based. She reflects;

"...I start to listen... teacher... advised me where I... should go, where I should improve my English ... I start to ... still now I watch ... English program...interact with other people (added emphases)..."

Here, the teacher initiates communicative learning in the classroom and subsequently advises how this can be extended into other places. Such place consciousness is rarely exhibited by teachers within the data.

5.2.1.2.3 Student Teacher Friendship

Seven (46%) of the participants consider friendly relations between teacher and student to be facilitative of ESOL acquisition in the tertiary classroom. Typical of this view is Delilah who reflects;

"...I create a ...friendship with him [the teacher] so ... you know I didn't leave the classroom during ... breaks ... I was sitting there, 'Why that and why this?'..."

Note that in this case agency over the learning process shifts significantly toward the learner, and this is traced in Delilah's choice of the interrogative form. Having established a more equal set of relations with the teacher during normal classes she is able to extend this beyond the schedule of formal learning where she takes over the role of questioner normally reserved for the teacher. Beyond the classroom, the teacher, as a member of the TESOL community of practice, becomes the focus for communicative learning, with the student enjoying legitimate peripheral participation and moving towards the centre of this community as the initiator of her own ESOL acquisition.

5.2.1.2.4 Student Agency over Topic and Task

Khalil's writing class at university allowed him freedom of topic choice. This enabled him to formulate his career hopes more clearly and led to high levels of intrinsic motivation which facilitated rapid ESOL acquisition. Delilah experienced similar advantages and Fakhra exploited this agency by judiciously choosing topics that were of interest to her family, enabling her to involve them in participative learning at home.

5.2.1.2.5 Self-Expression Focused Learning

Delilah, Eva, Fakhra and Mariam found self-expression key to their ESOL acquisition. Typical is Eva, who notes how her teacher started '*...opening these discussions between us...*' through mildly controversial topics. These goaded her into expressing her feelings which was highly facilitative of ESOL acquisition and to some extent re-balanced student and teacher voices in the classroom.

5.2.2 Interim Educational Places

Interim Educational Places are broadly distributed throughout the data and are defined as places, other than the classroom, that are within or managed by the school or tertiary education institute. Several sub-categories emerge that have properties relevant to a critical understanding of place in ESOL acquisition. The agency of the institution over these places is determined by both their geographical distance from the classroom and the degree of formal control it possesses over them. They form concentric circles moving away from the classroom, where the agency of the school is strongest, until they transition into the broader community where the agency of the school is dispersed. The properties of these places are analysed here in a similar sequence moving from the centre to the periphery of school control as in the table below.

Interim Educational Places

- *Formal Non-Classroom Places within the School*
 - independent learning centre
 - library
 - debating society
 - English club
 - writing competition
 - spelling competition
 - morning assembly
 - summer school
- *Informal Non-Classroom Places within the School*
 - non-specific but not in the classroom
 - corridors
 - cafeteria/canteen
- *Formal Peripheral Places*
 - projects/work placements
- *Informal Peripheral Places*
 - hostel/dormitory
 - sports fields
 - college/university bus
 - virtual places
- *Informal Places Beyond the School*
 - reading school material in the desert beyond the home

Figure 4 - Interim Educational Places

5.2.2.1 Places within the Institution

5.2.2.1.1 Formal Non-Classroom Places within the Institution

These include places such as independent learning centres (ILCs), libraries, English competitions, morning assemblies and summer schools which tend to increase learner agency over topic and task and thus provide a better balance between language and meaning-focused

learning. However, as we might suppose such interim places offer only a limited increase in learner agency. Independently reading a set of library books graded for competency level, for example, is likely to increase literacy skills but only within the range of content and approach that is selected by agents of global publishing houses. Enjoying videos in the ILC or library might increase visual and spoken communication skills but again only within the range of content permitted by the institution. Independent learning centres, too, tend to offer a range of materials for language-focused practice which are moderated and supervised by institutional staff. Similarly, the knowledge required for success in English competitions and the subjects approved for presentation in morning assemblies will also be determined by the respective institutions. In general, therefore, formal non-classroom places offer greater learner agency than the classroom, but keep it within a range that remains determined by institutional stakeholders.

5.2.2.1.2 Informal Non-Classroom Places within the Institution

These include English clubs, debating societies, cafeterias/canteens and corridors. In her second interview Saeeda enlarged on her differentiating place awareness describing the properties of such informal interim places as follows;

“...stress free ... environment or context when ... the focus is not the language itself; when the focus is what you have to say – the message... when the language is not the focus ... there is no focus on or the least ... focus is put on the accuracy thing – I think this [is] what really hinders...”

One such stress free environment is the English club at her university where topic, task and social relations are only moderately determined by the educational institution. She goes on to describe the acquisition processes as follows;

“...the focus on the ... topic itself ... the teacher’s not there to listen, to observe ... colleague(s)... were mostly the same level and you’re talking to native speakers who ... themselves ... have the right experience to encourage ... by not really paying attention to mistakes ... this kind of ... environment did help...”

The distribution of process and participants here is quite different from that of the classroom. The generic class of learners that Saeeda associates herself with, (*‘you’*), have full participation rights over the key transitivity process of *‘talking’* whilst her interlocutors have participation rights primarily over the process of *‘encouraging.’* This suggests that when encouragement is transferred from the classroom to informal interim places it becomes even more facilitative due to its synergist interaction with the learner’s desire to participate in intrinsically meaningful communication, and further enhances acquisition (see, Para. 5.3.2.4).

Informal interim places allow learners to interact with educational communities of practice whose members are willing to compensate for their learner status. They exhibit neither the focus on linguistic accuracy prevalent in non-communicative classrooms nor the disabling challenges, stress and risks of real-world communication in the broader community where uncompromising interlocutors need to achieve their social tasks with maximum efficiency. Saeeda's differentiating place awareness illuminates the effectiveness of this range of places.

Another facilitative interim place is the cafeteria. Fakhra recounts how she bypassed popular Arabic speaking cashiers in favour of English speakers who attracted shorter queues and encouraged a coterie of students to speak English amongst themselves at table leading to an on-going acquisition process among her peers. Ghareeb recounts how working as a waiter in the cafeteria of his university in the United States allowed him to apply synthetic language knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to communicative participation which rapidly accelerated his acquisition.

5.2.2.2 Peripheral Places

These are defined as places of ESOL acquisition that are on the periphery of the physical buildings or grounds of educational institutions, as well as those beyond, over which its managerial stakeholders retain a limited amount of agency.

5.2.2.2.1 Formal Peripheral Places

These include government agencies such as hospitals as well as commercial firms that form elements of projects and work placements. These places were considered to facilitate ESOL acquisition. For example, initiating and following through on a project enabled Shamsa to participate meaningfully in English and transcend local limitations through telephonic communication with people in companies in the cosmopolitan centres. She recounts;

"...I ... make study for project... [Miming holding the telephone] ... 'I'm from HCT student I want your help ... blap, blap, blap. My project....etc. ..."

Shamsa's imitation of fluent telephonic speech illustrates the potential this mode of communication offers ESOL acquisition. It occurs within a project over which the student has considerable agency as illustrated in the following recollection;

"... in this is project ... I ... thinking about how to ... create centre ... for ladies which include café, club... and nursery in Madinat Zayed... I ... make tender, send formal e-mail ...interact with [employees in companies in Abu Dhabi and Dubai] and they help me..."

The transitivity processes of *'thinking', 'creating', 'making', 'sending'* and *'interacting'* all accrue transparently to the learner indicating active agency and participation. This specific project was initiated by an external institution which offered financial support to potentially successful business ideas increasing its peripheral institutional status.

For Mariam, the key feature of her placement in the local health authority was a cosmopolitan workforce and consequent need to communicate in English. In a relatively short reflection Mariam is the full participant in a wide range of processes which saturate the discourse such as, *practice, start talking, explain, help, start to teach, have, show, start writing, refuse, need* etc. This agency is directed both toward her own learning and that of her fellow work placement colleague to whom she becomes a collaborative learner. Mariam recalls her fellow student;

"... Asked me sometimes to help her... explain for the employee ... in English. I explain for them but sometimes I was not in the office so ... what she will do if I'm not in the office?"

The interrogative mode here indicates Mariam's ability to challenge her fellow student's lack of self-reliance and to encourage her to learn collaboratively. As such it shows her increased agency within this interim educational place. She exhibits similar agency over a range of transitivity processes when reflecting in more detail during the second interview, in particular the material process of *'showing'* her colleague the methods she used to acquire English.

Likewise, increased agency over ESOL acquisition processes in formal peripheral places is exhibited by Budoor, Eva, Delilah and Fakhra.

5.2.2.2.2 Informal Peripheral Places

These include college managed hostels, dormitories, sports fields, buses and virtual places such as on-line learning sites, chat rooms and gaming web-sites. Khalil recounts how the UAE University hostel had an international set of residents and facilitated ESOL acquisition through both collaborative learning and social chat. Similarly, it was dormitory friendship which facilitated ESOL acquisition for Ghareeb. For Hadi, whose English was at a more advanced stage when he entered university, the dormitory was a bi-lingual place where code switching occurred depending on topic, facilitating social life and general education as well as ESOL acquisition. On the other hand, Budoor's female hostel was less facilitative because it was mostly an Arabic speaking environment.

Sports fields were of particular importance to Maha and Ghareeb. Maha says handball and basketball courts were the only places in school where she actually participated in English. Ghareeb, who spent 95% of his time in the United States on the university campus, illustrates the properties of sports fields which facilitate ESOL acquisition;

“... we used to play a lot of sport ... football ... Frisbee ... I used to interact a lot with ... American’s ...they are very nice ... people ... they ... gave you the courage ... to practice and talk ... to encourage you ... to speak more... they were not making fun of you when you speak...”

Through the encouragement of its members, Ghareeb was able to increasingly participate in the banter and hierarchy building that occurs in a sporting community of practice and this proved strongly facilitative of ESOL acquisition.

Khalil acquired ESOL effectively through informal participation in the global community of World of War Craft. This confirms Mohamed’s surmise that virtual interim places such as college chat rooms might be explored further as places of acquisition in the rural context of the Western Region. Informal online conversations offer contemporary virtual versions of Maha’s English pen friend through whom she gained access to mother tongue English literacy. They have the advantage though of providing real-time, synchronous communication rather than the anticipatory experience of letter writing.

5.2.2.3 Interim Places beyond the School

These form the sites of transition away from the school proper to the broader community where the agency of the school is minimal. One illustration of this occurs in Delilah who preferred to sit outdoors in the garden of her house to study school determined tasks. However, such a place is best considered part of the home and it is to this we now turn.

5.2.3 Community Places

A broad set of places where ESOL acquisition has occurred within the community is distributed within the data. These emerge within four main categories which are dealt with in turn; the home, work, specific places and geographic places.

5.2.3.1 The Home

Fourteen (93%) of the participants refer to their own home or the homes of others as places of ESOL acquisition. Four (26%) refer specifically to their own room as a significant place of learning. Nine (60%) refer specifically to reading at home as a key element of their ESOL acquisition whilst six (40%) regard using the computer at home as significant. A further six (40%) regard watching DVD or TV at home as significant whilst three (20%) found listening to

songs helpful. Four (26%) found family conversations in English significant whilst three (20%) learned or were inspired to learn English through their housemaid. Only one participant (6.6%) found writing independently at home directly helpful.

Most participants (86%) regard their own home as central to their ESOL acquisition processes. Some (e.g. Abdullah, Eva & Mariam) had family members who attributed high value to English language, whilst others who acquired ESOL as married householders (Delilah and Fakhra) deliberately established bi-lingual homes through dual collections of English and Arabic books. For some the host home enabled opportunities to participate in English conversations while living abroad.

5.2.3.1.1 Reading at Home

The home is significant for reading English for 60% of the participants. According to Saeeda, the home must be 'cosy' for successful ESOL acquisition to occur. Hadi confirms this by describing how he read in a large, quiet back room with a view to the garden whilst Delilah preferred the garden itself for ESOL reading. The home offers exposure to English not otherwise found in the community of the Western Region, through technological means, such as the computer, CD, DVD player and TV. Khalil situated his acquisition through computer gaming in the home, whilst Mariam and Shamsa used Google at home and found it central to their acquisition processes. Watching English movies at home on DVD was central to Budoor's initial acquisition, whilst watching TV was important for Eva and Shamsa. Listening to English songs on CD players at home was a significant element of the acquisition process for Abdullah, Delilah and Maha.

5.2.3.1.2 Spoken Communication at Home

The home, however, is not only important for passive literacy or listening skills, but also for communicative participation. For Fakhra, Delilah and Shamsa the initial impetus toward English came through communicating with English speaking housemaids whilst for Ghaleb in the United States and Delilah, Eva and Fakhra in the Western Region the home was the site of direct participation in family conversation in English.

Fakhra deliberately chose projects that would facilitate opportunities for communicative participation in English at home. Much of Shamsa's acquisition occurred at home while collaboratively working on school determined tasks with her sister. Her discourse on this is saturated with transitivity processes including *show, translate, compare, start using, learn how to, using, write, find, hear, start thinking, wonder, go back, asking, improve, looking* etc. over which she has considerable agency. The mental processes of *thinking* and *wondering* about the

English language, indicate the home as an environment of active engagement about which positive values such as a *passion* for and *liking* to learn English are expressed.

5.2.3.1.3 Nexus of Learning Processes in the Home

The home appears to be the nexus of several acquisition processes. Where it is penetrated by the school, it functions as a peripheral educational place exhibiting participative learning in a low stress, low risk environment in which familial interlocutors accommodate to learner needs. Where the school does not penetrate, the home is mainly for non-participative receptive skills such as reading and listening. The participative processes associated with acquisition in the community occur at later stages of language development when the home is becoming a bilingual place.

This complex functionality suggests that home ESOL acquisition might be effectively transferable between the language classroom, interim educational places and the community proper. Abdullah exemplified this potential as he consciously tried to use phrases acquired through listening to songs at home in his virtual gaming as well as the real world community. This has subsequently transferred to the college where he is a successful student in spite of continuing to dislike the classroom environment.

5.2.3.2 Work

Ten (66%) participants referred directly to their places of work as affecting their ESOL acquisition. Of these, eight (53%) found work places facilitative of ESOL acquisition whilst two (13%) found them non-facilitative. For some, such as Eva, Saeeda, Hadi and Maha, it is not surprising that they found their work places facilitative as they are all faculty working in an English speaking environment. However, Fakhra, Ghaleb, Mohamed and Budoor, who are non-teaching professionals, also found work facilitative because it provided cosmopolitan environments that required them to have good English literary and communicative competency.

5.2.3.2.1 Peripheral Participation at Work

The key facilitative property of workplaces is legitimate peripheral participation in English speaking communities of practice. Ghaleb exemplifies this reflecting;

“...when I came from the States ... I did not lose my language because ... I have a lot of participation ... communication with the physician meetings ... minutes ... agenda, e-mails ... all this... when you collect it together ... you will find that still we are learning ... every single day ...”

Whether through telephonic, e-mail or face-to-face communication, ESOL acquisition at work is driven by message-focused participation with interlocutors who need to achieve tasks effectively. There is not a focus on language and unlike interim educational places or the home the environment is high risk and high stress with little compensation for learner status.

5.2.3.2.2 Facilitative and Non-Facilitative

The data varies as to the participative properties of work places in the Western Region. Ghaleb, who holds a high level position in the health sector, found work highly facilitative. I witnessed this when our interview was interrupted by a long telephone call in which Ghaleb performed fluently in English. Mariam acquired considerable English working at a lower functional level during during work placement in the same health sector department. By contrast, Delilah, found herself in a non-facilitative Arabic speaking context. Although Mohamed and Saif are both local educational authority managers, Mohamed found his work facilitative of ESOL, whereas Saif found it detrimental stating that since returning from the United States his control over both lexis and pronunciation has significantly declined due to his work environment. This suggests that if workplaces in the Western Region are to be assigned for English acquisition purposes they will need to be scrutinized carefully to ascertain if they exhibit facilitative properties.

5.2.3.3 The Properties of Specific Community Places

A wide range of specific places in the community are considered to have been the site of ESOL acquisition. However, we need not examine each of these in turn because like the category of *work* above the key properties they exhibit which make them facilitative of ESOL are *legitimate peripheral participation* and a concomitant increase in learner agency. They are therefore tabulated below and considered as a single category.

Specific Community Places of ESOL Acquisition

service encounters	<i>shopping malls, supermarkets, grocery stores, petrol stations, banks, hospitals, clinics & hotels</i>
social meeting places	<i>cafeterias, internet cafes, restaurants, beaches & parks</i>
virtual places	<i>World of War Craft, Amazon & Google</i>
places of recreation	<i>campsites, gyms, recreation centres, sports fields, courts for volleyball, football, tennis, basketball, handball, Frisbee</i>
places of entertainment	<i>cinemas & theatres</i>
cultural places	<i>cultural centres, concert halls, public libraries & art galleries</i>
industrial places	<i>oil fields</i>
places of international scope	<i>trade fairs & regional festivals</i>

Figure 5 - Specific Community Places of ESOL Acquisition

5.2.3.3.1 Peripheral Participation in Community Places

Saif's numinous reflection about camping with his host family in the United States is a defining vignette of legitimate peripheral participation in action and illustrates the dialogic dynamics of community situated ESOL acquisition;

"...it was ... a fantastic trip and I enjoyed it a lot. Till now I still remember this ... event ... There was like a conversation. They were talking to each other. I was listening. Sometime I joined them and they explain. They were helpful. They explained for me ... this ... is how... do we, you know, cook. This how ... do we ... you know ... do things. This is our culture and you know I ... learned also ... their culture because it's informal you know. I see how they deal with ... each other you know..."

An analysis of the transitivity processes and participant roles within this text shows how peripheral participation in an English speaking community of practice is likely to facilitate ESOL acquisition. First, Saif is the silent observer of the *sayers* in the *verbal* process of talking (Toolan, 1988) and directs us toward his American interlocutors who *'were talking to each other'*. Next, informal social relations allow him to shift between observer and participant roles stating that, *'sometime I joined them'*. Later, Saif is the *beneficiary* of verbal processes when his American interlocutors *'explained'* their specific actions, general manner of camping and culture. Subsequently, Saif is participant in the *mental* and *visual* processes of *learning* about his hosts' culture and *seeing* how they relate to each other. This short passage presents a cameo of the dynamics of peripheral participation as Saif moves from the outer circle of silent observation, through the interim circle of benefaction, to the inner circle of participation and finally toward the centre of understanding. Throughout, Saif inhabits a fully tripartite subject position toward the processes of enjoying, listening, joining, learning, and seeing. Peripheral participation, therefore, appears to offer increased learner agency over the roles of observer, benefiter and participant in informal ESOL acquisition processes. Such an analysis validates the use of Lave and Wenger's (1991) constructs of situated learning and suggests they might be heuristic for future place-orientated, critical ESOL research.

Even brief episodes of peripheral participation in the community appear to have considerable significance for ESOL acquisition. For example Hadi, who had high level English literary skills, reflects about participating in English spoken communication for the first time in an authentic conversation at an international trade fair;

"...I remember that in the first place even though my language level was quite high, it wasn't easy. Because ... I was put in a completely different situation ... But of course it was you know sort of ... like I say [a] leap forward to be able to ... actually talk to ... someone..."

In this place of international scope, Hadi is thrust toward an English speaking representative by his cousin who also lacks communicative competence. The passive voice 'I was put in a completely different situation' does not, therefore, refer to an opaque agent but rather to known familial relations. Rather, it is the stress and difficulty involved in this humorously enforced participative encounter, which Hadi overcomes by taking an active participant role that created a leap forward in his acquisition. The contrast between the efficacy of this brief episode of peripheral participation and previous years of language-focused classroom study is highlighted by Hadi, who says;

"...these were like a couple of minutes compared with the hundreds or thousands of hours when I was learning but those were important minutes..."

Participatory learning within the community might, therefore, promote acquisition out of proportion to time spent when compared to classroom learning.

5.2.3.3.2 Subliminal ESOL Acquisition

Central to the acquisition processes of Abdullah is the on-line game of *World of War Craft*. The participatory nature of this virtual place is indicated in the grammatical choices he makes which foreground the progressive aspect of the verb, e.g. '... people inside the game was using this language...' More importantly, no explicit intention to learn English exists. Rather, '...it's all about playing...'; participation is central and ESOL acquisition occurs as a subliminal by-product. As Abdullah reflects, '...I didn't even ... feel it myself like forcing myself ... I felt it's happening naturally... like developing...' Such backgrounding of explicit attention to language is common in community situated learning and occurs frequently in the data, not only with reference to virtual places but also in association with reading for pleasure, collaborative study, and other forms of participatory behaviour (e.g. Khalil, Ghaleb, Fakhra, Hadi and Saeda).

5.2.3.3.3 Shyness and Gregariousness

What makes peripheral participation in the community effective for ESOL acquisition is its intrinsic focus on communicating a message in order to achieve meaningful tasks with interlocutors who make little compensation for learner status. In this regard, we should note that Saif and Hadi exhibit the readiness to risk face in society, and therefore benefit from participation in the broader community. By contrast, Saeda and Mariam are shy and have gained more from participation in interim educational communities of practice where interlocutors take account of learner status and present less risk to face.

5.2.3.3.4 Language Varieties

Another important feature of ESOL acquisition processes within communities of practice in the mixed ethnic and cultural society of the United Arab Emirates is the varieties of English that are encountered. Hadi illustrates both the facilitative and non-facilitative aspects of this experience;

“I had a lot of exposure with people from Britain and Australia and we had a colleague... from Scotland - it wasn't easy to understand him. It helped to have colleagues from different places and I also started to realize the difficulty of understanding people with say Indian and other kinds of accents. So the effect was... positive and negative – positive because my comprehension of various accents was much better – negative in a sense that I started to make more mistakes because of all the wrong English around... that might not effect a native speaker but a learner...there are times when I sort of hesitate what is correct because of the huge exposure to all the common mistakes here so that's the downside of it...”

Here Hadi is discussing advantages and disadvantages of encountering different varieties of English at the level of acquiring linguistic features. He makes the valid point that, not having a mother tongue point of reference, as a learner he was often unsure which grammatical forms and pronunciation to emulate. However, when considering the inter-cultural consequences of acquiring English in this context he is less ambivalent.

“...by learning a different language and by knowing about a different culture er your view of the world expands. And there are always good and bad things about each culture – yours and others. But if you have access to a broader range you know er beliefs and cultures you can pick the ones that will better you...”

Hadi's belief expressed here, that acquisition of English from within a multi-ethnic society is culturally expansive, is shared by many other participants such as Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi and Maha. Mohamed specifically regards it as a form of cultural collaboration whilst Shamsa feels she gained cultural insight. Mariam gained increased confidence and independence through such acquisition which enabled her to 'add value' (*in vivo* term) to the inter-cultural contexts in which she participated.

5.2.4 Geographic Places

As noted in the methodology, geographic demarcation of place is widely distributed in the data and would seem highly relevant to the global context in which this study has been situated. Whilst detailed analyses of aspects of this category have been undertaken, there is insufficient space to present them in this paper. It is suggested as an avenue for further study.

5.3 The Contrast between the Properties of Classroom and Non-Classroom Places

It is clear from the foregoing analyses that several fundamental differences exist between the properties of the classroom and non-classroom places in relation to ESOL acquisition. These are summarized in the figure below and subsequently analysed in detail.

Contrastive Properties of Classroom and Non-Classroom Places

nominalization of the classroom and teacher & learner roles

bifurcation of the classroom and the community

real life

differential agency

choice of transitivity processes

force, channel, involve and encourage

loss of Actor role and associated grammatical metaphor

quasi-modalization

interaction of transitivity processes, loss of Actor role and grammatical metaphor

differential metonymical clustering

Figure 6 - Contrastive Properties of Classroom and Non-Classroom Places

5.3.1 Nominalization of the Classroom and Teacher & Learner Roles

Nearly all participants (14/93%) assume the classroom to be the natural place of ESOL learning. In many cases this is indicated by nominalization of the classroom without reference to any determining agents. This naturalization is clearly exhibited when Fakhra makes the assumption that;

“...the classroom...is where you... are supposed ... to gain... to learn...”

The roles of teacher and learner are similarly nominalized and understood as given rather than socially constructed. Even in cases where the properties of the classroom are heavily criticized (e.g. Saif) or participation in its social relations is rejected (e.g. Abdullah) the inevitability of its existence is never interrogated.

5.3.2 Bifurcation of the Classroom and the Community

5.3.2.1 Real Life

The manner in which the classroom is naturalized in participant discourse cordons it off from the community. Almost three-quarters of participants distinguish between classroom learning and acquisition in the *real life* of the community. *Real life* is an *in vivo* term which occurs in the reflections of Fakhra, Abdullah and Shamsa but several other terms are used elsewhere which corroborate this construct such as, *real stories* (Budoor), *learning or for life* (Shamsa), *real authentic situation* (Saeeda and Hadi), *basic life* (Ghaleb) *natural life* (Maha), *normal life* (Hadi and Mariam) and *reality and life* (Mohamed). In what manner then are classrooms considered to be *un-real*?

5.3.2.2 Differential Agency

What emerges to explain this unnatural bifurcation is the loss of agency over classroom learning experienced by more than 80% of participants, in contrast to relatively high levels of agency over acquisition in the community. There are five linguistic features which are systematically employed to embed differential learner agency between classroom and community in discourse; choice of transitivity processes, loss of Actor role within the tripartite subject position, modalization, grammatical metaphor and metonymical clustering. These features are interwoven within the discourse; sometimes one or other of them predominate but they can only be separated for the purposes of analysis.

5.3.2.3 Choice of Transitivity Processes

A representative example of cases where a systematic shift in transitivity processes is the key feature realizing differential agency occurs in Mohamed;

“...at the class you become more listener ... but when you get outside the class there are so many ... efforts you need to think of ... when to become a listener when to become a speaker...”

Mohamed selects the process ‘become’ when reflecting about both the classroom and the community. However, he distinguishes between these otherwise identical processes by interspersing the mental process ‘think’ when reflecting about acquisition in the community. In the first classroom case, the learner is the subject within a declarative phrase of his becoming a participant in the receptive act of spoken communication. In the second community case he is the subject of the mental process of thinking about how and when to choose between receptive and productive acts in spoken communication within a similar declarative phrase. This indicates an increase in learner agency over acquisition processes within the community where judgment and choice over the mode of participation are both possible and necessary.

However, the effect on learner agency of this shift in transitivity is only fully explicated by analysing the associated systematic use of grammatical metaphor and consequent opaque loss of Actor role for the learner in the classroom. Due to the social relations of the classroom, which assume an active role for the teacher in maintaining decision making rights over the learning agenda and teaching methodology, the declarative phrase, “*you become more listener*” might be interpreted as a grammatical metaphor for the passive ‘*you are constrained to be more of a listener.*’ This underlying passive then opaquely places the teacher in the Actor role within the tripartite subject position, ousting the learner and tracing his attenuated agency.

By contrast, within places of the community, the mental process *'think'* is introduced in a declarative phrase that does not insinuate the passive but positions the learner as the fully tripartite participant in the mental process of thinking about the mode of his participation in spoken discourse which is maintained in the adverbial phrases of when and how to become a listener or speaker. Different levels of learner agency, therefore, accrue to the identical process of *becoming* either a listener or speaker according to the places in which they occur; the classroom or the community. In this case, Mohamed signposts this place-based interpretation by interspersing the transitivity process, *'think'*.

5.3.2.4 Force, Channel, Involve and Encourage

Force is a commonly distributed transitivity processes which cordons the classroom off from the community. When reflecting on classroom learning Ghareeb says that;

"...I've learned the vocabulary ... from the rules and the ... guidelines and procedures like vocabularies, grammar ... but I ... really do believe ... English ... needs to be somehow ... you need to force it on people..."

In reflecting about community acquisition in the USA he says;

"..English was like forced ... in a way ... the environment we were in we were forced to make mistakes, speak the language ..."

In the classroom the material transitivity process *'force'* in infinitive mode metaphorizes language policy as a physical threat to learner agency. The difficulty of achieving such enforcement is recognized in the hedge *'somehow'* but the injunction nevertheless assumes the desirability of maintaining teacher agency over students' language rights. By contrast, although in the community based excerpt *'force'* is explicitly in passive mode, learner agency seems less threatened. This is because in the community it is the learner's desire to participate in meaningful communication that channels his acquisition processes rather than immediate social agents who determine language policy. This inference is confirmed by the ameliorating hedge *'in a way'*. This channelling denotation of the word *'force'* is illuminated in Ghareeb's interviews where, as we have seen, on the sports field it emerges as *'encouragement'*.

A similar bifurcation occurs in Saif's reflections on English only classroom policy where he considers force as a means of achieving learner involvement, saying;

"...They should involve them you know by force you know (laugh, yeah oh)..."

I laughed in the interview and Saif smiled suggesting a cruce in the underlying assumptions he was making about language learning. Saif has control over passive structures in his interlanguage and could have chosen, *'They should be forced to use English'* but this seems not to be his intent. His decision to front the process of *involvement* and postpone *enforcement* as the means by which this may be achieved appears deliberate. Having gained an understanding

of the importance of participative community-based learning in the USA he wants to bring this about in the classrooms of Al Gharbia and makes it the theme of his utterance. The double use of the filler, *'you know'* is an appeal to the interviewer to try to understand that reconciling participatory acquisition methods with the normal agency rights of the classroom which give majority power to the teacher is difficult.

Saif attempts to do this by selecting the material transitivity process *involve* but rather than placing the students in the participant role they are objectified (*them*) whilst the agents of the school are in the full tripartite subject position (*they*). Simultaneously, he further removes student agency by modalizing the school agents' participation (*should*) in an exophoric reference to his own advisory rights as a local authority educational manager. The effect of these combined discourse features of transitivity choice, allocation of Actor role and modalization, is to create a grammatical euphemism that replaces student involvement with teacher enforcement. Indeed, Saif finally concedes in the enabling 'by' phrase that the outcome of his attempt to reconcile participative learning with the classroom is enforced passivization of the learners and removal of their agency. When unpacked we might read the utterance as;

'Teachers and key stakeholders of the school with agency rights over the curriculum and classroom methodology, as advised by me as an experienced learner and advisory member of local government, are recommended to force students to participate in classroom activities in English for their benefit.'

The contradictions inherent in this attempt at bringing about communicative TESOL in largely authoritarian classrooms illustrates how the bifurcation of *learning* in school and *acquisition* in the *real life* of the community is determined by differential levels of learner agency and realized in discourse through systematically different choice of transitivity processes and associated linguistic features.

5.3.2.5 Loss of Actor Role through Grammatical Metaphor

An example where loss of actor role within the tripartite subject position and an associated form of grammatical metaphor are the systematic grammatical features through which differential learner agency is realized is found in Eva's interviews.

Firstly, when reflecting about her *school* learning Eva employs the possessive process 'had'; '*...had all my education in a government school...*', '*...had all the education [in] Arabic...*' and material process 'took'; '*we took only six periods a week in English...*' However, the choice of being educated in an Arabic medium government school with only six English periods per week is actually determined by the government and the school not Eva such that the underlying

structure is passive: *'I was given my education in a government school'; 'I was given all the education in Arabic'; 'I was given only six periods a week in English.'* The original active transitivity processes appear to function as grammatical metaphors for the passive voice making the Actor role opaque. Even when the gerund is used to emphasize activity, this opacity of agency remains. When Eva says, *'I started learning English in Grade 4'*, the surface grammatical structure indicates a fully tripartite subject participating in the process of starting to learn. However, a place-based interpretation indicates that due to the power relations of the school the subject of the sentence is only dual; 'I' (Eva), is only the theme of the verb phrase and grammatical subject about whom something is predicated, not an *Actor* because she had no decision making rights about the age at which she started learning English; the school decided to allow her to learn and be taught at this certain age.

When reflecting about interim educational places of learning at summer school in Jordan, however, the identical possessive to 'have' is not determined by the institution;

"...we got the desire for this English from my mum... I had couple of courses in Jordan in the summer break..."

Here the possessive 'had' reflects joint agency between Eva and her mother, both of whom decided that she attend summer school because they value English language learning as a facilitator of an enhanced life.

This place-based determination of the manner in which the same transitivity processes, modes and indeed identical phrases must be interpreted, is a key finding of the study which is taken up more fully below (see Para. 5.3.3).

5.3.2.6 Quasi-Modalization

A further feature that realizes the bifurcation between school and community is found in Eva's reflection about use of English in the community in the early learning years. When Eva attempted to use English here mother advised her;

'...you have to say this not that...', 'we have to use in this way...'

This *in situ* advice enabled the acquisition of everyday expressions through social participation such that Eva can say, *'...we know these expressions from my mum...'* Within the community the quasi-modalization '*have to*' indicates a named actor who participates in Eva's acquisition process in an openly declared advisory role.

By contrast, when transposed to the classroom, the same feature indicates *loss* of agency. Consider the following from Maha;

“...the variety she brought in the classroom wasn’t just music. Sometimes we had ... magazines ... we had to cut up some pictures ... it was art ... it wasn’t ... just the language ... it was ... the variety she brought in the classroom that made a big difference.”

This passage describes a communicative English language classroom where music and art are utilized as conduits for ESOL acquisition, but grammatical analysis indicates that student agency remains limited. The students (*we*) are the theme, grammatical subject and indeed actor participants in the phrase ‘*we had to cut up*’. However, here in the classroom the quasi modalization ‘*had to*’ robs them of agency because it opaquely embeds the teacher’s decision making rights over choice of cutting up pictures as an activity.

Returning to Eva at later time in her life when she is acquiring TESOL within the *community*, she metaphorizes her learning as a ‘struggle’. The result is a systematic shift in transitivity processes away from the possessive ‘*had*’ and quasi modalization ‘*had to*’ and their replacement with ‘*try*’; ‘*...try to explain...*’, ‘*...try to run a conversation...*’ etc. Situated back in a place of work at a college within the *community*, the transitivity processes embed neither opaque agents of the school nor joint familial agency. Rather, Eva becomes the transparent, tripartite subject engaging in the participant role of Actor in the English speaking community of academic practice. In these reflections we see a shift from minimal learner agency at school, through dual familial agency in the home, to fuller participatory rights over acquisition in an academic community.

5.3.2.7 Interaction of Transitivity Processes, Loss of Actor Role and Grammatical Metaphor

A more integrated example of the place determined shift in differential agency realized simultaneously by three of the five systematic linguistic features is found in Hadi. In reflecting on his school learning he chooses the following transitivity process;

‘... [we] ...stepped into... what we call their middle school’

The metaphor ‘*stepped into*’ is a material transitivity process that simultaneously embeds time, place and teleology. It refers to starting Middle School (*place*), which is in turn related to age (*time*) and a curriculum based on theories of child development (*teleology*). Whilst the pupils *appear* as thematic and grammatical subjects and indeed Actors who accomplish movement into a new building and level of schooling, the purpose of selecting this transitivity process is to indicate a specific juncture in a bureaucratic educational process which has been decided by neither pupils nor parents. We might, therefore, paraphrase it as, ‘*...when we were required to step into... what they call our middle school...*’ such that the active process becomes

a grammatical metaphor for the passive voice. As with much data about the classroom, transitivity processes are not what they seem but characterized by a significant degree of opaque passivity. A similar analysis pertains to the phrase;

'...that age we only started English...'

Hadi started learning English not of his own volition but because at that juncture of time, place and bureaucratically determined progression he is required to do so. This embedding of bureaucratic agency is further re-enforced by the selection of various forms of the verb 'to be'. For example the negated infinitive, '*didn't used to be*' expressing past habit as in;

'...English didn't used to be a subject in elementary school...'

This phrase naturalizes the lack of English at elementary school in the discourse as if it were a familiar, longstanding pattern of behaviour and tends to hide from view the decision making agents who have determined this. Lack of English at elementary school is after all not a natural disposition but a political decision. Hadi's choice of an existential verb 'to be' ('*was*') in describing how English was introduced has a similar effect;

'...and that was just, you know, grammar and vocabulary... quite like the old ... grammar translation method...'

At face value 'to be' is an inevitable choice of transitivity. However, interrogating its obviousness suggests that it is determined by the fact that Hadi is talking about school. Why does he not select for example, '*I chose to study through learning grammar and vocabulary*' to indicate his own agency over this methodology, or choose to expose the fact that this decision has been made for him by selecting a declarative phrase such as, '*...the teachers believed that grammar and vocabulary learning, like the old grammar translation method was best...'*, or achieve the same result through a passive such as, '*... learning through grammar and vocabulary was decided by the teachers...'*? These choices are available to Hadi within his linguistic repertoire but the social relations of the school appear to channel him into the choice of the existential past tense of the verb 'to be' because it lacks any recognizable agency for grammar translation methodology being used. This vacant agency is replaced by the adverbial '*just*' to suggest mere existence of such methodology. This is emphasized by the filler '*you know*' which invites the interviewer to help account for this apparently agent free existence of traditional teaching methods. These features may be prominent due to the informal interview setting and spoken mode but they may also indicate that Hadi perceives his teachers to have considered grammar translation methodology as an inevitable choice rather than a socially determined fact, a perception which renders the higher order agents of the school opaque to them.

By contrast Hadi's discourse about the home exhibits quite different features and concomitant agentive effects. For example;

'...what I did was that I started looking around ... just reading things on the boxes and ... occasionally on some walls and other things looking at the letters the ones ... that were familiar to me...'

Hadi inhabits a fully tripartite subject position and the density of transitivity processes is striking embedding Hadi as a particularly active agent in his learning. This is remarkable because there is no communicative English language use in his home so the agency associated with 'doing' ('*did*'), '*started looking*', '*looking*, and '*reading*' is unalloyed by any opaque agents of either the home or school. Hadi is fascinated by the letters of English wherever he sees them and of his own volition tries to make sense of them. The use of an existential past form of the verb '*to be*' ('*that were familiar to me*') is also different in terms of agency from similar usage in relation to the school. This is because we know that Hadi's familiarization with the first six letters of the alphabet occurred as the cosmopolitan world penetrated his small town upon the visit of his cousin from the capital city; the agent of this familiarization beyond the school is, therefore, fully transparent. Another case of fully transparent use of the verb '*to be*' occurs when Hadi describes his first discoveries about the English language;

"... oh for some reasons I came to that conclusion very early that ... looks like the letters ... do not necessarily sound as they should that was one of the my first ... understanding, things I understood about English..."

In this case the existential verb is associated with the possessive pronominal indicating that the lack of direct correspondence between phonetics and orthography does not merely exist but is actively possessed by Hadi as his '*...first ... understanding ...about English*'.

The systematic differential place-based use and necessary interpretation of these linguistic features embeds a lack of agency over classroom learning, cordoning it off from acquisition in the broader community where a fully tripartite and often intensely active agency is traced.

5.3.2.8 Metonymical Clustering as Indicators of Differential Agency

Differential agency is also realized through lexical choice. There are clusters of metonyms for the manner in which ESOL is acquired which are different for the classroom and the community. In the classroom we find *learning, studying, practicing, doing exercises* and *memorizing* (Ghaleb, Abdullah, Khalil, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, and Hadi). In the community beyond we find, *participating, sharing, using, practicing, communicating, conversing, judging, negotiating, implementing, self-managing, self-auditing, anticipating* and *collaborating* (Ghaleb, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Mohamed, Shamsa, and Mohamed). All of the latter presuppose greater agency except the agency neutral term '*practicing*' which is the only category common to both domains.

5.3.2.8.1 Learn and Use

A key example of this metonymic bifurcation, exhibited by two-thirds of the participants, is 'learn' and 'use' with reference to English in the classroom and community respectively. For example, Mohamed says of his time in the United States;

"...we had the chance to learn and then use whatever have been gained or obtained ... through the materials and practice them on the society or the community..."

Learn is coordinated with *use* by the temporal adverbial *then*, tending to assume a linear relationship between classroom learning which occurs first, and subsequent use in the community. Ghareeb cuts the classroom off from the community in a similar manner;

"...the environment we were in we were forced to make mistakes speak the language ... the word we learned in the classroom or outside ... we were using it..."

Whilst the transitivity process '*learned*' is coordinated with *or*, making it available to both classroom and community domains it relates only to the synthetic learning of vocabulary whereas the key theme of Ghareeb's utterance is the facilitative nature of the analytic *use* of acquired lexis in the community beyond the classroom. A similar division is found in Abdullah whose language *learning* in school is passivized in the phrase, '*I feel like I'm forced to learn*', whereas in the interim world of gaming he has direct agency over the material process of language *use* with the progressive aspect of the verb emphasizing this in the phrase '*...I feel like I'm using it...*' This is immediately re-enforced with a negatively orientated statement that denies a passive role for language acquisition in gaming; '*...I don't feel myself being forced...*'

5.3.3 Place Dependent Interpretation of the Actor Role in the Tripartite Subject

The corollary of the foregoing analysis is the necessarily place dependent nature of the analyst's interpretative processes. Consider, for example, the contrastive meaning of the transitivity process '*started learning*' in relation to school as opposed to home acquisition of English in the following;

I started studying English at school. (Saeeda)

I started ... watching movies... (Fakhra, on the university library)

I started reading myself at the age of 13. (Hadi, on the home)

I started to read a first story. (Abdullah, on the home)

I started picking up a lot of vocabularies. (Ghareeb, on the university football pitch)

In the first school based case we cannot regard the subject position that Saeeda inhabits as fully tripartite; she forfeits the Actor role because it is agents of the school who decide when pupils begin learning English. By contrast, in the second case, even moving a short distance within the institution to the library the discourse determines that we must return significant

features of the Actor role to Fakhra because, whilst the institution provides and vets the movies available, it is Fakhra who decides to watch them. In the two home-based cases we must interpret the subject positions inhabited by Hadi and Abdullah as fully tripartite, including the Actor role, because both show significant agency over the decision to start reading. In the community-based case of Ghareeb there is a subtle nuance of agentive effect. In fact he inhabits a tripartite subject position, including the Actor role, with regard to the physical activity of playing football and verbal processes of socializing with the associated community of practice but *not* with regard to language acquisition. This is indicated by the transitivity process '*picking up*' which metaphorizes English acquisition as a physical activity, like plucking flowers or fruit, and embeds language acquisition as a casual side-effect of social participation over which the learner has little or no direct agency. It is this subliminal English acquisition that we have noted above as being the most effective.

This place determined interpretation of discourse is illuminated even more clearly when we consider several identical phrases as in the following;

I started learning English in grade 4. (Eva, reflecting about school)

I started learning English OK ... in the school when I was in Grade 4. (Fakhra)

I started learning words. (Hadi, reflecting about the home)

I started also learning some very simple sentences... like made in say USA. (Hadi, reflecting about the home)

In the first two school based cases, as we have shown, neither Eva nor Fakhra inhabit fully tripartite subject positions. Their roles as Actor are denuded because they had little or no decision making rights over either attending school, or at which point English learning was introduced to the school curriculum. However, in Hadi's case, when the *identical verb phrase* is shifted to a reflection about the home the interpreter must restore him to the Actor role within a fully tripartite subject position by dint of the different social relations which now allow him to make the decision to learn English words and sentences himself. This place-based hermeneutic is a key finding of the study.

5.3.4 Complementary Relationship between the Classroom and the Community

The differential agency of places of ESOL acquisition leads participants to regard the school classroom as *necessary* but *not sufficient* for their acquisition processes. Maha neatly sums this up when she says;

"... I needed someone to ...introduce me to English and to teach me the ... rules ... I needed someone to ... teach me in the classroom. So the ... presence of the teachers was ... very necessary... [But] it's not enough just ... being in the classroom, you have to continue outside..."

In spite of the unnatural bifurcation of school and community, it is clear from this that a more balanced relationship could be brought into being with greater learner agency accruing to the classroom. Only one participant (Abdullah) totally rejects the classroom as being irrelevant. All others have experienced various degrees of complementary relationships between classroom and community in their ESOL acquisition and it should be possible to build on this. This view was confirmed by all participants who responded to member checking requests.

5.4 An Increase in Critical Perspective on Place through Reflective Methodology

Two slightly more critical properties of place emerged in the second interviews where the initial place awareness of participants was explicitly taken up by the researcher.

5.4.1 The ESOL Classroom as a Place of Increased Voice

Shamsa eventually showed an appreciation of increased student voice similar to that found in Fakhra's initial interview. This occurred when the prevalent practice of memorization was replaced by meaningful participation in classroom activities. She reflects;

"...I ... start to hate memorizing ... when I learn I see the ... difference ... that's something you ... know you have ..."

The visual transitivity process 'see' is a metaphor for the mental process of understanding which occurs when the learner takes a voiced role in the academic community of practice as opposed to merely memorizing formulaic knowledge voiced and transacted by the teacher. Mohamed further recognizes that such participation can lead to a significant increase in student voice. Speaking of school in the UAE he reflects;

"...we have [been] ... taught ... whenever we have a question there is only one answer..."

By contrast, when reflecting on his participation in academic learning in the United States he says;

"... it's the other way around it's not ... having one singular answer ... there are so many open questions where you have ... space and autonomy ... to think and to bring ... whatever in mind and then try to like a puzzle ... have a final answer..."

Possessing such mental space and independence in order to reach a multi-voiced perspective is not limited to learning English in the USA. Several participants within the UAE (e.g. Delilah, Eva and Fakhra) note how gaining English increases the potential for learner voice in the classroom. Delilah's reflections in particular indicate this where she says;

"... If you listen to the new generation you'll find teachers now very complaining about all our children, why? They have the ability to uh (laughing) speak and ... this ... weren't before right... so ... they stop our abilities."

Conflict of interest between teacher and learner may arise within the communicative ESOL classroom because whilst memorization determines a single teacher voice, communicative methodology has the inherent potential to threaten it with newly acquired student voices. Delilah's laughter indicates a cruce in her assumptions about the status quo voices of the teachers whose attempt to circumvent potential conflict is realized by their participation in the verbal process of '*complaining*' and material process of '*stopping*' the new voices of the students. Her reflection, however, generally bodes well for the TESOL acquisition of future generations in Al Gharbia.

5.4.2 Gaining Increased Access to Place and Culture through ESOL Acquisition

Two-thirds of the participants believe ESOL offers them greater access to place (e.g. Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi, and Maha). Ghareeb's experience negatively confirms this because he was initially denied access to place through bureaucratic decision makers who required him to have ESOL competence before financing his study abroad.

Increased access to place through ESOL is seen as not only benefiting learners but also their interlocutors. Acquiring ESOL increased Mariam's confidence and independence such that she felt able to '*add value*' (her expression) to many situations in which she found herself. Mohamed too explains that acquiring English;

"... allow(s) you to ... collaborate with the foreigner with the different ... culture so this also give(s) you the plus ... in understanding ... the other world..."

Mohammed thus regards the increased access to place facilitated through place-based ESOL as a form of cultural collaboration and Ghaleb, Mohammed's acquaintance, confirms this by exhibiting considerable agency over the new culture to which he was exposed in the United States. Not only was he able to select aspects to participate in, such as informal conversation and outdoor recreation, but also to reject those which were alien to his culture such as alcohol and pre-marital relationships. Such agency over the negotiated transfer of culture through the practice of community-based ESOL acquisition is widely distributed in the data (e.g. Saif, Delilah, Hadi, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed and Shamsa) and suggests that place-based TESOL offers considerable potential for cultural dynamism.

Discussion

This chapter considers the key properties of the places of ESOL acquisition that emerge from the analysis and attempts to interpret them in light of the literature and their significance within the context of the study.

6.1 Inherent Lack of Criticality

Place awareness is present in the initial reflections of all participants although it varies in that each individual reflects on a different but overlapping range of places which they consider to have been significant for their ESOL acquisition. Mariam, for example, is most aware of the classroom and interim educational places but also speaks of places within the broader community. Abdullah and Ghareeb on the other hand emphasize community places whilst being aware of the classroom and interim places in their schools and colleges. Taking account of this variation, we can say that place awareness is ubiquitously distributed throughout the data.

As we have seen, however, the categories of initial place awareness emerge without any associated understanding of the explicit interests vested in the range of places in which participants acquired ESOL. A significant feature of participant place awareness is, therefore, its fundamental *lack* of a critical perspective. The fact that ubiquitous place awareness emerges without concomitant insight into societal power relations indicates that research participants *systematically* overlook the hermeneutic processes by which geographical space is demarcated into habitable social places (Osberg & Biesta, 2008; Soja, 1989; Gruenewald, 2003a and 2003b; Gruenewald and Smith, 2008; Fairclough, 1989). Instead, participants assume the hermeneutic of place, and particularly that of the classroom, to be an inevitable, quasi-natural process rather than a socially constructed phenomenon determined by the interests of hegemonic agents (Fairclough, 1992b: 12; Fairclough, 1992a: 90; McKenzie, 1992: 226).

Most general TESOL literature aimed at a homogenized global market tends to perpetuate this lack of criticality (White, 1998; Richards, 1999 and 2001; Brown, 1995). To attract broad readership it assumes a prototypical classroom that gives teachers agency over learning and fails to incorporate empirical studies which have attempted to unpack the social relations of the classroom and expose its true agents. For example, Young & Nguyen (2002) in their analysis of high school science show how textual features such as nominalization interpellate (Janks & Ivanic, 1992) students into the unequal power relations of the classroom. Rampton (1999) and Huang (2011) also show that learner agency is the primary determinant of

acquisition and that when places of learning offer sufficient agency for students to transform their identity through language learning, acquisition is most effective. The fact that this occurs more frequently within the social relations of interim educational places, such as the playground (Rampton, 1999), contrastively highlights the lack of agency which is often experienced in the classroom. These empirical studies support the current study's findings on effective places of acquisition and their key property of learner agency. This is further confirmed by the fact that learner agency is increasingly becoming a central construct in applied linguistics (Gao & Zhan, 2011; AAAL, 2012).

6.2 An Opaque Hermeneutic of Place

The hermeneutic of place within the data appears to be systematically embedded in participant discourse in an opaque manner. This finding confirms both the choice of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989) and the place-based (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008) focus of this study because it is the heuristic juxtaposition of critical methodology and a place-based perspective within the data analysis process that has allowed this understanding to emerge. Whilst the fact that ESOL acquisition has to *take place* somewhere is obvious, it is neither obvious nor inevitable that the power relations of the places of acquisition should go unconsidered as they do in participant reflections. The finding of an *opaque hermeneutic of place*, therefore, also confirms the philosophical approach of this study because the construct of *place* emerges from the data *precisely* as the kind of un-interrogated assumption which, according to Gadamer (1975), indicates an axiological prejudice. This *prejudice of place* has embedded in it the values which participants draw upon to answer the question, "Where am I?" when they engage in discourse. As we have seen, it is the answer to this question which significantly determines the prefabricated chunks of language participants select as they navigate through their linguistic resources and express their meanings in specific situated discourse (Fairclough, 1989: 151). However, because of the opacity of the hermeneutic of place that we have discovered, we know that the participants of this study are systematically unaware of the *source* of these values which drive their discourse. Critical theory suggests that this systematic failure of participants to reflect on the social power relations inherent in their places of ESOL acquisition is due to the actions of hegemonic agents who have pre-interpreted geographic spaces such as the classroom into inhabitable places on the basis of values consistent with their own interests (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) which have subsequently been naturalized within participant discourse (Fairclough, 1989).

This finding brought about through the combination of critical theory and a place-based perspective contributes to knowledge of how power is embedded in educational discourse. It is, perhaps, not an unexpected finding because ESOL students are only a special case in the

pervading ideological penetration of global society by hegemonic interests. Hitherto, however, the manner in which this penetration has been achieved within specific TESOL contexts has not been explained and this study seeks to contribute to such an understanding. Before we discuss what this lack of critical perspective might mean for the ESOL acquisition processes of the participants it will be helpful to consider how the naturalization of place may have occurred during the course of their English learning.

6.3 The Imperative of Fluent, Meaningful Communication and its Normative Effect

It is particularly difficult for English language learners to challenge naturalized hegemonic interpretations of the places of their acquisition such as the classroom, library, Independent Learning Centre, college canteen, office, clinic, shopping mall or public café once they have been established by government bureaucrats, educational professionals or entrepreneurs. Indeed, it is a *necessary condition* of the fluent, meaningful communication they strive toward that they *do* assume the values upon which these interpretations are made. If they do not possess the linguistic competence to subconsciously embed sociologically given values of place in their discourse they are unlikely to be able to produce fluent, comprehensible communication. An opaque hermeneutic of place within learner participant discourse is, therefore, to some extent inevitable. However, Fairclough's criticism (1992a: 83) of competency models of language acquisition such as Hymes (1972) and Candlin (1975) remains valid because they merely accede to the necessity of normative understandings of places of ESOL acquisition and fail to identify the interests that have formed them. Whilst in the recent past TESOL professionals and other education theorists have recognized the necessity of informal learning beyond the classroom (e.g. Blackburn, 1971; Fathman, 1976; Johnson, 1984; Ellis, 1999; Rampton, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Eraut, 2000; Field & Spence, 2000; Baron, Wilson & Riddell, 2000) few have linked its effectiveness directly to social power relations and the increase in learner agency inherent in *places* of informal learning.

Norming of hegemonic social relations in the discourse of this study is achieved in several ways. At the most direct level through the selection of lexis which metaphorizes place through its prototypical function (Aitchison, 1987) such that participants do not have to carefully redefine the meanings they ascribe to each place in which they must produce discourse but are able to achieve adequate contextualized communication through rule of thumb fuzziness (Aitchison, 1987). In the case of this study we have seen how common nouns such as *teacher*, *student*, *school* and *classroom* and differential sets of metonyms for learning are used in this way. For example, participants rarely refer to their teachers, fellow learners, schools or classroom designation (which often reflects streaming by categories of language development decided by institutional agents) by name or attempt to unpack the metaphorical meanings

embedded in these nominalizations. Benwell & Stokoe (2006: 111) note how such nominalization is the most pervasive means through which assumptions about unequal power relations are perpetuated in discourse. This study, however, exposes a more opaque embedding of unequal power relations achieved through participants' systematic place-based use of four other interrelated linguistic features which indicate differential learner agency between classroom and community; choice of transitivity processes, loss of Actor role within the tripartite subject position, modalization and use of grammatical metaphor. When referring to the classroom, participants systematically chose transitivity processes that assumed denuded learner agency, placed themselves as learners in subject positions that robbed them of the Actor role and employed modalization that rendered their teachers' agency deeply opaque within a form of grammatical metaphor. Hence, the combination of CDA methodology and place-based perspective has enabled the study to provide detailed confirmation and explanation for earlier more general findings by van Lier (1982), Fairley (2009) and Matbouli (2009) of relatively low levels of learner agency within the classroom.

6.4 Challenging Normative Values through Narrative

There is an inevitable tendency to naturalize power relations in discourse (Fairclough, 1992:72; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) due to the metaphoricity of words and syntactic structures which enable competent and fluent language use (Aitchison, 1987). However, this effect is heightened in the case of the language learner who has less complex and sophisticated linguistic resources. One way in which the non-mother tongue participants of this study attempt to counter such naturalization is to employ narrative techniques. We saw this particularly in Maha who chose to invoke an extensive narrative comparing an authoritarian Arabic language teacher with a communicative English teacher in an attempt to point out and criticize assumed unequal power relations of the classroom. This is categorized in the study as *awareness of differential agency* and is considered as only incipiently critical because it does not extend to identification of the interests of opaque agents of the educational institution and government who remotely control the social relations of the classroom. Maha appears to have employed a narrative technique because she was unable to achieve her critical intent at the lower level of textual features alone. Benwell & Stokoe confirm that such narrative techniques are important macro processes that enable participants to establish agency alongside micro level grammatical features (2006: 160). To achieve the level of incipient criticality Maha sought without employing a lengthy narrative would have necessitated a set of grammatical resources not available to her or indeed to most of the other participants. This is indicated when shortly after having made this marked extended utterance to challenge the status quo power relations of the classroom, she unwittingly reverts to assumed *unequal*

power relations within the lower order linguistic features of her discourse by consistently selecting the quasi-modal transitivity process *'have to'* when referring to her classroom activities. As we have seen, this creates a grammatical metaphor that robs Maha of the Actor role within the tripartite subject position and re-naturalizes normative classroom power relations by rendering opaque the agency of the teacher over Maha's learning processes. In written frameworks of discourse production such narrative techniques can be highly effective (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006) but may prove lengthy and troublesome within the less iterative framework of an interview. It is less effort for the study's participants to navigate their linguistic resources according to the imperative of fluent, meaningful communication via the smooth employment of prototypical lexis and the range of linguistic features we have analysed. This generally necessitates the normative assumption of societal power relations and backgrounds (van Leeuwen, 1996) the hegemonic agents who have pre-interpreted places such as the classroom, largely hiding them from view.

In the current study, where the researcher is an ESOL professional and many of the interviews took place in an educational institution, it may have been even more difficult for participants to avoid subconsciously embedding unequal power relations as they navigated through common lexis and textual features. They will have most likely made subconscious discourse choices consistent with the values they believed I held about their places of acquisition. If, for example, they had not assumed the unequal power relations inherent in the subject positions of teacher and learner they may have been concerned that I would not have easily understand their utterances.

6.5 The Necessity of Place-Based Differential Interpretation of Identical Discourse

The subconscious concern of participants to select linguistic features that carry assumptions and values consistent with the place in which their discourse emerges (Fairclough, 1989) is well grounded and supported in the data. In particular the textual analysis showed that identical transitivity processes and indeed whole identical phrases had necessarily to be interpreted quite differently by the interlocutor/researcher depending on the places in which they occurred or which were being reflected on. In particular, we saw that the initiation of the ESOL acquisition process signalled by the choice of the transitivity process *'started learning'* had to be differentially interpreted between the school classroom and community places such as the home. This was because the unequal social relations inherent in the school classroom necessarily removed the Actor role from the subject position made available to the participants in their discourse; a role which was automatically returned to them even within identical linguistic features solely by virtue of a shift in their reflections away from the classroom toward a different context of situation. This effect is brought about by the

interlocutor's need to go beyond the endophoric reference system of the text and refer to a different set of socially determined exophoric references (Halliday & Hassan, 1985).

This finding of a differential hermeneutic of place confirms the place-based orientation of the research process and underscores the significance of a historical re-affirmation of *place* as a construct for sociological and pedagogical analysis (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). Not only do the participants in this study navigate through their linguistic resources in a place-determined manner but also their interlocutor, the researcher, must interpret their utterances according to his understanding of the societal power relations inherent in their places of learning.

6.6 The Consequences of an Opaque Hermeneutic of Place

The discovery of an opaque hermeneutic of place embedded in the production and interpretation of discourse has considerable significance for ESOL acquisition within the context of the study. Firstly, the linguistic features the participants have acquired as ESOL learners; lexis, transitivity processes, subject positions, syntactic structures, passivation and modes etc., will have been and will continue to be opaquely determined and limited by their places of acquisition. Secondly, the manner in which these features are mapped to the semantic content of their utterances through meaning relations, nominalization, lexical and grammatical metaphorization and the text internal (*endophoric*) referencing system of logical connection, will also be opaquely determined by text external (*exophoric*) reference to the specific contexts of situation in which they must produce discourse (Van Dijk, 1996: 89). Thirdly, the manner in which their discourse is 'consumed' or interpreted will be opaquely limited to what is made possible within the social relations that pertain to the contexts of its production (*ibid.*).

The effects on the acquisition process of these currently opaque functions of place will override those emanating from conscious attempts to structure formal ESOL acquisition through the selection of the *content* and *processes* of learning within transactional, systemic or re-constructural curricula types. For example, whatever sequences of language acquisition are discerned in empirical studies (Ellis, 1999: 73-117) they are inadequate as a guide to selecting linguistic content because they are not replicable (Ellis, 1999: 119-158). This is largely because acquisition sequences can only be fully explicated if they are accompanied by a systematic understanding of the social dynamics of the places in which they emerge. Likewise, the outcomes of ESOL curricula based on the selection of certain learning processes (e.g. McKernan, 2008) can only be predicted and understood if they take systematic account of the construct of place within their design. This is because, on the basis of our current analysis, similar learning processes, for example action research based on controversial issues

(McKernan, 2008: 151; Slattery, 2006: 160), will lead to the emergence of quite different learning outcomes depending on the places in which they occur. As we noted in the literature review with respect to general education, it is only the conscious, explicit and systematic consideration of *where* students learn that marks the postmodern approach (e.g. Slattery, 2006) as a transformative learning model. Other, even quite advanced process oriented and reconceptualizing curricula models (e.g. McKernan, 2008; Pinar, 1991), remain in a non-transformational, modernist mode due to their failure to understand the place-based dynamic and their tendency to restrict learning to the social relations of the classroom.

6.7 Classroom Power Relations and ESOL Acquisition

The main reason why transformative ESOL is unlikely to occur in the classroom alone is because of all the places mentioned in participant reflections it is the one that appears throughout the data as thoroughly naturalized in participant discourse. Its existence goes unquestioned even in strongly negative cases such as Abdullah, who reluctantly attends school whilst emotionally rejecting the classroom, and Ghareeb, for whom classroom learning is an irksome burden. Similarly Saif, who seeks to transform the classroom environment into something more akin to that of the community, makes no attempt to interrogate its vested interests that hinder ESOL acquisition. Whilst such participants are aware of the limitations of the classroom in contrast to the efficacious properties of interim educational and community places, they are unable to critically question the existence of the classroom *per se* and its inherent social relations. This lack of critical perspective is confirmed by Matbouli (2009) in a similar Middle Eastern context.

Indeed, our textual analysis reveals that the school classrooms experienced by learners in this study tended to perpetuate social power relations which maintain the teachers' decision making rights over their language acquisition process. The resultant low level of learner agency has led to a heavy reliance on the teacher as a source of knowledge about language as an academic object and the creation of low risk learning environments in which students do not feel any pressure to communicate in the target language but often revert to their mother tongue. This has led to non-participative approaches to teaching and learning that are ineffective for language acquisition. The overall effect of this is generally negative learner attitudes toward primary and secondary school ESOL classrooms.

We noted that some tertiary classrooms tended to rebalance social power relations to certain degrees by allowing less formal teacher/learner relationships to develop. As noted and encouraged by Fairley (2009) in a similar context, this increased learner agency often gave students greater freedom over topic choice and learning methods and consequently shifted

the acquisition process toward intrinsically motivated, participative and meaning-focused tasks. This rebalancing within some areas of the tertiary sector, however, remains under the control of the teacher and tends to prove the general rule of unequal classroom power relations which are inevitably shaped in favour of the teacher by broader social dynamics. We can say then, that whilst there is a range of learner agency within the classrooms of this study this range is placed at the lower end of a putative learner agency scale. This finding is supported by Matbouli (2009) who found that although female students in the Middle East acknowledged responsibility toward their own learning more than males both genders tended to cling to transactional models of learning and saw their teachers as having overriding authority in the classroom.

6.8 The Contrast between the Classroom and 'Real Life'

The unquestioned assumption that the classroom, with generally unequal power relations between teacher and student, is the natural place of ESOL learning is illuminated further when we contrast it to participant discourse about the community. A key aspect of the demarcation of place in participant discourse is, indeed, the distinct separation of the school from the *real, actual, natural, 'life itself'*, of the community. All of these *in vivo* terms for the community are used in a manner that infers that the classroom is by contrast an unreal, non-actual and unnatural place for ESOL acquisition and as a result bifurcated from the practical learning or *phronesis* (Gadamer, 1975: 18-19) of the community. This is exhibited directly in the unique sets of metonymical clusters of terms used for language acquisition that associate quite differently with the classroom and community domains (see section 5.3.2.8 above). This helps explain the longstanding distinction between TESOL *learning* and *acquisition* (Littlewood, 1984). This study shows formal *learning* to be a function of the manner in which status quo power relations of society permeate the classroom and *acquisition* to be a subliminal process based on creative participation in communities of practice beyond, where the learner has increased agency (Littlewood, 1984: 4). The distinction is, therefore, an unnatural one and throughout this study I use *acquisition* as the umbrella term for all the place-based processes, including those that occur in classrooms, through which learners acquire spoken communication and literacy skills in English.

The nature of the strongly marked boundary between classroom and community is particularly exposed in the analysis of Saif's attempt to dissolve it by introducing community-based acquisition processes into the classroom. His reflective discourse led him to the tautologous conclusion that teachers must *force* students to participate *freely* in classroom English learning. This tautology can only be resolved through critical interrogation of the social relations of the classroom (Bartsch, 2008; Sorenson, 2008). Only a systematic consideration of

the places in which language is acquired will enable learners and teachers to penetrate the classroom with the *phronesis* of various communities of practice and their more distributed power relations, increased learner agency and participative learning that participants such as Saif perceive as necessary for effective ESOL acquisition. The pervasive lack of critical perspective within the data suggests that considerable professional reflection would be needed on the part of all of the participants for this synthesis to be achieved.

6.9 The Classroom; a Placeless Place – Confirmation of Foucauldian Pedagogy

In Gruenewald's terms then, the current study shows the classrooms experienced by the participants in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi to be *placeless* (2003b: 8) because they are demarcated as being divorced from authentic interactions with the community. They are generic places; substitutes for all places. As such, much of the language used within them has little indexicality (Ochs, 1990); it has no valence with the needs, purposes and social actions of the students within real communities of practice and their associated social relations. This denaturing of discourse, its bowdlerization, is primarily what leads to extrinsic motivation and instrumental learning approaches in ESOL classrooms rather than intrinsic participation based on the learner's own agency. This finding is consistent with Bernstein's concept of re-contextualization (1996) where discourse imported from real-life communities for pedagogical purposes takes on meanings which merely reproduce the power relations of the classroom. The fact that participant discourse in this study consistently sets the classroom aside from the real-life of the community and in every case subconsciously demarcates it as a place of unequal power relations also confirms Foucault's view of the classroom as a place for the purposes of regulation of the knowledge/power nexus rather than education (1977) in the sense of the creation of new knowledge.

The physical spaces of educational institutions become classrooms when they are *defined* by unequal social relations that favour the teacher and are embedded in classroom discourse (Young & Nguyen 2002). We can show this by asking, "When is the classroom not a classroom?" The answer is, when the people inside it are allowed to regulate the social relations situated within it on their own terms without necessarily deferring to the authority of the teacher. This occurs, for example, when students socialize in the classroom during school break times or when extra curricula events occur there. An example of this is found in Delilah's reflections where she frequently remained in the physical classroom with her teacher after the bureaucratic timing of the formal teaching and learning schedule had ended. We noted that at these post-lesson times decision making power over the learning process shifted significantly toward Delilah as learner and that this power was indicated by her use of the interrogative mode. This is consistent with Matbouli (2009) who found female students were more able to

shift away from the normal power relations of the classroom. This is further illustrated by another comment by Delilah, who says of her male teacher;

"I was the big headache for him."

This metaphorization of the effort and mental strain caused to Delilah's male teacher as a physical '*headache*' brought on by her determined interrogation and passion to learn was uttered with a smile and traces in her discourse an ironic 'turning of the tables' of power relations. As we noted with Ghareeb, it is usually the *students* who consider the interrogative rights of the teacher and the imperative to learn as a burden to bear and a strain on *their* attention. Reversing this gave Delilah the ability to participate in her ESOL learning process on her own terms and was a key property of her success. This complex negotiation between individual learners and teachers for agency over pedagogic discourse exhibited in the present study confirms the empirical research of Lanas & Corbett (in press), Canagarajah (1993) and van Dijk (1996) which seeks to disaggregate simplistic views of educational hegemony and show how it is achieved in the lived experiences of students. However, all too often when the bureaucratic demarcation of classroom space resumes under the normal timetable, it returns to being just another cell within the Panopticon of the educational institution (Foucault, 1997: 200) where power is generally assumed to reside firmly in the hands of teachers and educational managers and the benefits of learner agency are once again diminished.

In this respect it is important to note that social relations in the classroom are generally pared down to the minimum; a set of students, who in terms of agency are homogenous, being subordinate to normally just a single teacher to whom decision making rights accrue. The norm of a singular teacher voice emphasizes the classroom's generic nature and explains why when a double-voiced relationship arises in friendly relations between a student and teacher, as with Delilah, or when significant attempts are made toward communicative teaching as with Maha and Abdullah, a limited but more authentic set of social relations emerges within the classroom and ESOL learning is often more rapid and thorough as attested by Blackburn (1972), Slattery (2006) and Fairley (2009). Classrooms that exhibit these kinds of social relations sit on the putative learner agency cline closer to places we have termed interim educational places.

6.10 Classrooms as Ideological Places

We have seen that when places are naturalized in discourse in the manner of the classrooms of this study, the agents who have pre-interpreted them are rendered opaque (Fairclough, 1989) and the values upon which these interpretations are founded are backgrounded (van Leeuwen, 1996) such that they appear as inevitable and agentless places. As a

consequence of this naturalization and lack of critical awareness, I believe we must consider the classrooms experienced by participants in this study as ideological places invested with hegemonic interests (Fairclough, 1992: 72). Further, I believe that the values upon which the social relations of these classrooms are founded must be interrogated and transformed if students are to gain greater agency over their ESOL acquisition processes. A deliberate policy of place-based learning may well raise awareness of the unbalanced social power relations of the classroom and help toward such transformation. Although this challenge to the ESOL methodology promulgated by status quo agents will not be without risks as Cameron (2008) discovered in Australia, it must be attempted not only in order to achieve an increase in the effectiveness of ESOL teaching and learning but also to offer students and teachers new ways of positioning themselves in the global TESOL community. By increasing ESOL learner agency within and beyond the classroom, in particular helping learners in the region create their own interim educational places, we will start them on the route toward re-inhabiting their geography (Gruenewald & Smith: 2008) and becoming place-makers in their own right, perhaps leading to the transformative experiences that should accrue to all those who acquire a new language.

However before turning to the nature and effectiveness of interim educational places, it is necessary to briefly consider the sociological consequences of these findings about the classroom.

6.11 The Sociological Consequences of an Opaque Hermeneutic of Place

Our analysis indicates that, just as systematic consideration of the places where learning occurs as proposed in postmodern curricula (Slattery, 2006) has been shown to transform *general* education, so it might transform the *specific* practice of TESOL if we are courageous enough to implement it. We have seen that the ESOL classroom sits low on the cline of acquisition effectiveness because its opaque social relations limit learner agency and consequently their active production and interpretation of English discourse. Simultaneously, we have seen that the participants in this study, all successful ESOL learners, are consciously aware of, at the very least, having complemented their learning in a broad range of places of acquisition beyond the classroom. Whilst few participants believe they would have achieved success without their classroom experiences none believe they would have achieved their current language ability within the classroom alone. The critical issue is that the *reasons* for the significance of learning in places beyond the classroom remain unanalysed within an opaque hermeneutic of place. It is this hermeneutic that determines discourse production and interpretation and its discovery indicates the properties of the *places* of acquisition, especially their social relations, to be the hidden drivers in the ESOL learning process.

As a consequence, ESOL professionals will only be able to transform their practice when they begin to transparently employ the construct of place as the central organizing principle for English curriculum design in a systematic manner. The reasons for neglecting the issue of place-based learning must be considered to be largely political. The kind of linguistic features students may acquire and the way they might map these to the meanings they wish to make is less easily controlled by powerful decision makers if they learn beyond the unequal social relations of the classroom in the 'real world' of various communities of practice. In particular, Emirati women, who account for some 80% of college students in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi, are often restricted in their movements within the community as a means of maintaining social norms and are sometimes confined mostly to the home when not present in the college. It may prove difficult in the short term to change these gender based values, increase learner agency in the classroom (Matbouli, 2009) and move out into the community beyond (Slattery, 2006; Umphrey, 2007) but such sociological challenges will have to be faced if both educators and students are to effectively re-insert place (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: 148) into the ESOL curricula of the education systems in Al Gharbia.

In order to achieve transformational English learning, ESOL professionals in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi will have to come to regard their students as being situated in a broader movement that is seeking to reclaim the significance of the local in an age of globalization (Gruenewald and Smith, 2008: xiii.). They will need to find ways of preparing their students for global citizenship through culturally appropriate participation in their local communities of practice.

6.12 Interim Educational Places; Culturally Appropriate Contexts

In this regard, a finding of the study that indicates a culturally appropriate route toward such transformative, place-based ESOL acquisition in the context where social place restrictions are in force for the majority of the college population, is the category of *Interim Educational Places*.

Informal Interim Educational Places emerged first from Saeeda's reflections who noted that whilst her classroom lacked the active English learning she recognized as important, the challenges of participating in real-life English speaking communities of practice, where interlocutors were not tolerant of her learner status, were too great for her. She found that places within educational institutions, which existed somewhere between the unchallenging classroom and over challenging community best facilitated her ESOL acquisition. When she removed herself from the classroom into other places within the same educational institution, or places beyond, such as the English club, inhabited largely by members of educational

institutions, her discourse traces a significant change of role within a different set of social relations. This confirms the shift in agency rights over discourse noted by van Lier (1982) when learning moves out of the classroom.

The importance of the current study, however, is its insight into *why* this shift occurs. Just as identical discourse must be interpreted differently depending on the places from within which it emerges, so participants must interpret their identities differently as they emerge through the accomplishment of social action within various communities of practice. The same people who are *teachers* and *students* in the classroom, when transported to different places, even within the same educational institutions, no longer inhabit these subject positions but produce discourse on the basis of the new social relations they assume.

Saeeda and Fakhra found that although they were often dealing with their own teachers in interim educational places such as corridors and clubs these teachers no longer behaved as omniscient observers, listening and paying attention to mistakes as they did in the classroom. On the contrary, they now became participants in the transitivity process of *encouraging* their interlocutors to actively communicate in English, not as a *student* but an independent *learner discourse participant*. We have noted *encouraging* as the key transitivity process in facilitative ESOL classrooms because it arises as the teacher lowers her authoritative threshold and allows more equitable social relations. However, within Interim Educational Places, such modified power relations appear to be the norm rather than the exception such that they are in general more facilitative of ESOL acquisition (Fathman, 1976; Johnson, 1983; Rampton, 1999).

The situation is similar within other informal places, in particular institutional cafeterias and places such as sports fields and virtual places. Here the social relations determine that we must interpret the transitivity process 'force' as a synonym for 'encourage', rather than considering it as emanating from teacher agency as in the classroom. In these places both '*encouraged to use*' and '*forced to use*' take on the meaning of '*channelled to use*' English through the desire to participate in social action within a less hierarchical set of social relations even though they include the teachers, fellow language learners from the classroom and managers of educational institutions. Utilizing informal community learning *within* the bounds of educational institutions confirms Field & Spence's (2000) balanced view of the need for both formal and informal learning.

My study also shows virtual interim educational places to be highly facilitative of ESOL acquisition because they significantly extend access to legitimate peripheral participation within English speaking communities of practice that exhibit less hierarchical relations. This finding confirms Lam's study on computer mediated learning (2000) to some extent and

suggests that cyber-places should be carefully considered as an area for investigation into place-based ESOL.

The advantages of such interim environments are, therefore, that whilst teachers and other educational professionals relinquish their superior agency and become mutual discourse participants, they retain their professional understanding of the learners' needs and possess the training to accommodate them. This creates a participative learning situation without the overt stress of 'real-life' communities of practice. A key feature of this re-adjustment of social power relations is a consequent shift away from a teacher led focus on the structure and accurate use of language toward intrinsic meaning making (Sorensen, 2008). Within these more equal social relations any overt focus on language features such as lexis, structure or pronunciation will occur subliminally within discourse repair and confirmation processes and must be considered as a form of *peer-correction* (Johnson, 1983). This defocussing on accuracy means that ESOL learning processes within Interim Educational Places will generally take on task-based, analytic forms of learning which create purposeful, intrinsically motivated tasks indexically related to the context and lead to intrinsic motivation, retention of knowledge, increased self-worth and a desire for life-long learning (Sorensen, 2008).

This quite subtle shift of social relations is brought about *merely* as a result of identical people or people with similar societally defined roles (teacher, student, educational manager etc.) shifting into different places. The discovery of a range of interim places within educational institutions which assume subtly different sets of power relations lends further support to Fairclough's understanding (1989: 150) that total social space is not only divided up into a set of institutional places but also, that a set of different contexts of situation are distributed within these institutional places which determine how discourse participants employ their linguistic resources and interpret their social world. This finding suggests, following Malinowski (1935) and Halliday and Hassan (1985), that we might usefully regard place as a multi-embedded concept; within the overall context of culture, the values of which tend to be most firmly embedded at the axiological level of consciousness, place is interpreted at the institutional level and then at the level of subtly differentiated contexts of situation within these institutions.

Indeed, by placing the set of Interim Educational Places that occurred in the data on a dual axis of *formal institutional control* and *geographical proximity* to the institution we were able to quite finely delimit a set of institutionally internal contexts of situation which determine social power relations and learner agency and therefore discourse production, interpretation and acquisition. Those places situated high on both axes such as libraries, Independent Learning Centres (ILCs), English competitions, morning assemblies and summer schools will increase

learner agency to a certain extent with regard to topic choice but without necessarily bringing about a significant shift in social relations and encouraging mutual participation in discourse. This is because librarians, ILC coordinators, teachers, and educational managers retain significant administrative and physical control over social interactions in these places. However, as we saw with Fakhra, freedom over topic choice, such as choosing movies to watch in the college library, can give significant impetus to the acquisition process and is likely to be more facilitative than classroom learning alone.

Those places situated low on the dual axis, exhibiting low levels of formal control by the institution and being furthest removed from its geographical proximity are likely to be interpreted as assuming more equal sets of social relations than the classroom and therefore significantly increase learner agency and facilitate more rapid English acquisition. In general, however, interim educational places offer many of the facilitative properties of the broader community whilst remaining within the permissible institutional domain. They therefore offer a significant place-based learning opportunity for the majority of students in the context of the study who have restricted community access due to cultural and sociological values.

6.13 The Significance of Peripheral Participation

We can conclude then, that whereas the social relations of the classroom generally prevent legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in recognizable English speaking communities of practice from taking place, interim educational places significantly facilitate this informal learning process. This is of considerable importance in the Western Region where English speaking communities of practice within the broader society are limited in number and scope. Whilst interim educational places may not situate learning within the highest ranges of learner agency they do appear to offer significant advantages for ESOL acquisition and indicate an appropriate domain for further exploration, action research and experimentation.

Interim educational places exhibit to a significant degree the property of peripheral participation which we saw as the overarching feature of ESOL acquisition within the broader society. The main differences between peripheral participation in these two domains are the level of learner agency they make available, the degree to which the learner can move toward the centre of the community and the extent to which interlocutors take account of learner status.

Whilst the Western Region of Abu Dhabi itself is rural and possesses a limited number of English speaking communities of practice our analysis of Hadi's minimal experience of peripheral participation at an international trade fair suggests that we should exploit whatever range of such places that exist locally to the full. Hadi's claim that a few minutes of peripheral

participation in a real life community of practice was worth hundreds or thousands of hours of classroom instruction initially appeared as hyperbole to the researcher. However, I confirmed this perception during a brief member checking interview when the numinous property (Jung, 1964) of his initial reflections about this event surfaced once again; it was a lived experience that remains indelible in his memory decades later and brought about what Hadi metaphorizes as *'a leap forward'* in his learning.

A similar numinous quality surrounds Saif's narrative about learning to go camping with his host family and friends in the United States. Again, the significance of this social learning event for his ESOL acquisition and the fact that it remains powerfully strong in his memory decades later was confirmed in the second interview. The cameo of Saif's peripheral participation in the English speaking camping community which we described and analysed was slightly more extensive than Hadi's few minutes of numinous learning experience, as it took place over the period of a weekend. This enabled us to perceive a greater shift from peripheral observation, through participation and benefaction toward the centre of understanding the community. Saif's learning in this context indicates significant agency not only over ESOL acquisition but also the right to choose cultural values. It also indicated the importance of subliminal acquisition as a by-product of participation in meaningful social action within a set of relatively equal social relations.

Hadi's and Saif's highly facilitative placed-based learning experiences along with those of many other participants in the study, clearly confirm the findings of other place-based research such as Sorenson (2008), Bartsch (2008), Dubel & Sobel (2008), Cameron (2008) and Lanas & Corbett (in press). In each of these studies, most students who participated in place-based education gained greater agency over their learning processes, developed intrinsic motivation, and significantly improved critical thinking and spoken communication skills (Dubel & Sobel, 2008). Like Eva, Maha, Fakhra and Delilah, students in these studies achieved communicative fluency and a strong desire for life-long learning (Sorenson, 2008: 51).

The most extensive example of ESOL acquisition through peripheral participation in a community of practice beyond the school is Abdullah's on-line gaming experience. Rejecting school, Abdullah's primary ESOL learning occurred through participation in World of War Craft. We saw how he moved from observation, to written participation, spoken communication and eventually became a known player in the global on-line community with full agency rights. Although Abdullah's acquisition was bolstered by passive processes such reading and watching movies, subsequent member checking confirms that it was his numinous obsession with gaming that was the primary driver. His experience confirms Lam's (2000) findings of the effectiveness of virtual places of learning and the development of self-confidence over against

the sense of failure and rejection of the classroom. Similar processes of peripheral participation are observed at work by professional participants, who are not presently formal college learners. Again the factors that determine successful acquisition are the availability of English speaking work communities and the levels of agency offered to the learner within them.

We saw the home as a nexus of different modes of ESOL acquisition that often encompass school, work and community. The learning that young people achieve in the home must be thought of as a type of peripheral participation that occurs as they are reared within a particular form of community, the family. ESOL acquisition is an aspect of their general maturity and growth into the centre of the family. The important aspect of the analysis to be considered is the manner in which the home is the nexus for both formal and informal learning. We saw in Mariam, Shamsa and in particular Fakhra, that the re-positioning of formal school learning within the home context often led to students having greater agency over their learning within familial social relations. The systematic consideration of such relationships in ESOL curriculum design may be thought of as a particular kind of place-based learning and a way of breaking down barriers between the school and community and harnessing social capital (Field & Spence, 2000) that will be both important and attainable in the Western Region context where social mobility is low.

The significance for ESOL acquisition of participating in social action through English in an extant community of practice beyond the social relations of the school would appear to be great. Being able to use English passively acquired in the classroom to achieve social action, however limited, has consequences for the learning processes quite out of proportion to the time spent. The key feature of such powerful learning events is communication with interlocutors who have little or no interest in teaching or learning language but who want to conduct meaningful communication in order to achieve social action. The participants of this study state that such events bring about a level of self-confidence that drives the learning process powerfully from then on and this confirms similar outcomes of previous research into place-based learning (e.g. Blackburn, 1971; Sorensen, 2008; Bartsch, 2008; Dubel & Sobel, 2008).

6.14 The Critical Consequences of Peripheral Participation

To say that legitimate peripheral participation in a range of communities of practice beyond educational institutions, where increased learner agency and a consequent focus on meaning making rather than language learning occurs, significantly increases ESOL acquisition, is not to overlook the critical consequences.

The opaque naturalization in participant discourse of the classroom as the inevitable place of ESOL learning, juxtaposed to the assumption that *real life* only exists beyond it, simultaneously opens and closes critical pathways. On the one hand, participants who make this contrast, might, upon further professional reflection, open up the discursive gap (Bernstein, 1996) that is of necessity created as the discourses of communities of practice are re-contextualized to the classroom. They may as a result of becoming aware of the re-contextualization process come to the critical realization that the school is an artifact of a bureaucratic society controlled by powerful others who do not necessarily represent their interests.

On the other hand, this demarcation embeds human social behaviour beyond the school in the nominalization *life itself* which naturalizes in discourse the assumption that social life somehow also exists as a self-determining sociological phenomenon. This renders opaque the obvious fact that social life beyond the classroom is also the cumulative effect of human actions, and that, as within the school, decision making over such actions is radically unequally distributed.

In this respect Osberg and Biesta (2008: 324) have argued that because globalized social action is increasingly commoditized through the cash nexus, place-based TESOL that attempts to situate learning beyond the specific power relations of the classroom may in fact also tend to reproduce status quo values rather than facilitate the emergence of new forms of knowledge. They would argue that the kind of subliminal learning processes that we have found here to be facilitative of ESOL acquisition, when achieved through social action in contemporary global capitalist society are likely to subconsciously embed the assumptions of the inequality of the market place in participants' minds and discourse (ibid.).

However, unlike Osberg and Biesta, I do not believe the classrooms of the Western Region of Abu Dhabi can be transformed into the only remaining bastions of criticality. Rather, the most effective approach would seem postmodern inclusivity; the creative bringing into play of the often incommensurable values of the classroom, interim educational places and the broader community. We need not dismiss the significant advantages of place-based ESOL we have identified, such as the indexical power of learning through peripheral participation in a wide range of communities, because it might perpetuate inequality of opportunity. Instead we should, as this study seeks to do through its methodology, encourage ESOL professionals toward critical reflection on their practice. In this respect I would carefully *adapt* Blackburn's idea of considering the community as the most fruitful language *laboratory* (1971: 251). The traditional school-based language laboratory actually has little to do with the empirical experiments that take place in science laboratories but is merely a place in which spoken communication is technologically simulated for the purposes of acquisition. The term

laboratory is only a metaphor for the centralization of educational technology that might facilitate this. Rather, I suggest that broader society, with all its valence points to the assumptions of specific communities of practice, should replace the school-based language laboratory by becoming the primary domain of English acquisition considered as 'data collection'. In the context of the study this will have to be achieved by maximizing participation in available English speaking communities of practice such as local shopping malls, clinics, hospitals, hotels and oil field offices etc. For the more socially restricted female students a significant increase in interim educational learning will need to be provided where community members bring the discourse of their various practices into non-classroom areas of educational institutions.

With legitimate peripheral participation in interim and community places providing opportunities for acquisition, the classroom, under the guidance of a critical pedagogue, might become a *true* laboratory for experiment with and understanding of the forms of language acquired beyond it. In fact, this is closer to Blackburn's actual learning model which is a continuous cycle of home and classroom-based reading and discussion followed by experience in the community which is then brought back to the classroom for further reading and discussion and so forth (1971: 254). Blackburn's inclusion of community learning within process pedagogy highlights the weakness of similar modern pedagogies and action research (e.g. McKernan, 2008) that lack specifically place-based experiences. On the other hand it indicates the strength of postmodern dialogic approaches where lived experiences of a wide range of communities of practice are integral to the curriculum (e.g. Slattery, 2006). This recycling of learning between the community and classroom need not lead to an uncritical rapprochement between de-schooling (Illich, 1970) and status quo ESOL pedagogy (e.g. Brown, 1995; Richards, 1999 and 2001) but might rather bring about a transformative synergy between the two when the teacher is educated to perform as a critical catalyst (Fairley, 2009).

6.15 Social Practice

The foregoing discussion has sought to interpret place awareness in TESOL at the *descriptive* textual level; that is the formal linguistic properties of the text in which ideology is explicitly embedded. This is sometimes quite transparent, such as considering classroom TESOL learning as a burden (Ghareeb) and at other times it is more opaque such as in the grammatical metaphorization of the passive in the use of quasi modals (e.g. Eve and Maha). The discussion has also considered place awareness at the *interpretative* discourse level; that is the processes of discourse production and interpretation through which such axiological values are made implicit in the text. These included the development of naturalized cognitive resources (MR) that enable learners to interpret the places of their acquisition so they are able to more or less

smoothly operate under the imperatives of generating fluent meaningful discourse that adequately takes into account the indexicality inherent in each context of acquisition. It also includes the place determined hermeneutic that allows the researcher to interpret identical phrases in quite different ways depending on the contexts in which they occur.

Here I will briefly consider the third level of Critical Discourse Analysis which is the *explanatory* social practice level; that is I attempt to explain the assumptions about place indicated in the two lower levels of analysis through associating them with the interests of members of the surrounding society.

The basic assumptions I have found in reflective participant discourse are:

1. School and college classrooms are the necessary or inevitable places for ESOL learning. Synthetic learning of itemized parts and skills of English is necessary and this should occur in the classroom. That is, classrooms primarily exist to enable the implementation of transactional ESOL curricula that profile educational *products* as objective knowledge and the *means* through which these might be transacted.
2. School is 'unnatural' in contrast to places that form 'real or natural life'. To acquire English adequately, synthetic learning must be used analytically in meaningful participation in communities of practice beyond the classroom, both within educational institutions and the broader society. That is, the community is where informal learning that profiles *processes* and *place* should occur.

Why should the classroom, a place that is ubiquitously considered 'unnatural', be simultaneously considered necessary or inevitable? What are the interests of students, TESOL professionals and educational agents, particularly in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi, that might have led to such incommensurable assumptions?

Firstly, students accept the necessity of participation in the unnatural learning environment of the classroom, sometimes reluctantly, as with Abdullah, or under a heavy burden, as with Ghareeb, because they have the imperative to gain knowledge and skills as validated by societally approved institutions. This imperative is driven by several factors. In some cases it is to obtain gainful employment, in others it is to escape the perceived limitations of a rural background. In yet others it is to gain status among peers and family as the first members of a generation in which tertiary education is commonly offered in the local region. Even Abdullah, who rejected school and is indifferent about tertiary education, persists in attending the classroom where he uses his informally acquired English to assist him achieve recognized academic credentials. Ghareeb, in spite of recognizing the burdensome nature of classroom study in his own learning processes elsewhere, is now a teacher in the region and continues to

follow the institutional norms of attendance taking, grading of papers and awarding of examination marks etc. on the basis of prefabricated learning outcomes determined by generally opaque others.

Indeed, teachers and educational administrators, regardless of their own learning experiences, tend to perpetuate the bifurcation of classroom ESOL *learning* from ESOL *acquisition* in the community because without institutional ring-fencing of bureaucratically validated knowledge they would have little purpose, and no employment. In general, the classroom teacher, and in many instances the academic managers of the region, have little agency over what constitutes valid knowledge as this is decided at executive levels. Whilst ESOL professionals often respect the knowledge their students possess from prior informal learning in the community, such as the ability to judge a healthy camel, understand the market of local livestock, weave expertly, make baskets or cook local dishes, it is not considered valid within the curricula of the institution (Johnson, 1983; Eisner, 1985). Whilst it might be displayed in extra curricula activities it is rarely used as the basis for more formal ESOL acquisition or assessment. Instead, much of the teaching role is taken up with assessing learning outcomes pre-defined elsewhere by powerful executives, who often transmit these decisions directly to information technology administrators for implementation whilst by-passing academic managers, teachers and students who, nevertheless, must approve and accept levels of acquisition, language performance and competency on this basis.

Whilst educational authorities in the United Arab Emirates and the broader Middle East and North African region often pay lip service to the trends of 'learner independence' and 'critical thinking' (TESOL Arabia, 2012) they continue to promulgate course outlines which contain pre-determined Learning Outcomes (LOs) over which learners have no decision making power (Ould Hende, 2011). Presently, there is a movement toward linking such LOs to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe) for language learning which in turn is being populated by detailed language inventories that encompass grammar, vocabulary and functional items. The Cambridge English Profile (2012) team who are carrying out this latter operation claims these items to be those which learners acquire at certain describable levels of ESOL acquisition. However, although the corpora upon which this research is based is international in scope, little attempt is made to analyse the social relations of its production, distribution and interpretation. Indeed, as much of the language analysed and used to detail the English Profile level descriptors has been collected from educational institutions, learners will have had little decision making power over the discourse processes from which it has emerged.

This is the operation of hegemony at the social level, the traces of which we find in participant discourse. Not only learners such as Ghareeb find the imperatives of classroom learning a burden. Many teachers find the pressures of 'getting through' the agenda of fixed syllabi and inventories of predetermined learning outcomes equally burdensome and often complain that this prevents them from adopting place-based project work. Moreover, both students and teachers find the incessant testing and measurement that ensues stressful. Such approaches are far removed from the needs and interests of students as they emerge within the places of their daily lives (Kumaravadivelu, 1994).

The penetration of TESOL practices in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi by executive decisions that insist on generic rather than locally produced learning can be further explained at the national political level. Since independence the government of the United Arab Emirates has been consultative according to the principles of Sharia Law as enshrined in the Islamic institution of Majlis-ash-Shura (مجلس الشوري). In Abu Dhabi this body is known as the National Consultative Council and was established in 1971 as a forum for discussing by-laws and public topics, receiving complaints and petitions and addressing questions to the Executive Council Chairman about matters under his jurisdiction. The country, however, lacks direct democratic representation of its citizens in government and remains autocratic to a significant extent. Thus the classrooms of the Western Region of Abu Dhabi are embedded in the broader unequal social relations of society and penetrated by them. This remote production of social relations helps account for the opaque naturalization in participants' reflective discourse of their classrooms. As actors within the institutionally internal places of school and college classrooms, students and teachers behave according to unanalysed social values external to their immediate context without, as we have seen, being aware of their prefabricated hegemonic nature.

The movement toward place-based TESOL in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi will both necessitate greater political representation and heterogeneity at the regional and national level as well as raise awareness of this necessity. For example, enabling female ESOL learners to dissolve the boundaries between the classroom and community by offering them access to cyber-places may well lead them to challenge status quo societal values, in particular, with regard to gender relations. In this respect, I believe the practice of place-based TESOL might become a key catalyst for cultural dynamism and transformation. There is however, no reason to suppose that this cannot be achieved appropriately within the cultural and religious values of Emirati society. Participants, as exemplified by Ghaleb, exhibit considerable agency over the cultural values they come to understand when learning English and feel able to accept those consistent with their own current culture and reject others. This suggests that place-based

ESOL practice might facilitate gradual cultural change in a constructive manner. Bringing about greater political inclusivity in order to transform TESOL practice in the region will not, therefore, merely improve English language learning outcomes but also increase learner agency and inter-cultural collaboration and is likely to create new places in which transformed relationships and knowledge might arise. This would enable the UAE to make a unique contribution to the development of global economics and culture and ensure its long term economic and social viability as it matures from an oil-based oligarchy into a diversified, knowledge-based democratic state (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).

Conclusion

Conclusions

The aims of this paper were to explore the significance of places of learning for ESOL acquisition, enumerate the specific places that emerged, consider their properties, their relationship to the classroom and evaluate the participants' level of critical place awareness. Although the thesis collected extensive reflective discourse and applied an intensive analytic procedure it is based on a small sample of participants and remains exploratory in nature. Any conclusions drawn here are, therefore, tentative and put forward as indicators for further consideration and research.

7.1.1 Ubiquitous Place Awareness

Firstly, I conclude that whilst participant awareness of the significance of the places of their ESOL acquisition varies in nature it is nevertheless ubiquitously distributed throughout the data.

7.1.2 Low Levels of Critical Awareness

Secondly, I conclude that in spite of this ubiquitous awareness, at no point, even after making a place-based focus evident to participants, does the data exhibit explicitly critical awareness of the *interests* of specific agents vested in the places of learning. This indicates that an opaque hermeneutic of place is embedded in participant discourse. Classrooms in particular, even when their properties for acquisition are heavily criticized, are assumed to be the natural places for learning; their existence is never openly questioned and the interests of those responsible for establishing and maintaining the social relations within them are never directly exposed. This suggests that the classrooms experienced by participants in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi and elsewhere are largely ideological places invested with interests that do not necessarily represent those of the learners.

7.1.3 Confirmation of the Properties of Places of ESOL Acquisition

Three broad domains of place emerge; classroom places, interim educational places and community places. Specific places regarded as significant for ESOL acquisition are distributed within these domains. Analysis leads us to conclude that the key defining property of these places is the degree of agency they offer learners within their acquisition processes. This is largely determined by the opportunities they provide for legitimate peripheral participation in extant English speaking communities of practice. Where learner agency is high and peripheral participation extensive ESOL acquisition tends to occur informally through meaningful

communication rather than formal attempts to transmit knowledge about English to the learner. Such subliminal learning appears to be rapid, effective and long lasting. This conclusion is confirmed by the participants who responded to member checking requests.

The importance of learner agency in ESOL acquisition was discovered independently within the data of this exploratory study but it is a construct that appears to be rapidly becoming a central focus of language learning research. For example, the American Association of Applied Linguistics has called for chapter proposals for its forthcoming, “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Theorizing and Analysing Agency and Second Language Learning” (AAAL, 2012) whilst Goa and Lamb’s recent collection of articles (2011) also focuses fully on learner autonomy.

7.1.4 Confirmation of the Relationship between Classroom and Non-Classroom Places

The ubiquitous awareness of the significance of a wide variety places in ESOL acquisition combined with an opaque hermeneutic of the classroom is made manifest in participant perceptions that their formal learning is bifurcated from the *phronesis* of everyday life. However, classrooms show a range of effectiveness for ESOL acquisition and analysis indicates that various complementary relationships between classrooms and community places already exist that might be further developed. This conclusion is supported by most participants who responded during member checking. In particular, the relationship between the classroom and interim educational places which offer opportunities for meaningful communication in English would seem to have a particularly important role to play in the rural context of the study where access to English speaking communities of practice in broader society is limited.

7.1.5 Implications of Place-Based Acquisition for TESOL Practice

By reinterpreting educational places through the radical synthesis of school and community within a transformative TESOL curriculum that is dialogic and place-based I hope this study will bring about cruces within the local discourse of TESOL practice. The resultant exposure of the professional assumptions of TESOL practitioners should bring about the need for them to reflect on place-based perspectives to ESOL acquisition and the broader social issues that determine them. Such reflection is key to initiating and sustaining transformative practice and leadership in today’s fast changing and complex globalized society (Densten & Gray, 2001: 119).

Introducing a transformative place-based curriculum to the TESOL profession, which is so fundamentally engaged with understanding the nature of language, would seem the most appropriate starting point to form the vanguard of a new educational movement that realizes in practice the manner in which language learning and situated social practices are mutually

conditioning (Fairclough 1989, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999). The professional reflection that is likely to ensue as the classroom is penetrated by the broader community should allow a local group of the global TESOL community of practice to realize the dialectic character of discourse, go beyond mere awareness of hegemonic classroom power relations (Wachob, 2009) toward resistance to it (Freire, 1972; Giroux, 1988) and its redistribution through recognizing;

“...not only the social determination of language use, but also the linguistic determination of society (Fairclough, 1989: 19)”

As TESOL professionals it is our moral duty to our students in an increasingly homogenized world culture of private interest to help them gain control over access to the multiple forms of discourse which should accrue to them with the acquisition of a new language and which should offer them more control over power in society (van Dijk, 1996).

Recommendations

7.2.1 Local TESOL Curriculum Design

The broad purpose of this research was to problematize assumptions about the ESOL classroom as the natural place of adult learning and explore the potential of the construct of place in order to illuminate and transform TESOL practice. In doing so, an opaque hermeneutic has emerged suggesting that the apparent obviousness of place within the primary dimensions of human experience (Butcher, 2008) has blinded agents of the globalized TESOL profession to the ideological nature of the classroom. The conclusions drawn from this exploration support the view that language in the classroom, as elsewhere, is an emergent phenomenon determined by its situated social relations. This suggests that *place* is of primary importance in TESOL because *where* a language is used largely determines what of its elements is learned (i.e. content) and how they are acquired (i.e. process). In particular, places determine the level of agency learners have over their acquisition processes. It is recommended, therefore, that TESOL curricula be devolved to the local level where designers, managers, teachers and above all students begin the design task not with questions about ‘what?’ or ‘how?’ learning will occur but ‘*where?*’ it will ‘take place’, making *place* the primary organizing principle of locally situated TESOL practice.

Practically this means from the outset curricula must structure in a range of interim educational and community places in such a way that they do not become formal extensions of the classroom. This can be achieved by deliberately handing agency over places of learning, topic and task to individuals or groups of learners. The teacher’s role is to help learners identify their own compelling questions and collaboratively evolve community-centred tasks to answer them. This will immediately enable learners to use interim educational places such as the

library and Independent Learning Centres for background research. It will also induce intrinsic motivation towards acquiring synthetic linguistic knowledge in the classroom as this will have relevance to the learners' successful achievement of self-determined tasks. It is crucial, however, that such tasks take students directly into real-world communities to collect live data in order to create the participative conditions necessary for effective ESOL acquisition and avoid tendencies toward plagiarism of existing knowledge. If the knowledge gained is subsequently recycled back into educational institutions in the form of presentations, discussions and forums as well as written projects and diaries submitted to school, college and public libraries, TESOL practice takes on the form of Umphrey's ALERT acronym (2007: 17); Ask, Listen, Explore, Reflect and Teach (see Para. 4.2.2 above). This approach is similar to Problem Based Learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004) and its recent transformation being promulgated by Apple Corporation as Challenge Based Learning (Apple Inc., 2011) but with the crucial feature that problems and challenges are not merely recontextualized to the classroom but students are re-situated to participate in real world contexts. There is unanimous agreement in member checking responses with the need to significantly complement classroom ESOL acquisition with such real world participation (Appendix 4, No. 2) because of the increased learner agency this offers (Appendix 4, No. 4). One such research cycle undertaken in Al Gharbia sought real world solutions to frequent camel death due to plastic bag pollution. This has fed into national concern and research and led to an on-going shift to biodegradable and reusable shopping bags in the nation's supermarkets.

7.2.2 Extending the Complementary Relationship between Classroom and Community

The learner agency cline indicated by this study does not force us into a false dichotomy between the 'magic womb' (Illich, 1970) of a classroom that passively prepares ESOL learners for a hegemonically prefabricated society, or quotidian community learning which ultimately will be dominated by global capitalist interests (Osberg & Biesta, 2008). On the contrary, it is recommended that instruction that enables the synthetic learning of lexis, grammatical structures and language-focused practice of literacy and spoken communication skills continues to be provided but within classrooms that offer learners increased choice over topic and task, develop friendly student/teacher relationships and strongly encourage communicative forms of teaching and learning. In particular, students must be allowed sufficient agency within their classrooms to negotiate their own learning experiences that allow them to use synthetically acquired English language in tasks that have real outcomes in the world beyond and therefore intrinsic meaning to them (Breen and Littlejohn, 2000). Member checking responses confirm that there is a range of agency within classrooms (Appendix 4, No. 1 and 4) with some tertiary classrooms offering the greatest agency. This

together with place-based curriculum design (see Para. 7.2.1) suggests that simultaneously reforming classroom practice to increase learner agency and resituating students' learning in the community wherever feasible will go a long way toward transforming TESOL practice in Al Gharbia.

7.2.3 Critical Cycle of Research Pedagogy

To achieve such a complementary relationship between classroom and community I have recommended that locally devolved TESOL curricula integrate classroom, interim and community domains in a collaborative classroom process between teacher and students. This should deal with issues students recognize as critically important and subsequently provide opportunities for them to participate in various local communities of practice beyond the college with a view to initiating local solutions to the range of issues which emerge. For example, the local Health Authority is fairly cosmopolitan and an English speaking community of practice within which students might effectively achieve legitimate peripheral participation whilst seeking to find solutions to prevalent health concerns such as thalassemia, obesity and diabetes partly resultant on changing lifestyles. The local shopping mall offers some opportunity for exploring entrepreneurial issues whilst the hotels offer insight to the growing hospitality industry. The oil industry which is the key economic force locally and nationally is a particularly cosmopolitan English speaking community and, although access is currently limited, efforts should be made to convince its authorities of the importance of student participation in research projects within their purview.

Subsequently, emerging student research findings should be presented within the college to audiences comprising not only educational personnel but also a broad range of local society members and it should be published and deposited in local libraries (Umphrey, 2007) and presented at student led research symposia. On the basis of current findings, this cyclical process, with the teacher acting as a critical catalyst, is not only likely to increase learner agency and facilitate effective ESOL acquisition but also help break the hegemonic cycle of the reproduction of knowledge which fails to perceive and solve local problems.

7.2.4 Expansion of the Interim Domain

Due to current cultural constraints, the direct synthesis of classroom and community may not be immediately possible. It is, therefore, recommended that many more places within the college but outside the classroom (Johnson, 1983) are allowed to emerge by encouraging students to develop their own activities that take place in English together with TESOL teachers and English speaking managers, administrators and members of the broader community. This domain is doubly important in the context of the study. Firstly, English

speaking communities of practice beyond the college are limited in number and some such as oil fields need special permission to access. Secondly, many of the young females who comprise approximately 80% of the student population are restricted from participating in learning outside the institution. This importance of the Interim Educational place domain is confirmed in member checking with participants stressing the complementary relationship between interim and classroom places (Appendix 4, No. 6). Only Fakhra attenuated interim places as a determining factor of ESOL acquisition, stating she believed that language learning is rather related to a 'learning moment' (Appendix 4, No. 6). This is reminiscent of Slattery's proleptic moment (2006) where past, present, future and place coalesce in powerful learning experiences and something I shall explore further with Fakhra.

7.2.4.1 Research Fair

In this respect a research fair has already been conducted in Al Gharbia Colleges of Technology in which groups of students in foundations classes and beyond undertook research projects in English. Students carried these out within the home and interim educational places such as the library and independent learning centres as well as the broader community on topics of their own choice and presented their findings in forums, posters and electronic media to a college-wide and community audience. This event has been recognized by students and teachers alike for the extraordinary increase in self-confidence, motivation and language skills that it achieved, which is consistent with the findings of for example Sobel (2004) and Sorensen (2008) from similar place-based learning. The present study suggests that such approaches should be developed into more generalized curricula forms that increasingly expand into the community beyond the educational institution.

7.2.4.2 Community Penetration of the Classroom and Institution

It is recommended that a wide spectrum of people from the local, regional, national and international communities be encouraged to participate in classroom activities and that an increased number of social events with broad community and familial participation be instigated within the college.

7.2.4.3 Project Based Summer School

An *in vivo* suggestion, confirmed by member checking, is to instigate a project-based summer school that links student-centred, task-based learning with the local community which would become a part of the standard curriculum. There are limited opportunities for English language use in the Western Region during the summer and such a school appears as a useful way of extending interim educational places.

7.2.3.4 Virtual Places

This study shows that virtual places, such as telephone interviews, video conferencing, chat rooms and live on-line gaming, offer forms of legitimate peripheral participation in less hierarchical social relations that are highly facilitative of ESOL acquisitions. They offer extensive access to other educational institutions, professional and business communities of practice and provide channels for research purposes to the urban centres of Abu Dhabi and Dubai and beyond to the international sphere. Al Gharbia colleges have, for example, already undertaken research and discussion forums with students in Japan and Spain using these media. In the current prevailing cultural context of the study virtual place-based ESOL experiences may be monitored by the institution for appropriate content and relations but nevertheless they offer the potential to perform a significant role as a catalyst for cultural dynamism and transformation.

Al Gharbia has also run virtual, joint-distance classes through video-conferencing in ESOL contexts for several years. Whilst these offer access to classroom teaching across the two far flung campuses of the colleges as well as to other colleges in the system and elsewhere it is notable that, unlike non-classroom orientated cyber-spaces, all of which are indicated as highly facilitative, some participants such as Delilah and Fakhra regard classroom-based video conferencing as detracting from ESOL acquisition. This appears to be because they robbed them of the rich-channel support of their live interacting teachers. In the case of Delilah and Fakhra this view may be accounted for by the fact that they are among the participants who experienced the most communicative classrooms and friendly student/teacher relations.

7.2.5 Participative, Place-based Bilingual Learning from the Early Years Onwards.

It is recommended that participative classroom learning and community based projects in a bilingual setting be made standard practice from early learning onwards so that active English usage and place-based learning is fronted in the students' educational trajectory and not delayed merely to the tertiary stage.

7.2.6 Educational Inclusivity at the National Level.

Bearing in mind the extraordinary demographics of the United Arab Emirates in which more than 80% of the population is non-permanent immigrant (expatriate) and that this portion represents a wide spectrum of mother tongues including several forms of English, it is recommended that increased enfranchisement of the multi-ethnic expatriate population should include affordable access to government schools, colleges and universities. The inclusion of a wide spectrum of non-Emirati students in educational institutions of the Western

Region of Abu Dhabi which practiced place-based learning would not only avoid mono-linguistic learning environments and the associated drawbacks of limited English language participation and acquisition, but It should also improve inter-cultural communication through use of multiple forms of English and from this synthesis create entirely new places out of which might emerge transformative knowledge to the benefit of the UAE and beyond.

Contribution to Knowledge

7.3.1 Confirmation of Critical Discourse Analysis and Place-Based Perspective

To the best of my knowledge CDA has not been used for TESOL research in the UAE hitherto. It has, however, proved effective in increasing understanding of TESOL practice in one area of the country and in my view this justifies its use. Whilst the various places in which ESOL acquisition occurred were identified through a surface reading of the data, CDA was able to penetrate their apparent obviousness. Through analysing textual features of participant reflective discourse and relating them to social practice it brought them into meaningful juxtaposition with a pervasive lack of criticality. CDA allowed me to penetrate the apparent obviousness of places of ESOL acquisition and problematize them through a detailed critical analysis of textual features such as lexis, transitivity processes and participants, nominalization, modalization and, in particular, the loss of learner agency within the tripartite subject position (Fairclough, 1989: 110 – 111; Eggins, 2004). This textual interrogation indicates a particular localized form of the bureaucratic demarcation of geographic space (Fairclough, 1989: 150) into habitable social places of learning which has subsequently been naturalized in participant discourse such that the agents that interpreted them are backgrounded (van Leeuwen, 1996) and rendered opaque.

The ability to achieve this understanding is important for the purposes of this study because its stated aim was to seek to unpack assumptions about the apparent naturalness of the ESOL classroom. All research participants are adult learners and/or working professionals either within the TESOL profession, higher education or local government departments and possess the intellectual capacity and to varying degrees social opportunities to be able to engage with critical questions about their places of learning and yet their lack of a critical perspective is pervasive, particularly with regard to the classroom. CDA may have provided them the opportunity for such critical reflection which might form the basis for professional development and the transformation of TESOL practice (Densten and Gray, 2001).

Moreover, the combination of CDA and a place-based perspective revealed an unanticipated methodological finding; that is, the place-based determination of the researcher's interpretation of the text. These findings suggest *place* to be a sociological unit of analysis (Gruenewald, 2003a) that indeed might usefully inform further research into TESOL practice.

7.3.2 Working Model of Place in ESOL Acquisition

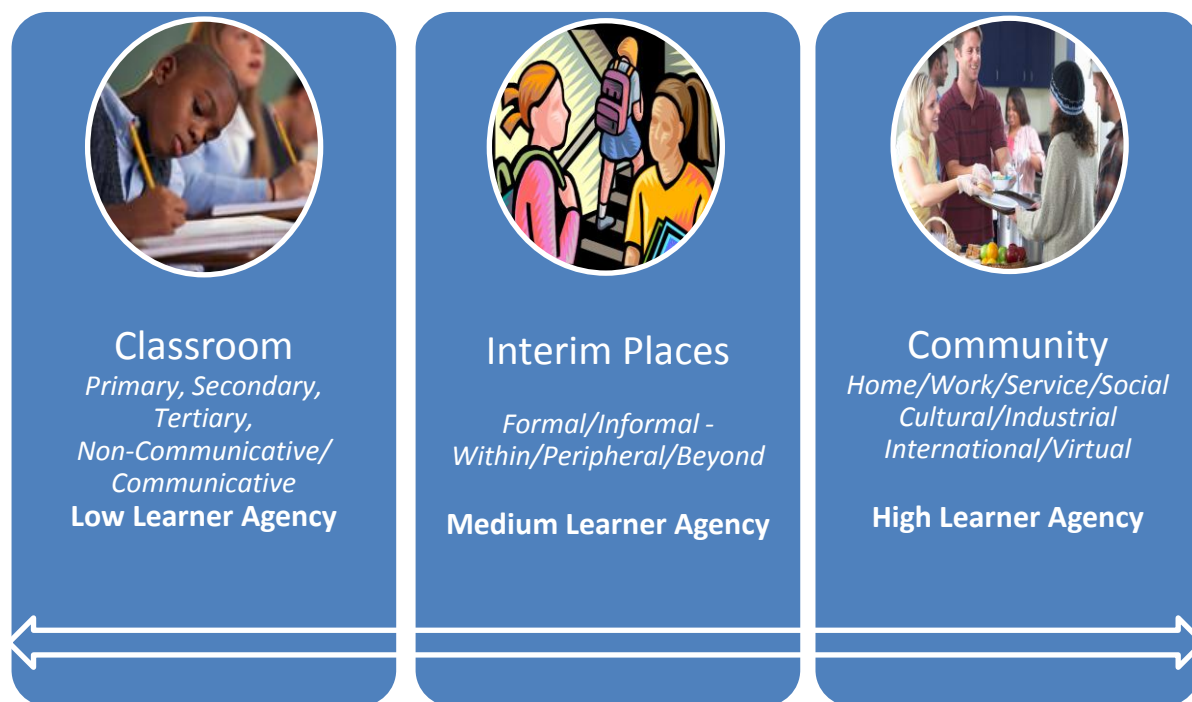


Figure 7 - Domains and Categories of Places of ESOL Acquisition Distributed along a Cline of Learner Agency (Stanfield, 2012)

7.3.2.1 The Domains of Place

Three broad categories of place, the *Classroom*, *Interim Educational Places* and the *Community* emerge. The specific places in which the participants' ESOL acquisition occurred or in which they believe it might effectively occur are distributed within these broad domains along a cline of *Learner Agency*. Learner agency varies according to the degree to which places offer learners opportunities for legitimate peripheral participation within English speaking communities of practice and decision making rights over their ESOL acquisition processes.

In general, classrooms are controlled by agents of educational communities of practice who have a narrow set of interests. They tend, therefore, to exhibit relatively low levels of learner agency. In contrast, places within the community, which are pre-interpreted by a variety of familial, governmental, commercial, industrial and cultural agents, are inhabited by a broader range of communities of practice offering relatively high levels of learner agency. Whilst learners of ESOL are necessarily '*interpellated*' (Janks & Ivanic, 1992) into the values and

interests of these situated communities of practice, discourse analysis indicates that they offer greater rights over participation in discourse than the classroom and are therefore more facilitative of ESOL acquisition.

The category of *Interim Educational Places* emerges in the interstice between the Classroom and the Community. As one might expect, places such as college libraries, corridors, buses and work placements are positioned midway upon the cline of learner agency. These places are key factors in successful ESOL acquisition in the rural Western Region of Abu Dhabi. They provide opportunities for participation in English which are relatively rare in the community whilst exhibiting many of the facilitative characteristics of community places, only to a lesser degree.

7.3.2.2 Learner Agency

There are no discrete steps on the Learner Agency cline; it operates both across and within the three broad domains. Learner agency varies according to level and type of classroom; primary and secondary school classrooms generally exhibit lower levels than tertiary classrooms. Primary and secondary school classrooms that are authoritarian and non-communicative exhibit the lowest levels of learner agency whilst tertiary classrooms that are friendly and communicative offer the highest levels.

There is also a range within the community domain. Workplace communities of practice dominated by business or governmental interests and service encounters dominated by commercial interests generally appear to offer higher levels of learner agency than the classroom but less than social, cultural and virtual communities of practice. The home appears to facilitate acquisition that can be transferred effectively across all three domains.

There is a range of learner agency within the interim educational domain determined by the degree to which places within it are formally organized by the educational institution and the extent of their physical separation from the buildings of these institutions. Informal corridors may offer greater learner agency than formally operated libraries whilst the offices of a work placement assignment situated in the community but partly determined by the educational institution may offer greater learner agency than informal activities on sports fields at the physical periphery of the institution.

Further Study

7.4.1 The Construct of Place

The heuristic combination of CDA and a place-based research perspective, which exposed an opaque hermeneutic of place and the ideological nature of the classroom, suggests the construct of *place* might offer further intellectual insight in future critical TESOL research. One avenue will be to conduct further intensive qualitative studies in the cosmopolitan centres of the UAE as well as both rural and urban areas in other countries for comparative purposes. Another route will be to conduct quantitative studies that provide statistical data i.e. numeric counts of textual features and their interpretations, which might confirm or disconfirm the place-based differences in discourse that have emerged from this study across three primary domains.

7.4.2 Local Place-Based Acquisition Studies

This study suggests that generalized acquisition studies derived, for example, from Euro-centric research such as the Common European Framework of Reference will always be inadequate for understanding and assessing English learning in specific local contexts such as the Western Region of Abu Dhabi. An area of study suggested by this paper is, therefore, the establishment of a centre for local place-based acquisition studies that show local forms of inter-language emergence which might enable teachers and learners to better plan their learning. An initial phase of such a project will be the collection and analysis of student speech and writing derived from the research-cycle process curriculum recommended here. This would indicate inter-language based on acquisition processes determined by greater learner agency than classroom essays and summative tests which often form the bulk of educational corpora. This could form an on-going local corpus that might be submitted to international collections such as that being shaped by the Cambridge English Profile (2012).

7.4.3 Geographic Demarcation of Place in TESOL

A distinct category of place that emerged from the initial analyses of the data of this study was Geographic Demarcation of Place in ESOL learning processes. This had to be discounted due to place constraints but might provide an informative route for further study.

7.4.4 Interim Educational Place Studies

A key category of place that emerged from this exploration is the informal, social language-acquisition environment (Johnson, 1983) of educational institutions which over the foregoing decades has largely been ignored as a manipulable variable by researchers (Johnson,

1983: 55). This paper suggests however that ‘in-school-but-outside-the-classroom’ is a place amenable to both quantitative and qualitative forms of TESOL research which may well illuminate the ‘null’ curriculum (Eisner, 1985) of TESOL practice.

7.4.5 Learner Agency

Learner Agency which emerged from this critical, place-based study, as the primary property of places that facilitate ESOL acquisition, is also currently forming a central focus of research into language learning in general (e.g. Gao & Zhan, 2011; AAAL, 2012). It is clearly a construct that offers a broad avenue for further research.

7.4.5.1 Learner Agency and Structuration Theory

Some scholars may take issue with the critical approach of this paper (e.g. Bowers, 2008) and by association some may devalue the place-based perspective it takes. This would be unfortunate and unnecessary because the place conscious education movement encompasses a broad range of political views (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Greenwood, 2008). For scholars who prefer more liberal approaches, a possible area for further research might be within Giddens’ sociology which explicitly seeks to critique historical materialism and post Marxist critical theories of society (1979, 1984). In particular, Structuration Theory as propounded in “The Constitution of Society” (1984) and which explicitly considers agency as a construct for sociological analysis might offer further avenues for place-based TESOL research. The fact that this study has tended to see places as relatively stable with learner agency emerging from within them is quite similar to Giddens’ view and suggests we might attempt to position place-based learning within structuration theory.

Final Reflection

7.5.1 Final Reflection

In preparing this study for submission I find that it is incomplete in many ways and signals more the beginning of my journey of discovery than the end; I am continually finding references to place-based learning and perceiving the far reaching consequences of this approach to TESOL. Early on, by admitting my inadequate understanding of ‘curriculum’, I identified the construct of *place* as a lacuna to be explored within TESOL practice. When colleagues asked me what my study was about and I answered excitedly, ‘Place!’ I drew blank expressions and uncomprehending queries; “How can you write a doctorate about something so... well... so obvious?” Yet, in attempting to penetrate this obviousness through critical inquiry my study has exposed *place* as a repository of a broad swathe of assumptions about education and as a result spawned at least as many questions as answers. To have attempted

to follow up on each of these lines of inquiry within the confines of a short thesis would have been inappropriate so I have focused on what at this stage seems central, the issue of learner agency.

Unbeknown to me at the time I was making these personal intellectual discoveries the problematic convergence of critical and place-based pedagogies had already begun, and was to come to a head in the 2008 June issue of *Environmental Education Research* which published a series of articles strongly debating the pertinence of critical theory in place-based pedagogy. Moreover, Learner Agency is now appearing at the very vanguard of inquiry into language learning processes (Gao & Zhan, 2011; AAAL, 2012). It seems that my current work is part of a zeitgeist of critical awareness that is appearing in the field of applied linguistics. This is particularly of note in the Middle Eastern context of the study where so many fundamental sociological changes are presently occurring.

In spite of the limitations of this study, therefore, I believe that the current absence of a systematic consideration of the construct of *place* within the TESOL community is a genuine discovery that will prove heuristic for its practice in the years to come. The future challenge for me will be to follow up with determined efforts to apply these new understandings to my own TESOL practice as teacher and educational administrator.

Doctoral study has brought with it certain vicissitudes, not only intellectual but also practical. There have been times when the project seemed too huge to overview in its entirety. The only way to continue has been to press ahead with the next process within grasp. The demands on my time and energy added to those of a husband, father and educational administrator have been immense. Adding to this difficulty have been the many hours of travelling back and forth to my place of work. However, my fascination with critical place-based TESOL pedagogy has enabled me to regard these long bus journeys as a time resource. In keeping with the place-based theme of this study I might with some justification claim to have read for my doctorate ‘on the bus’ which is one of the *in vivo* educational interim places that emerges from the study itself.

At present my learning journey has led to one of those summits of the intellectual terrain where for once I can briefly overview this study. My wife recently quoted Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s famous saying that, “Patience is bitter but its fruit is sweet.” I can savour this experience and spend precious time with my family before descending once again into the less explored valleys below in search of material for post-doctoral research.

Appendix 1: Detailed Descriptions of Participants

Eva

Eva was born to an Arabic speaking expatriate family in Ruwais, a town in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi dominated by oil and gas industries. She was raised there and her education took place primarily in the UAE with some summer classes taken in Jordan. She is poised, quietly self-confident and spoke freely and at length. Her first interview lasted a total of approximately 22 minutes and is *4,100 transcribed words. As often happens some of the most significant comments started to emerge after concluding the interview and I recorded these with her permission. Her second interview was also recorded in several (3) takes and lasted a total of approximately 24 minutes (*4,670 words). Both interviews took place in the college conference room which is relatively private and neutral in terms of our respective statuses within the institution. This should have helped reduce the higher status of the researcher compared to the participant and increased her agency in the co-construction of the interview discourse.

Maha

Maha was born in a North African country and subsequent to her developing a self-declared fascination with English language and culture she migrated to the United Kingdom and married there. She speaks French, English and Arabic. She is a lively person and effusive in her speech. Interview 1 lasted 19 minutes (*3,658 words) and interview 2, 35 minutes (*1,639 words). Both interviews took place in the researcher's own office which embeds managerial status which may be an intervening variable on the co-constructed discourse with the participant who possesses lower institutional status. Any reduction in participant agency this may have inferred was not overtly present in the interview as Maha was one of the few participants who were able to be openly critical of some of her teachers.

Saeeda

Saeeda, like Eva was born and raised in Ruwais but has visited the United Kingdom for at least one extended period. She self-declares as a shy person but in the interview context was able to reflect extensively about her English learning experiences, identify key features and carefully define the properties of the places in which these occurred. Interview 1 lasted 11 minutes (*1,899 words) and interview 2, 20 minutes (*3,464 words). The interviews were conducted in the same neutrally interpreted college conference room as Eva above and the same caveats apply.

Ghareeb

Ghareeb was born in Rural French speaking Lebanon. He managed to get a scholarship to study in a US university in spite of not having a word of English. After gaining his bachelor degree he moved to Australia and became a naturalized citizen. Ghareeb is self-confident and enthusiastically reflected about his English learning story with an intensity that the researcher found emotionally moving as he immersed himself in it during the transcription process. Interview 1 lasted 14 minutes (*3,666 words) and interview 2, 21 minutes (*4,504 words). Both interviews took place in Ghareeb's office and this, together with similar managerial status and a friendly professional relationship facilitated mutual trust in the co-construction of interview discourse.

Hadi

Hadi was born and raised in post-revolutionary rural Iran. His mother tongue is Marzandarani, a dialect of Farsi. He is self-confident and thoughtful. His participation was amongst the most prolific and marked with sensitive self-scrutiny and fascination. He declared at the time of the interviews and during later member checking sessions that this study offered him for the first time the opportunity to reflect on his English acquisition with an interlocutor. He states that he found it a very helpful process for further professional development. Interview 1 lasted 48 minutes (*8,532 words) and interview 2, 38 minutes (*6,728). The interviews took place in a secluded counselling room which is a neutral domain. This would have helped maintain his agency over interview discourse in a faculty-to-manager institutional relationship with the researcher.

Budoor

Budoor is an Emirati National who was born and raised in Madinat Zayed in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi. She has recently taken a managerial role in the college and is a former student of the Higher Colleges of Technology in Al-Ain in the Eastern Region of Abu Dhabi. She has a quiet but confident demeanour. In her first interview she may have been reticent to criticize her schooling in the local region but was able to do this more openly in the second interview. Interview 1 lasted 10 minutes and 30 seconds (*1, 923 words) and interview 2, 23 minutes (*4,126). The interviews took place in Budoor's own office which may have helped balance any perceived inequality of institutional status and give her appropriate agency rights over the discourse that emerged.

Fakhra

Fakhra is an Emirati national who was raised in Abu Dhabi and studied at Zayed University in that city. She is a manager in the Western Region Development Council (WRDC) a regional government body. She has strong self-confidence and exhibited an intense interest and ability to reflect about her English language learning processes. Her contribution is prolific and embeds many of the place categories that emerged overall. Interview 1 lasted 30 minutes (*5,776 words) and interview 2, 42 minutes (*8,100 words). The interviews took place in Fakhra's office in the WRDC complex in Abu Dhabi City a context which would have allowed high levels of agency over her reflections.

Ghaleb

Ghaleb is an Emirati national who was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi but was educated at university in the USA. He has a high status managerial position in the regional government health authority. He is a considered speaker with strong views on education and health care which he was able to express clearly. Interview 1 lasted 18 minutes, 45 seconds (*3,134 words) and interview 2, 21 minutes (*3,321 words). The interviews took place in Ghaleb's own office in the regional hospital. This together with the researcher's lower social status would have offered Ghaleb significant agency over the co-construction of reflective discourse.

Mohammed

Mohammed is an Emirati national who was brought up in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi but educated at university in the USA. He is a high level manager in the regional education authority. He is self-confident and outgoing and was able to reflect thoughtfully about his language learning and metaphorize it in interesting ways. Interview 1 lasted 11 minutes, 30 seconds (*1,773 words) and interview 2, 20 minutes 30 seconds (*2,968 words). The interviews took place in Mohammed's own office in the regional educational headquarters. This together with his relatively higher social status than the researcher would have offered him considerable agency over his reflective discourse. Saif (below) who was my first interviewee introduced me Mohammed as a potential participant and was also present at Mohammed's first interview.

Saif

Saif is an Emirati national who was born and raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi but educated in the United States. He is a manager in local government. He has a warm, friendly disposition and spoke with feeling about his views on education in the region. His reflections

highlighted the importance of peripheral participation. Interview 1 lasted 11 minutes (*1,442 words) and interview 2, 22 minutes (*1,467 words). The interviews took place in Saif's own office in the local government building in Madinat Zayed and this together with his high social status would have offered him agency over the co-construction of our reflective discourse.

Delilah

Delilah is an Emirati national and student at the college. She was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi but lived for an extended period in the USA with her family, although she never studied there. She is a highly motivated student who perceives that she has benefited greatly from studying in the college. Interview 1 lasted 12 minutes (*2,109 words) and interview 2, 24 minutes (*4,584 words). The interviews took place in the researcher's office which may have reduced Delilah's agency over co-construction of the interview although this was not apparent either at the time nor noticeably traced in the discourse itself.

Mariam

Mariam is an Emirati national and student at the college. She was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi and has not travelled abroad. Interview 1 lasted 12 minutes (*2,114 words) and interview 2, 22 minutes, 30 seconds (*3,982 words). The interviews took place in the researcher's office which may have reduced Mariam's agency over co-construction of the interviews.

Shamsa

Shamsa is an Emirati national and student at the college. She was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi and has not travelled abroad. Interview 1 lasted 13 minutes (*2,233 words) and interview 2, 24 minutes (*4,248 words). The interviews took place in the researcher's office which may have reduced Shamsa's agency over co-construction of the interview.

Abdullah

Abdullah is an Emirati national and a student at the college. He was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi and has not travelled abroad although he independently visits the cosmopolitan cities of the UAE and has many expatriate friends. He disliked school and learned English mostly through on-line gaming. The interviews took place in the researchers' office together with his fellow student Khalil (below). Interview 1 lasted 9 minutes, 30 seconds (*2,226 words) and interview 2, 18 minutes (*3,875 words). Whilst the context of the interview may have reduced Abdullah's agency over his reflective discourse sharing this with

his colleague may have compensated to some extent. There is some three-way co-construction in a few segments of the interviews but for the most part it is two-way between Abdullah and the researcher.

Khalil

Khalil is an Emirati national and a student at the college. He was raised in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi and has not travelled abroad although he independently visits the cosmopolitan cities of the UAE and had several expatriate colleagues during a previous period of study in the United Arab Emirates University in Al-Ain. Interview 1 lasted 10 minutes (*1,736 words) and interview 2, 24 minutes (*4,664 words). The interviews took place in the researchers' office together with his fellow student Abdullah (above). Whilst the context of the interview may have reduced Khalil's agency over his reflective discourse, sharing this with his colleague may have compensated to some extent. There is some three-way co-construction in places but for the most part it is two-way between Khalil and the researcher.

** Approximate values, including the researcher's questions and comments.*

Appendix 2:

Example of Transcription

I: So good morning Fakhra – what I'm really looking for in in this first interview is just a brief reflection in general erm and trying to pick out some specific points about how you learned English what was your experience your story of learning English

FAKHRA 1: OK Good morning Peter ummm I started learning English OK since er in the school when I was in Grade 4 OK er now they now the system is is difference from what used to be in my days we used to like to we start we used to start learning English as a subject OK when we arrived Grade 4 but now it's different they start from KG not every from Grade 1 – So Grade 4 and they were teaching us like the basics the numbers ABC –

I: This was in the Western Region

FAKHRA 1: No it was here – I studied here

I: In Abu Dhabi

FAKHRA 1: In Abu Dhabi yeah – specifically in Bani Yas – OK so it was er (long pause)..... it was er what I can what how can I describe it a 'modest'

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 1: Way of studying OK the subjects

I: The basics

FAKHRA 1: Yeah – less than the basics I mean we spend like 3 years studying the same basics can you imagine this ABC Grade 4, 5, 6 – then we started like er er studying grammar OK when we arrived grade 7... 7, 8, 9 and – starting from 10 er grade 10 – we we started like erm you know using our skills er even the writing I like we used to memorize a paragraph and then write it if we got something different to what we memorize it was like er huge program we started blaming the teacher – how come this paragraph come and how come you want me to write about this topic and you didn't give me a paragraph to memorize for this topic – so erm it was different absolutely different – OK and er I was good in English by the way my grades were high since I'm talking about memorizing

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 1: OK – so er like I u I used to get er 90/95 in English subjects I was good student – when we arrived the university when I move to university ... everything changed

I: This was in Al-Ain

FAKHRA 1: No it was in Zayed University

I: Zayed University

FAKHRA 1: Yeah so the the system was different OK and er.... And even the English course – the way of studying English was absolutely different – it makes a loop in my life OK because

I: A a what

FAKHRA 1: A loop

I: A loop - Yeah, yeah, yeah... This was the Bridge Program

FAKHRA 1: Yeah – OK, now I I have I you know er I have to keep this image about the the excellent student who get A (*laughing*) all the time (*yeah, yeah*) and also I have to er adapt myself with the new system – the problem – was that I dunno how to manage I dunno how to adapt myself you know like I used to use the same old style studying style which is memorizing which is different in the university - then I so in the first course I got I think C in English OK and I was shocked, what's happening? – OK then I used this is the time er and since I was the first one who enter university in my house so erm there is a there is there was no one like guiding me telling no do this don't do this this not the right thing and the university was new Zayed University was a new university and I was in the second cohort – So I asked help from a girl who was in the first cohort and she was with me in the bus when I asked she told me just ignore it C is good but this not yannie er it's not me it's not Fakhra I want to be the A student because I used to be the A student er then I asked erm er I went to the library I remember this after this conversation, I went to the library and then I thought it's a good way – I have to help myself here OK so what did I do I went to the story corner in the library I then I saw the books that there was like levels in the books

I: Yeah graded 1, 2, 3

FAKHRA 1: Elementary Level 1, level 2 level 3 so I start reading elementary books OK then I finished like in 10 minutes like this level's not my level I have to get to read something like higher this than this level so I start reading Level 1 then level 2 then I used to read like er then I start level 3 OK in level 3 I used to read you know like my way in the bus OK from the house to

the to to the university and and the opposite from the house to the university from the university to the house and I used like to finish two stories at the same day then I moved to higher level then I finished all the books in the er

I: So you were reading two stories a day on the bus – (*yeah*) one to the college and one back again

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, again – yeah, so I finished all the most all the books from the corner and then guess what I found out that er um in the writ... even in the writing it it effect even my writing skills – yes I'm reading but I'm learning new new words new vocabularies so erm... then I found myself just er writing a whole paragraph OK an whole report by the way and getting B+ A

I: And as far as you're aware the only difference that - the only thing that you've done was to read (reading) all these books (*yeah*) – particularly to and from college

FAKHRA 1: Only reading, only reading OK – and then I started expanding my ... my way of learning English OK I started er watching movies – OK er you know without translation

I: Where?

FAKHRA 1: In the library itself

I: In the library you're watching movies

FAKHRA 1: Yeah I was using to like current er CDs movies from the library (*yeah*) and using the resource – then I found myself er doing something else um you know checking um my friends and my colleagues er reports and er paragraphs they were like you know they need some they need feedback (*OK*) OK so I was going and I was asking them please let me read and I will er yannie um review your er your report to correcting all the er and they were doing this – of course yannie – they they think I this is the good Fakhra who helped them but I was learning as a matter of fact

I: You were giving them feedback but you were learning at the same time

FAKHRA 1: I was learning – OK then er I found myself writing an e-mail - a wh... a I as matter of fact which I didn't feel that there is a change I'm improving I'm developing my skills no

I: You didn't notice at the time

FAKHRA 1: I did notice any change in myself – I was

I: Although you got better grades – for the writing

FAKHRA 1: The grades were number one - another one that no the numbers was you know um the feel itself of happiness OK didn't make me see what's happening yannie – how I um - check my development – OK yannie notice my development – I was only happy but I didn't notice I'm improving – so what happened I was once writing an e-mail – to my English instructor and er about a grade or about something it was in the break – it was very long e-mail by the way was typing, typing, typing, typing, typing – and then my friend said my colleague told me before er are you playing? I thought I'm not... I'm not – I'm typing. And yannie – are you typing did you er type all this and all this report only in this amount of time – she thought that I was playing (Um-) not writing an e-mail (yeah) Yeah, and guess what because I started knowing, yannie I memorized the place of the the keyboard (yeah) so I noted that not only my English improved even my typing

I: Your keyboard skills, um, um

FAKHRA 1: Yeah even my keyboard typing skills so I - I was like yeah I I'm there is something about me – I have to notice there is something I have to work now on on myself you know to focus again on the like to get better I have to work on myself now.....So then – OK – er there was like um a mid-year project which is writing – OK now I'm grade 2 – er sorry level 2 –

I: So you've passed the Bridge Course now

FAKHRA 1: Er no I'm

I: You're still in the Bridge Course

FAKHRA 1: I I passed level 1 with C (yeah) then I'm level 2 now I'm in level 2 OK in level 2 er as I told you I'm getting yannie better and better spa...in English OK in all skills Speaking, Writing, Reading and even listening... and guess what (laughing) very – um I wrote um I didn't know that there is that competition or they will er they they they the university said the campus OK er as a matter of fact the English college OK they asked us to all the students from Level 2, Level 1 and level all the levels OK it's like a gathering meeting in the in the auditorium and I wen.. I went will all the yeah I went with the students we sat in our chairs everything was fine we were waiting what's happening then um Mr. Chickaro OK who was my writing instructor he came OK to the on the stage then he said we are going we yannie the staff we decided to pick some of the distinguished and er like um er unique piece of writing OK in front of all the students and they started mentioning the names OK and guess what my name was one of er

I: Wow – (yeah) so you were really happy

FAKHRA 1: Yeah -.... What's happening what my name

Both: *laughing*

I: Shocked even

FAKHRA 1: Yeah I was shocked

I: Really

FAKHRA 1: Wallah – I was shocked I didn't - in the middle of it I start screaming ahhhh... and my colleagues they were like yannie pushing me – go to the stage – go to the stage – nahhh ahh ahh.... Nooah yannie I was I was I was like really proud of myself (*um, um, um*) OK and um and I was really proud he said you deserve it and which was yannie there were like there were er two names and I was one of these names OK and then erm they er by the end of level 2 they said that all the student who got – all the A and B+ students you will take eer a test an English test if you pass this test you will skip level 3 will go direct to level 4.... So we all these with level 2 who got A who yannie all the students A B A and B students of Level 2 they we got the same test and er I took the level er took er the test and then I could I was with the students who skipped level 3 and went direct to level 4 and then which is s... by the way and this way I saved a whole course in the university so I finish I think that the I'm I'm the only students who graduate in 4 years (yeah) as an English teacher

I: Yeah you saved a whole year

FAKHRA 1: Yeah (*um*)

I: So that's a fantastic story and er you know well done indeed erm I'm just you s.. you had reading which started to drive it when you realized that , you came from school you realized that this was a different thing completely so you would the reading you used the movies and you used writing and somehow the keyboarding skills gave you a kind of fluency in writing as well

FAKHRA 1: U no the er the er no it's not the typing that helped me but I told you that I recognized the difference that I'm developing OK because she told me that you are fast OK I'm fast at the keyboarding OK but what yannie I wrote a whole report she told me you write you wrote all this report yannie in this short time (*um*) so it's not about I'm yannie this made me recognize that yeah there is something in my I'm developing OK

I: What opportunities did you have outside of er, obviously you're motivated (*um um*) don't learn another language without really wanting it, but and and clearly listening to you you're you know very motivated for this experience but what opportunities did you have outside of

the university to participate in English I'm mean you mentioned projects were any of those projects outside of the university or did they all take place inside

FAKHRA 1: No it they were inside in the first second years they were inside OK however, we start because I erm I entered Education college and there's there was like erm the practicum when I had to go to schools (*yeah*) and the university they started in the first er two courses we have to go to private schools not to the government (*right*) not to government so it was a good experience because I was studying in the government school I dunno what's happening about the education system in the private schools so it was um I was amazed the way of learning English how do they teach English which is different absolutely different about what's (*how?*) happening in government school the way is different there was they were surround even the posters around the er walls the students' work the exhibition of students' work it was different erm the appreciation of the students' work it was exist which it was exist can be seen Peter but not in our er government school erm there was like er a mini library OK but very developed libraries – listening section, reading section (*in the class*) which is not existed... Yeah, in class and even the library itself (*yeah*) OK there was like sections OK

I: And were were you when you visited the schools the private schools were you using English with the teachers were there English teachers speaking in English there

FAKHRA 1: Yeah and they were speaking English all the time I was amazed because this is how was not happening in the in our schools you know the teacher like used to speak in English for two or three minutes then she when she look at our face or or at least not for me because yannie I could understand her at the at that level I was OK I understand what she was saying but there were students who were clueless so she was they were pushing her to speak Arabic and she was doing this (*yeah*) – yeah she was speaking Arabic which is – I can't bli - blame her but er – Then at that time I decided to be an English teacher

I: Really?

FAKHRA 1: So when I

I: When the When you did the projects to go to to

FAKHRA 1: The private schools (to the private schools – that's) and see the difference then I decided to be a teacher yannie it was first an elective course the introduction to education college er I I knew that I want to be a teacher but not for any subject I was I was not sure yeah er I was not determined about like I want I wanted to be as a matter of fact a history teacher or geography teacher....Then when I went to that school to the private schools I was amazed OK and er then I decided to be an English teacher at the yannie at that time

I: How did your English er progress after that once you'd gone into the er college (um) out of the Bridge Program you skipped a year - very successful - how did your what sort of things did you do to continue improving your English what were the main influences on the growth of your English at that point

FAKHRA 1: I participated in different er I started taking er lit er literature classes (OK) English literature classes OK (*really*) in the yeah in the University as electives and by the way the this also saved my time because I already took like two or three er elective courses and it was like er a demand of me since I will yannie I was I planned I changed my plans to be an English teacher so er like I took a course which I were supposed to take it like er in the third or in the fourth year

I: OK and that

FAKHRA 1: And I finished them

I: That was parallel to the courses you had to take these were extras so you finished them early

FAKHRA 1: Yeah I finished all the lit... all the er

I: What effect did studying English literature have on your er English language learning

FAKHRA 1: How what?

I: Ho-ho-how did these electives in English literature improve you English, what was the process

FAKHRA 1: I will start tell you know since were discussing like different er literature pieces OK er books, movies er analysing the movie itself or the subject itself OK er the fruitful discussion which were er yannie happening in the classroom it was all these improve not only my my language even my thinking skills (*yeah*) OK so I like er I like that times

I: Who were you discussing with fellow students?

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, the students and also my er my instructor OK and even the projects when he I used to give us a project – I remember the first – I I entered a literature class and was clueless about since you know it's not only about language even about thinking itself (*yeah*) yeah I remember that what's happening what are they saying about the story in how do they analyse the story in this way I couldn't the way of er dealing with the book – with the piece itself – OK what's the creativity with someone who like for example Ernest Hemmingway killing himself at the end yannie? Why (*yeah*) they appreciate his work – what's the difference in his work?

(yeah) Why what's the thing that makes him different from the others?.....So then we start – then I think that I understood that the the key – the um – at the first half like at the first two months I didn't er couldn't understand the secret - so I got C

I: Yeah, really in an (*yeah*) elective?

FAKHRA 1: Yeah it was C+ (*and it and it was ...*) and the level was very high the level of the class was it's nos not like all one or two it was like three something yannie people in the last in the final year take this cla...(yeah) this course and I took I it was like a challenge I didn't know even about the numbers about the levels of the class about the level of the courses um.....So I thought what's happening I'm not going to get C I have to do something C+ is not a grade – I I remember that I even cried (*laughing*) *laughing* wallah – then I start to work on myself starting um er I talked to my friends OK who were insisting and they asked me to you know to go with them in family science er they were special they yannie their majors were family science we were four four friends three of them

I: Family science

FAKHRA 1: Family science and they wanted me to go with them so when I got this grade they told me – we told you before come with us it's easier – I told them no – I have to face this I I and even if I will go to family science I have to deal with the the C+ like I have two month now the mid it was this was the midterm (yeah) er grade I worked on myself OK and er since the the the midterm 30% only from the total grade go to the er midyear er the mid-year test OK I have now 70 (*yeah*) to play with – guess what – *banging on table lightly* – I worked on myself and by the end - *banging on table heavily* - I got A – *banging on table heavily*

I: When you say, that's fantastic, when you say that you worked on yourself what sort of things did you do to (I started) make the difference

FAKHRA 1: I - first of all I went to my instructor and and asked him Why? Why I got this grade why? He told me and he was clear er that er there are thing you have to work on in yourself not only you even the other students (yeah, yeah) OK and er and also you you not as er not as like um second year student or third year student you as er - I don't know – He was like you know when you see some yannie when you when you are er when you see all the students OK he was he has er I think that he was I want to pick my words I don't want to be rude here but he was er he had this low yannie low sight

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 1: OK and he he thought that we all the students all the six students OK we were not good enough (*yeah*) to er achieve his target

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 1: Or to achieve er yannie um we are not on his level – simple

I: Par-part of it where he was marking you down because he expected you to be bad because he knew that you were not at that level at this stage

FAKHRA 1: Yeah

I: So you you were tackling something much above your current level

FAKHRA 1: Yeah and there is nothing...

I: Then you pushed yourself to achieve it so you really stretched yourself

FAKHRA 1: Yeah they were students... they were miserable they said thanks to God he give us C+ What!

I: But what did you actually do you went to your teacher you got his opinion but what did what did you actually do to improve your English

FAKHRA 1: I start first I remember the first thing is that I went to my laptop I opened Google OK (*yeah*) then I wrote Ernest Hemmingway – OK er description then I started like reading I dunno like thirty or forty articles about it and opened my mind people's opinions about this book and how they um they were discussing the the you know like the the lines the text itself sentences so I was *yeah* why didn't I think in this way this word they were he was simply playing with the words and only I had to understand the game (OK) all the list so I was started doing the same OK I started to playing with the words (*yeah*) OK I understood the

I: Being creative with them not memorizing them but being creative with them

FAKHRA 1: Yeah

I: So your resource for improving yourself for bridging that gap between where you were and where you had to get to be one of the resources was the er internet (*yeah*) using Google *yeah* - A main one was is there anything else

FAKHRA 1: Main

I: That was the main one

FAKHRA 1: Yeah

I: Just reading, reading, reading being determined using the internet

FAKHRA 1: Yeah and knowing about the people er not only internally even externally feedback – also another thing I did is that I entered another literature but you know like if poetry class it was poetry course and er I was amazed also with the poetry because you know all the time I thought that the English er poetry is like it's different from us (yeah) OK then I thought an... there is no match I was I I'm good in er Arabic ... poetry (poetry) yeah but I dunno about English then I thought what's are these lines what are the connection of these lines then I got myself on another story*Laughing* ... another loop..... Another loop (*laughing*) I have now to deal with the English poetry – so and even I I er I did the same I start Googling and w...er our instructor was different from the poetry instructor was different from that er instructor OK he he she she was she she and she was clear to us that use your own imagination its up it's all about here OK live the lines OK try to read the words behind the lines ah it's like a game (yeah) OK she was er so she was different OK she was encouraging us to yeah give me what you have yeah no no there is nothing wrong about any of your explanations – it's your it is the way you see and you read the lines that's it the stanzas that's it – so erm and guess what there was er when I finished her course, with A of course (*laughing*) OK what happened I there was like erm she was going to publish a book OK for poetry and she invited all the students to be part of this book OK she took some of my works she included in the book and she asked me to write also more – so three or four of my poems are published or...

I: In English

FAKHRA 1: In English

I: Fantastic

FAKHRA 1: Yeah

I: So reading is a driving force the internet is a driving force um of your learning um movies was an important thing that made made the difference – before we finish today because I have enough er ideas there I think for the time being unless er which I can come back I would like to come back to you about in more detail – so what are it's quite interesting that you were using the bus because that's something in the Western Region our students travel a lot and you were really using that as a time resource to to read – I do the same I've done my doctorate on the bus basically

FAKHRA 1: Yes *Laughing*

I: Um – with all the travel that we do – is, before we finish is there anything else er that you can think of that was a a major sort er of sort of driving force in your learning that we could learn from for the students in the Western Region – just to recap you’ve got internet you’ve got reading you’ve got reading on the bus er and particularly movies er CDs films – anything else that comes to mind

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, applying what I learned – using the word that I’m learning the new word it’s very important it’s not enough only like to memorize it you have only to use it

I: How?

FAKHRA 1: You have always to use it

I: How do you use them though – where do you use them

FAKHRA 1: In the house

I: In the house?

FAKHRA 1: Yeah and even

I: Really

FAKHRA 1: Yeah and even when I become er good when I go to I become a teacher an English teacher so I used to er use yannie er chose the any new word I use I use it yannie in the real life (*yeah*) OK which is er

I: In the house

FAKHRA 1: In the house (*with who*) in the school – with my family

I: Really, you use English in the house with your family with new words

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, (*how, they all speak English*) not only new words not only new words (*they all speak English*)

FAKHRA 1: No, my mother no, my father no, but my er my sisters and even I I erm when I graduate from the school I I found that all my sisters OK their English also developed as well with me because they were involved (*yeah*) yeah – even when I have studies for example any any projects OK they they um I was er er yannie er I wa... I didn’t pick any subject I used to like pick subjects and in purpose OK that er I can involve my family in

I: Right OK

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, so that also my sisters can develop their English as well and this what's happened they are good in English

I: But it was partial I mean in the normal day to day running of the house you use Arabic (er yeah) but then you chose certain times to use English

FAKHRA 1: To use English - not certain times for example er we're talking about here simple words OK for example er er water (*yeah*), erm give me, would you please give me this would you please give me (*Yeah the daily phrases, you use those in the house*) Yeah even now when I got married the same thing with my baby

I: So participation when you've learnt a piece of language a word a phrase the the key for you is that you use it

FAKHRA 1: You have to implement – you have to use it

I: What other places have you used it – in the house?

FAKHRA 1: No, even in the in the er in shopping

I: Shopping

FAKHRA 1: In the past I used, yeah shopping, in the past before going to the university do you know er I going er when I used to go to er any stores OK any store er when there is like an English er salesman or er like er a an Arab I prefer to go to the Arabic one (*yeah of course*) but not anymore I was pushing myself to go to the English and like open conversation with the people (*right, right, yeah*) not even not only in the shopping even in the university I met many many of instructors who who who was not teaching me like stopping them open conversation with them I start talking to them

I: You created opportunities (*yeah*) you found the opportunities (*yeah*) to practice to participate

FAKHRA 1: The open conversation with anyone who knows er basically with the native speakers (*yeah*) yeah – talking it was very good too by the way you can also add it (*yeah*)....I used to stop many er I remember Miss Patricia she was new to the country even to the university (*yeah*) and she was not my my instructor I used I stopped her she told me she was asking me about um way of classroom the way (*yeah*) and I told her are you new here she told me er I'm new my husband work too we start to open conversation then become friends and guess what she was my instructor next course (um, um) so she became my instructor and also my friend as well

I: So, we generally think that there are few opportunities particularly in the Western Region for our students to participate to use the language but if they actively chose to they can usually find some...

FAKHRA 1: Yeah they have to, they ha... they anyone one er Peter, not only in English anything you have you have you must have the motivation to do something to change to develop yourself otherwise you won't do anything

I: Of course

FAKHRA 1: Yeah You can you can as we saying you can er take a horse to water you can drove a horse to water but you can't push the horse to drink this is definitely life in any in any field not only in English

I: Thank you very much Fakhra um just as a sort of preview to the next interview the second and final interview um I will go away and analyse this and I will be coming back looking particularly at some ideas developing these ideas of places that you learned the places that you actually participated and used English and my purpose as I've explained before the interview is to er try and find opportunities for other students in the Western Region to er participate in English as much as possible because as you say participation is one of the one of the keys

FAKHRA 1: And they have you and you have they have there also I don't I don't think that Isaac or any of er I mean you your team will say no to one of the students (of course) what's happened that I think the problem it's not only yannie we have multi-sides with the students they have to be brave enough OK you know to take the intiti... er to be initiative (yeah) OK to take the first step they have to start it's not it's not only you yeah yannie you can push them but they have they have to make the first step (yeah) they have to take it.....

I: I mean in um in some circumstances er people particularly the males have gone to the US to study and then of course they've had lots of opportunities they've stayed with host families they've been camping they've been to the cinema all these sorts of things – particularly the ladies in the Western Region they have fewer opportunities – but like yourself you've made the decision if you have to choose between going to er an Arabic speaker in a perfume shop or an English speaker a Pilipino I: English speaker for example you go to the English speaker and you practice your English - so there are opportunities there

FAKHRA 1: Yeah, I have to lear... I er er er we have to find to ourselves like channels for communicating and improving ourselves and communicate you know it depends also on my personality since I'm interpersonal

I: Yeah, yeah

FAKHRA 1: Yeah interpersonal er person so I like to ... *unclear* ... and talk with people communicate with them it's part of my er my personality (*yeah*)

I: Thank you very much I appreciate your time

FAKHRA 1: Thank you Peter

FAKHRA 2: Meet my manager

I & FAKHRA 2: *laughing*

I: Let's just make sure we've got enough volume here – input – yeah. So, what I really want to do is to focus on the the places that you learnt in (um) OK. And if you can help me reflect a little bit on how important they were. Everybody assumes that the most important learning takes place in the classroom in the school – yeah – that's where we write books for that's where students go to study – they go to college, they go to school, they go into classrooms. I'm look trying to look at how important that work is in the classroom because clearly it's it's likely to be important but how important other places are like you in the service encounters (um) talking to the er Pilipino sales woman (*yeah*) in the...

FAKHRA 2: The other places OK er it's the the classroom OK is where you you are supposed to to gain OK to learn er this was what the system the education system basically they were like teaching us voc... giving us vocabularies like ten vocabularies in each class and we have to memorize it OK this what's happening in er our education system. So we have to memorize these vocabularies by the end of the week they have er a dictation test OK and er and that's it but er what happened later when I went to the university that I I started using these vocabularies these words OK it's like this – I have this blocks OK putting them close together and er establish a wall OK happened in the real life in the these places in the super in the store for them I said Al Areej in the mall - the outside.

I: This came out in the last part of our first interview er you were talking about the real life (yes) – real life and participation. And that's what I'm really interested in it seems that there's a relationship between what goes on in the classroom – isn't enough but it that needs to be um – we tend to just use the word practice but it's a bit it's more than practice (yes) 'cause you're not really focusing on the language you're participating in something (yes) in English you're participating in buying some perfume or speaking to somebody in the home – what was

really interesting – er just trying to get a little bit of organization – I want to be free but a little bit of organization into the interview – er the key places seem to me were at home through and at school and in the library – different places in the school not just the classroom (um, um) – er watching movies was a strong influence (yeah) early on yeah – was is that correct? Am I interpreting...?

FAKHRA 2: No, no, no

I: That correctly?

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, yeah, yeah, you're absolutely correct. But there is a belief, er it's my belief OK– that er it's not about only about applying OK er what I learnt it's all - also about being linguistic – I think that I I have this er intelligence – OK I'm linguistic. I know, aaaas a matter of fact the English is not er the only language er which, which I know OK beside the Arabic I also er know some exam Indian and also er some Persian language – (yeah yeah) some words. So er what happened that erm – you must have this intelligence I think yannie yannie it effects on er at least on the speed of learning (yeah, yeah) it's my belief. OK, for example, my sister - erm I'm not going to take my house because we are we are all linguistic in the house (right, right). Even my father he knows more than one language – he's not good at English but he knows Urdu he knows, and from um he knows er er Persian as well, he knows er Arabic and also there is a fourth language – I don't know what – (yeah) he knows four but and and he didn't study at school (no) no he learned these languages in the the life itself (yeah) in the work because um you know at the beginning – er in the 70s – OK the he used to like to work with er with Indian people (yeah) – different nationalities – so he learned the languages from them - (yeah) OK so er yeah the environment effect in your learning (yeah) OK.

I: Sure, and and um one other thing that comes out that you know there may well be er a linguistic intelligence or you there may have been significant influence from your family to interest you in the whole thing about learning languages – the other thing that comes out of course in your story and in every story (um) that I've studied so far is this really strong powerful motivation (to learn) desire you know I'm not gonna have a C I'm not gonna have a C+ I'm gonna have an A and I'm gonna work on myself and I don't care how I'm gonna do it but I'm going to do it – I'm going to get there. And and those things are are very important and they will certainly be mentioned in my study but what I'm really trying to focus on and dig out here is – is where *–pause* – where you learnt what were the most important places in your learning story for learning. One of them was the library in the university and the movies

FAKHRA 2: yeah this this is the first place that came my head – the library was the first place that er put me yannie in the right division er in the right direction. I I'm positive yannie – I I'm sure. OK I was not sure at the beginning because I didn't know from where to start but now I'm telling you er the most attractive place OK that helped me to improve my English was the library in the university.

I: Yeah, it was watching movies

FAKHRA 2: No not watching reading the books

I: And reading

FAKHRA 2: Yeah reading the books and then, OK er I er yannie the reading helped me expand OK my um my knowledge and also like to be brave to take big step – like watching movies without translation it's a big step (yeah) for someone who didn't used to to do this (yeah) in my entire life we used to like watch movies with a translation – and I remember when I was in in the school if there is like a movie without translation everybody was – everybody was attracted to the movie I just escaped.

I: Really,

FAKHRA 2: Yeah I didn't have to tell me ah I'm not going to understand anything – but I did. Er, now I'm wondering why didn't I stop just to talk for 5 minutes (yeah) to watch the movie without translation. In just like to evaluate myself to find myself. (yeah) I was not I was not interested.

I: But

FAKHRA 2: But now

I: Once you'd done the reading and of course that was the fascinating that's something we (yeah) have in common – because you did a lot of reading on the bus going to Zayed University – and as told you last week much of my reading for this particular study (on the way) over the four years has been done on the bus you know

I & FAKHRA 2: Laughing

I: So that's a very special a very specific (yes) place (yes) but you read a lot of graded readers (yes) first and that was what prepared you for actually understanding the movies – is that correct.

FAKHRA 2: Yes

I: FAKHRA 2: Right. Yeah - it helped me

I: Right

FAKHRA 2: It make me take the steps not all understand the movies – because maybe – yannie -now I'm wondering – if I watched these movies OK while I was in the university – I'm wondering now - maybe that was going to to change everything. You know er I'm not er start I mean starting or improving my English er er I I start to improve the improvement OK started where when when I went to the university (*yeah*) OK we're talking about the first year when I was 18.

I: That was that shock when you went from (*yeah*) A to...

FAKHRA 2: But maybe if I tried watching these movies

I: Earlier

FAKHRA 2: Earlier it would effect on my distribu... yannie umm I was not going to go through er you know like this experience of getting C.

I: Um (*laughing*) yeah – and also you you it was a bit later in life when you were at the university you started really taking the opportunity to create chances to speak English like in the malls and so on yeah – when you were a little bit younger you didn't do that (no). And one of the things you mentioned also was this idea of being brave that the students have to be brave – because it is a big step to walk up to somebody and say – try and say something in a language which you're not very comfortable in.

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, I used I remember that in the first in the first course OK when when I wan like wanted to say something to the to the instructor I was asking my friend who was sitting beside me tell him this and this and this please (*yeah*) which were my comments or my answers OK and then it changed with the second the third not second course third course I was the one you know the speaker of the classroom Fatima tell them this OK then 1, 2, 3 (*yeah*) OK so changed the places

I: So reading sort of early early sort of lower levels reading with the graded readers er prepared you for understanding the movies (*yeah*) yeah and so you had the movies you had reading on the, reading on the bus and then the library - and then there were these service encounters and then when there were later all the opportunities you made to speak to your instructors in the corridors in (*yeah*). Any place everywhere even in the cafeteria?

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: Yeah, Even in the cafeteria

FAKHRA 2: Even in the cafeteria

I: In English

FAKHRA 2: Yeah in English

I: And you never found that awkward or embarrassing with your fellow students didn't they were they not embarrassed that as a as an Emirati as an Arab that you were using English do you think

FAKHRA 2: Noooo...

I: You didn't have any worries along those lines

FAKHRA 2: I didn't care about this ... now you are ... you are ah... no I didn't care, I don't know why. They were like no one accept me – I have to talk to work on myself. I didn't care about their opinions - I don't know – maybe – is it embarrassing? I don't know?

I: No... I'm just int... I'm interested because

FAKHRA 2: No I was not embarrassed no – I didn't think about it – about their er attitude or what will it they say. My focus was to develop my language to develop myself it I have to take advantage of this er opportunity (yeah). It's a learning opportunity.

I: Wherever you were

FAKHRA 2: I have to create – yeah - I have to create one I have to go I have to take advantage of this opportunity that's it. This was what's in my mind.

I: I want to follow up with the idea of participation in a in a minute but so there are other people that have you know family members who are fluent in English but they don't like to use the language in the home and one thing that stood out from our previous interview w w was that both before and after being married um you have no er you you tried to use English as much as possible in the home is that is the case you still use English in the home

FAKHRA 2: Even now with my baby yeah I speak Arabic OK but er when you know when I for example when I have the opportunity to use the English why not with my depend even with my husband OK because to be honest I want also to improve his English OK he works in oil field in gas field (yeah) um in gas and oil sector so he use English but I noted that er he want to try

but he was not luck like me OK as I was so um so er and and he's a brave he's motivate he has the motivation OK but he needs someone to say you know this don't say it in this way say it's better to say it in this way OK and er

I: That's something else you did with your colleagues that you were like your peers

FAKHRA 2: Even now

I: You corrected them you helped them advised them you

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, without embarrassing them (*um*) OK even now with my girl when she sends an e-mail it's not tell it's tells – don't forget the S (*yeah*) for example (*yeah*) OK errr... here, in the work, in the house, with my baby, even when er when I before even marriage and even if I start working in the house in my family house with my with my sisters and brothers we and we studying English (*yeah*) yeah er and by the way it effect on the main – none of them had a problem in English

I: Yeah you said that in the (*yeah*) first interview (*it was really helpful*) that you deliberately chose topics at in the college that would be appropriate about for er talking about in the home (*yeah*) so that you could improve their English (*yeah*) that's very...

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: So, OK um just holding back on the participation idea just a little bit – this is a very difficult question – a er I mean I'm not er you know expecting exact numbers obviously, but if you if you were to sort of put a number on it a rough number on it how important was the classroom that is the the school classroom, the university classroom for your learning, 'cause you're a fantastic speaker of English um and how important were all these other places? How important you know is it is it 50/50 is the classroom much more important was all the other were all the other things more important I mean do you see what I'm

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: Trying to get at

FAKHRA 2: For me OK the right thing should be the school should be number one – the right thing

I: It should be

FAKHRA 2: It should be

I: For writing

FAKHRA 2: No for learn for er learning English

I: It should be

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: But (*it should be*) was it

FAKHRA 2: No, in my experience no. The school was not number one. No - The university

I: The university

FAKHRA 2: Yeah – I was excellent in school. I got like er 90/95 in English OK er I used to study for the test – er memorizing my paragraphs

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: You know everything

I: Memorizing the paragraphs

FAKHRA 2: Memorizing basically

I: But how how important was that for getting you where you are now in your English language

FAKHRA 2: Erm... *pause* I can't say er ... ahhhh

I: I know it's difficult but I'm just trying to assess

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, yeah, I know, I know – I want to be fair, I want to be fair, I want to be honest OK I think er, if we are talking about the English classes

I: I'm talking about English – yeah...

FAKHRA 2: English classes or the school itself

I: Well the school – anything 'cause the school's....

FAKHRA 2: The school is different because ah ah I told you er I used to be like an A student in the school (yeah) so it's effected on me (um) you know the even university when I want I was my motivation in the first place was not the challenge itself, it became a challenge later (yeah) but I wanted to I I want to get I wanted to get A because in the school I was A student (yeah)

I: So the whole school experience (*so there is a connection*) was good for you in terms of learning because it gave you confidence (yeah) it gave you yeah but the

FAKHRA 2: And the motivation to be an A A excellent in everything that's it

I: But in the actual English language classroom how much effect did that have your English language learning later on how important was it? W...would you still be at this point of English language learning without having learnt English at school – in the early levels of school

FAKHRA 2: No

I: No – (*no, to be honest*) it had an effect

FAKHRA 2: It give me a base - no it give me basic

I: It had an effect

FAKHRA 2: I learn my base from the school – and the proof of this that there were like more than one levels OK in the university there was you know like a placement test (*yeah*) you have to take and English test and there were four levels er I entered the the.. level three.

I: Yeah, so you'd learned something at school (*yeah*) – it was significant (*yeah*).

FAKHRA 2: But (*OK*) There were like level ... there were erm ... er four levels, I was in level 3 which is good OK (*yeah, yeah*) and those who were in a private school they went of course to Level 4 (*of course yeah*) yeah

I: Because they had more they had a different style of English teaching – which you discovered when you became a teacher and you went to the private schools and you realized that there was much more communicative OK – so we've established that although the school wasn't as good as it should be and it wasn't the most important er place for your English language learning which you believe it should be – never nevertheless it has helped you (*yeah* it has) it has in fact (*yeah*) – then the university, when you went to university er what places in the university, we've mentioned the library, were there other places in the university that were important for your learning – 'cause I really want to focus on the specific places where you (*the places where*) you learned or participated in English

FAKHRA 2: The classroom and the cafeteria

I: Yeah, which is where students spend most time of (*yeah*) course

FAKHRA 2: The classroom and the cafeteria

I: And did you speak English in the classroom

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: Always

FAKHRA 2: I told you in the first course no but in second course I started in the third er course I was the I was the speaker the classroom speaker

I: What about the other students did did they were they as confident and as good at speaking English

FAKHRA 2: Er no in the first er course er there were like some several students who were good in speaking but they were not good in the other skills (yeah) I was the opposite I was good at writing but not good in speaking (um). OK and then in the second course we were the same in the same game the same students erm the same cohort in the same levels OK we were not that much - erm so when we went to the level 2 OK they, they become better and I and also me I I get better (yeah) OK. In the third er level in the third erm um third level OK I I became not more like I I I made loop (yeah) yeah so they were like one if they went like one step higher I went like two or three steps higher than them

I: Yeah, yeah, you progress your your progression rate was faster (yeah) but nevertheless they got... so if you were in the um school classroom and you wanted a pencil or you didn't understand anything, in the earlier school you would ask in Arabic but then after say the first course in the bridge course at Zayed University in the second year, second semester rather, er you would more likely to ask for the pencil or ask for understanding in English

FAKHRA 2: Yeah and also the way of asking itself you know Peter in the beginning we used I used to translate in my mind for example how how would I say OK in Arabic it's for example er er for *Arabic* for example (yeah) which means, I want a book, OK so _____ means book, er _____ means one it's like you know (yeah, yeah) it's like er I have translate word by word which is wrong OK it it's like it distracted my thinking – I was focusing on the words instead of focusing on the idea itself (yeah, yeah) OK. But er, thanks to Allah OK I get rid of this (yeah) OK erm

I: How did that happened how did you get rid of it

FAKHRA 2: I don't know... it's with the third with the er when I started reading OK there was like something in my mind... I don't know what OK I I started thinking – now when I started reading I was focusing on the words, on the words er with the erm with the low level of books you know with the the intermediate reading (yeah, yeah) and then when I start reading like advanced level of works I stated focusing on the story itself, not on the words.

I: Yeah so the this is this is like the this is where we can bring in the idea of participation I think because you you were interested in the story and you weren't focusing on the language and it's the same er when you you're buying something or you are studying another subject (*yeah*) that isn't language that you're studying education you're thinking about education not about English

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, it's only a tool it's like a communicative tool (*right*) it helped me

I: And then you forget about the Arabic. What about just give me a picture of the erm if you would the the canteen in Zayed University how was English used there?

FAKHRA 2: Erm, for example when we er order food we were like erm er like the waitress for example and the waiters there they were the waiters basically 'cause there were there were some Arabic even the cashier some of them Arabic and some of them were foreigner OK English, Pilipino (*yeah*) I remember that er my group and me we used to er to the Arabic ladies (*yeah*) and avoid the Filipinos

I: At first

FAKHRA 2: Yeah OK and the erm then we became friends so er we speak Arabic with them we spend like 15 minutes then we paid I think talking about the food and then khalas we know her - I remember her name was Abyad OK

I: You still remember her

FAKHRA 2: And then I used started an er 'why should I wait' you know and the queue and the line was very long because most of them

I: Everybody wanted to (*laughing*) *laughing* speak Arabic

FAKHRA 2: Everybody was going to talk to her – so I moved to the next line I moved to the Pilipino cashier and they told me wait I remember my group yannie my my friends they said to me OK wait – yannie – I said no. This was not about Abyad it was about... I wanted to go to her you know I wanted like to (*and you wanted*) to chat with her

I: And you wanted to get your food first so you (*yeah*) you were prepared (*yes, khalas, yannie, why, why should we wait khalas let's pay*) take the risk of using English. So you were using English with the er waitresses what about on the tables when you were sitting and eating with your friends were you were using Arabic?

FAKHRA 2: Yeah then we speak Arabic and erm, we had this problem at the beginning ah which is er, wh... yannie you know since you are coming from the government school don't don't speak in English for example we were like er getting angry not angry like why she why speak why she speaks er English, come on we are all Arab here so speak Arabic why speak English

I: This is what I was trying to understand

FAKHRA 2: Yeah it's like about a tradition you know

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: And but er then I remember that one of my colleague was good in speaking she was like speaking English all the I mean she speaks English and she was very good

I: From the private school?

FAKHRA 2: No she was from government but erm she used like to travel every summer to go to European (yeah, yeah, yeah) countries so she she knows English better than us

I: *Coughing* – excuse me

FAKHRA 2: Yeah (*yeah*) so what happened that er and she took one English courses OK so she was she was she was excellent OK in English and then er and she she knew it she knows it she's she know she knew that she's er she was good in English OK so she used that speak English and we were like, Why she speaks English yannie (um, um) OK. Er then er I we were like four OK I talked to them and I told them, she was sitting also erm er her name was Azza so I asked her Azza since you are good in English OK er and instead of spending you time like making jokes and speak English with yourself why we er we don't I I I and er I asked my other group let's do this let us speak English OK like er er so that we can improve our language OK we are good at writing but not at speaking and she's good at speaking she's our friend so and she was sitting with us all the time (*yeah*) so let's talk to her

I: And that worked

FAKHRA 2: Yeah.

I: They they decided – so it was a conscious decision it was a part of your you know clear strategy er all the way through your learning er is to create opportunities to participate (yes) this is another one

FAKHRA 2: As a matter of fact um there is something else is that I I want she she as as she still my friend OK and she's very nice girl but because she was speaking English they were like er you know sensitive (yeah) and the want to avoid her (yeah) – you know the girl who who doesn't belong to the to the group who want to be who's supposed to be outside and I didn't want this so I asked them it's a good opportunity why we don't learn why we don't yannie – let's take her as a model OK and speak with her

I: And she got drawn in to back into the mainstream of the the group

FAKHRA 2: Yeah (yeah)

I: She she was happy (yeah) you got your English

FAKHRA 2: We were happy – were are still her friends – we are still friends yannie until now

I: That's fantastic – so going back to this trying to draw you out on how important these places were I mean if you were going to say – so the school was significant, the university was very significant um for the the classroom, for the library, for the cafeteria, yeah, (correct) um – how important were things outside of the college like you know the your service encounters – and – er it's a little bit – it's very interesting that you chose to use English in the home – because er other people even wh... if they've got you know English teaching mothers are not happy about using, they will just naturally flow and use their mother tongue Arabic (um) but you've made it a a deliberate decision to use English in the home – how important are these other things like the home and the er service encounters outside for for learning English?

FAKHRA 2: Er, very important, for example I was, it was a good opportunity er not only for the not only for my sisters or my er members my family members, even for me because you know I had these projects OK a er I entered many many courses and I had to pick er to choose OK projects (yeah) inside I can apply some in the house OK er or even you know like um making a research paper about er I don't know about any any topic

I: Mini research yeah

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: Did you ever (and) go out – did you ever go to other cities did you ever go out (no) of Abu Dhabi or Dubai or (no, yeah, yeah, Dubai yeah yeah I wrote about Dubai) Ras Al Khaima or Al-Ain (museum yeah my father was talking me to Dubai museum) alright, alright

FAKHRA 2: I remember this in my second year and I got A in this subject

I: But not – although – the the museum (and my, and my...) was a project

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, it was about Dubai museum and...

I: And you did that in English

FAKHRA 2: Yeah in English now what happened er Peter er because er writing a paper was something new for us (*yeah*) OK, any paper I'm talking about any research paper, interview, er case study, action er p... action even writing (*action research*) even writing an action yeah action research and even write writing and action plan something that's (*yeah, yeah*) new it was new for us so they they in the university they they put like this policy that you can pick any any topic OK erm so I wrote about Dubai museum I wrote about er I studied my um the language development of my er baby sister tsh... (*great*) yeah I was following her everywhere er in the house – I studied also, there was many things even about Dubai for example about Dubai museum I took my sister with me, my father went with me and then er I think my sister also she was you know er taking notes (*yeah*) then, because under each picture there was like er you know like article or some (*yeah*) or or er er description about the picture (*yeah*) OK in the museum so my sister like used to to help me so she it was a good experience it was a good exercise for her.

I: Did you have any other experiences like the Dubai museum project that you can think of that you you (*outside*) went to different places?

FAKHRA 2: Um I er should, I look I did lots of er – I went to er Cultural Foundation (*yeah*) OK

I: Also as a project (*yeah it was a project, yeah*) or just as a private visit

FAKHRA 2: But I er er only I used the the library of the Cultural foundation here OK or

I: In English

FAKHRA 2: Yeah in English... or Arabic no Arabic also what er...

I: How significant were those visits for you for learning English?

FAKHRA 2: It was a good experience as a new experience and my father was very helpful because something new for the (*yeah, yeah*) family you know taking my father the toilet to (*to Dubai*) to Dubai and we were moving we were moving to new house also he was coming from the work and I had to finish the paper by the lend by the end of the week so he took me he came from the work he was tired yelled we'll go to er Dubai – he took me to Dubai (*yeah, yeah*) yeah. He was

I: OK

FAKHRA 2: So

I: And erm how significant was practicing or using English in the home for you learning?

FAKHRA 2: Erm, in the home OK I was pushed you know like er to learn er new words because er when you eh for example when you are in universities OK you use that specific words you know you are not you are talking about even if I open like er er you know ... er social er conversation with anyone OK I would be restricted because I'm talking to instructor

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: OK

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: So er but er for example in the house there were like these simple words if er for example the names the animals because I was following my sisters spurogrling ling, linguistic progress so she was (*yeah*) you know she was following my mother's hen hens (*yeah, yeah, yeah*) OK and she was like – so I I learned hen er from my sister I didn't know about er the hens or about the difference between chicken and hen

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: I know, I I learned this er while I was working on this project

I: And you and so your baby was picking up er you're your baby sister was it?

FAKHRA 2: Yeah my baby sister

I: Was picking up English as well?

FAKHRA 2: She's excellent in English now she's now in Grade 5 *laughing*

I: Right, right

FAKHRA 2: She's excellent in English now

I: So all of these things add up um um you know the home, the projects, going to Dubai um and so on er they add up as as ways of participating in English yeah

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: Of using English that you've learnt. Um now, just to try and move on um two two other areas I want to explore if you would

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, sure

I: Um you have a lot of experience now in the Western Region you know the places, you know the personalities you know many of the er our students and the er students that will come to us from the schools. Um what sort of places in the Western Region do you think that we could use to help our students get these participatory experiences that you've had, where can we take, I mean put simply where can we take our students outside of the class to give them this chance to participate?

FAKHRA 2: To learn to learn Eng....Er you have for example the hotels

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: Would be a (*for a project*) good place you I'm talking about Hotel Liwa or Qasar Al Sarab (*yeah*) OK give them a project where they can work and go to these hotels and yannie.... so they will interact with English speakers.

I: Yeah that's, that's....

FAKHRA 2: In the mall the same thing

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: OK OK also

I: So they could do mini research (*yeah*) projects in the hotel in the mall

FAKHRA 2: In the mall, you have also in er I'm not going to say but erm erm like er the municipalities because most of speak most of the employees speak they are speak (*yeah*) they speak Arabic. But I think that the mall the hotels it's a good ex... in it it's a good place where they can er improve their English

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah (*yeah*) good, good. And er also maybe I'm thinking in terms of improving or increasing the number of different places in the colleges you know like improving the library and the learning centre and

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, the library is very small as a matter of fact to be honest Peter the library in the but it's good for the HCT. This what's happen by the way everyone I speak with them my colleagues in er in Madinat Zayed who works with me in WRDC they say that we have to utilize the existing what we have in Madinat Zayed OK (*yeah*) er for example the library you know the size of the library is OK yannie if we are yannie if we are er if we look to the to the number of the students (*yeah, yeah*). However what I feel that this what happening because you say it's

OK for them then it will become OK for them. They are not motivate, a ah, this my feelings about the people of Al Gharbia they are not motivate to be yannie, to make as I as I told you before the loop – I'm not I'm not seeing the loop in Al Gharbia. They want to be er you know you they have er yannie inside the box they don't want to to be yannie not I'm not talking about thinking about the er about even taking steps about even the the way of thinking – they are restricted OK it's fine for them so it's fine for them. No I don't want fine I want something more than fine.

I: Yeah you wanted the A+

FAKHRA 2: Yeah because what's happen that they say fine but what's happening there is that it's less than fine (*yeah*). They are not fine they are less than fine. You are you want you are – I think that why why the level is lower than the student the HCT students in Abu Dhabi? Why?

I: This is what I'm trying to find out.

FAKHRA 2: Why?

I: One, one thing that is clear to me is that er OK... motivation toward learning English, er er being brave and all these things er these are a serious aspects these are key aspects of learning. My study is about where how can we give our students whether they are motivated or not um er how can we provide opportunities for students to participate in English outside of the classroom and inside the classroom?

FAKHRA 2: I think, I think the motivate why

I: Why we need to work on motivation

FAKHRA 2: They will be motivated if if as you said Peter even if they are not motivated now if they have you know it's about er er do you remember when I told you that er I didn't stop to watch the movie er yannie (*yeah*) I'm wondering now why didn't I stop watching the movies which without the ones which without translation yannie I used to watch movies with a trans Arabic translation – but what if I stopped – I mean this what if? (*yeah*) They don't have 'what if'.... (*yeah, yeah*). OK they we have the same way of thinking they make the same tool they same... and the world is changing

I: Indeed

FAKHRA 2: Yeah, everything is changing around them they have to be part of it what I feel that um OK let's talk about al Gharbia 2030 OK. Er I'm not going to say 2030 let's say 2020 within ten years for example (yeah). OK I think their level even for now i... i is not aligned with what we are expect – (yeah) the government er expectations.

I: A, another thing um so I'm planning to increase the participation of the foundation students considerably by er having movie having a movie club English movie club (OK) Trying to get projects where they go out to different places and you've come up with some a couple of excellent ones that the hotels for example and the malls which I hadn't nobody had thought of so that's great um

FAKHRA 2: That's very good er you can start from there and also it's like an advert – you can make deals with the hotels even through us even through WRDC (sure, sure) people take advantage of what exists you know the resources you have (yeah) OK it's not only about taking or picking in taking some or few HCT students to for example Spain or to other – it's a good experience but it's not enough for the HCT one yannie you your role you're the one who's taking you know er yannie our the government entities OK (yeah) they expecting er their future employees from you from HCT (sure, sure) so we have to provide the market with a good students – (yeah, and) good level.

I: You know er it's great to take students to you know a one-off trip to Spain or wherever

FAKHRA 2: But it's not enough

I: But it needs to be a daily it needs to be a daily weekly process where (yeah) they are participating. The other thing that we haven't touched on which I think is very important and you said the world is changing is another powerful influence in your learning was Google was the internet...

FAKHRA 2: Yeah...

I: So maybe that's something we need to look at in more detail er... Yeah, take an advantage, since they they are distract with the they can't move to different places but you can do something with the yeah through Google

FAKHRA 2: But Cert is er the computer is a good way Peter but it's not like the real life – they need to use what they learn – they need to apply what they learn use the language tools that they learn in the classroom in the real life – OK it's not as you said it's more than a practice it's more than – yeah because they practice the language with you OK they are in the er you know the safe zone with you because they know you will understand them

I: I will make every effort to understand them

FAKHRA 2: Yes, but outside they will make the effort (*exactly*) to make the people understand them (*exactly*)

I: Because they want to do something with the language

FAKHRA 2: Yeah and they want (*not just*) they want to get yannie, yannie, this, this my, this my point I think I know this my this what I this the missing thing with HCT OK what's happened that you are you the staff are is excellent, the upper management is excellent they want to work you all want to work you want to you want the students to to improve the student levels but there is something missing you have to find OK the student they go to HCT er but what I er I there is something missing and I think that the not the practice something like we have to pick er something more than practice – they have

I: Participation

FAKHRA 2: More than participation, they have to get involved in the real life

I: Yeah

FAKHRA 2: To use not only well not after graduation because after graduation most of them they are not going to work do you know why because they are not they don't have the motivation we have to make them motivated while they are in the H, while they are studying.

I: And maybe um you know I'm not pushing motivation to one side it's just that you know I'm very aware that it's a key aspect of language learning but it you know and er it will certainly be stated in in my my paper I'm just trying to look it in detail of of places, but it may be (*um*) that by giving students opportunities to go outside of the college and participate in things like projects in the hotel (*yeah*) that there that will improve their motivation (*yesssss*) and make them want to learn they can see the purpose for having English (*yesssss*). OK, thank you Fatima, just to finish off; just a few minutes if I may, I know I've taken a lot of your time. Um *cough* and another difficult question and probably a whole a whole paper in itself (*um*) but I just wanted to touch on this – how do you feel about the effect that learning English has had on your identity I mean er who Fatima is – has learning English changed you in any way?

FAKHRA 2: Yeah – the learning itself it was er – ah er as a matter of fact I'm a social person. OK

I: Yeah, yeah and that's also a great aid in learning English (*yeah*) you're outgoing (*yeah*) and you're ready to socialize.

FAKHRA 2: OK so and er also you know it's like I I I like I like to interact I like to talk to people I like to to learn more about about life, in different fields (*yeah*) OK *unclear* me in everything, economy, erm politics everything OK I I I like to be knowledgeable (*yeah*) about what's happening around me OK er and also er it's about being the the English (*yeah*) it raise my erm it make me my my self-confidence OK

I: It's increased your self confidence

FAKHRA 2: Yeah. Now what's happened that er I just noticed this OK but when I got married erm I noted that my sister in laws, I have two sister in law OK er sisters in law (*yeah*) they were they were er for example when er when they were talking about me they were saying that um er Fatima she's in she's she's an English teacher OK she er even when I when I when this was before marriage when I got married OK I was at their house I moved to their er to their house to the to my husband's family house (*yeah*) for example there was something um when we go to mall we go to *lbn* salon to ladies salon we go to any place OK and there was an English speakers people say this this this and... OK why you don't do it – this is – we don't know. So it was like you know we are a proud because she knows English (*yeah*). Yannie, what's the relationship, why er they they think that I'm lucky they think that... it's not about luck it's about yannie, er I feel that I was a brave enough t... to take you know you know like like er to take to take an action action steps to learn to improve myself (*yeah*) yeah and I'm trying now to pushing them to do the same.

I: Right, Right

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: So the way people look, look at you is different because you speak English (*yeah*) the way they appreciate you is different, yeah,

FAKHRA 2: Yes, but yannie, I noticed this after marriage maybe er even when I was when I because you know I I er I was an English teacher for er I taught English for like 7 years (*yeah*) the same thing with my students OK I was like pushing to speak English even in the class for example if they wanted to go to erm to the toilet for example they were like used to come to me miss, they were saying in Arabic er I want to go to the toilet I said no, you have to say it in English then you can go.

I: *Laughing* so er you don't feel that English, learning English has been... it's changed you and it's changed the way people look at you buy it's not been a problem it's not it's not limited you in any way it's not distracted from your Arabic for example

FAKHRA 2: No... because I'm good Arabic speaker as well, reading and writing I didn't have any problem with my Arabic

I: No

FAKHRA 2: No even now I'm good at Arabic in every not good excellent reading, writing (*yeah*) all the, all the er, I'm fine with my Arabic and and by the way I haven't got any – I don't have problem with my language so I feel that I'm safe

I: Yeah, yeah,

FAKHRA 2: It give me this feeling that I'm safe I er if I for example in a meet was in a meeting with er that that day I had a meeting with Abu Dhabi University and all the speakers were English OK I was not scared or er no I was just listening to them make sure I erm understand them and then I reply give my feedback on different er points it's like and my manager was sitting as well one of the managers OK so I was- now while you are talking to me yannie how, how, how er how it effects I mean (*yeah*) the English how it effects me me – it's about self-confidence it's about be... feeling you know the safe feeling that I'm fine (*yeah*) it and er I can express my ideas so I'm fine

I: That's good

FAKHRA 2: Yeah

I: That's interesting. OK Fatima, thank you very much indeed.

FAKHRA 2: Thank you Peter good luck Inshallah on your paper...

Analysis Notes

Initial Awareness Analysis

- Incipiently Critical Awareness?

she was clear to us that use your own imagination its up it's all about here OK live the lines OK try to read the words behind the lines ah it's like a game (yeah) OK she was er so she was different OK she was encouraging us to yeah give me what you have yeah no no there is nothing wrong about any of your explanations – it's your it is the way you see and you read the lines that's it the stanzas that's it

The above passage shows that one of the properties of Fakhra's classroom learning at university was the hermeneutic approach of the teacher – that far from the approach of the high school and expectation of high school students which regards knowledge as a fixed entity to be memorized, in the university knowledge is seen as fundamentally interpretative – that none of the reader's ideas about a novel or poem are incorrect. The teacher's advice to 'read the words behind the lines' is an injunction to think critically, indeed to interpret the world from the students' own perspective.

Postulates a 'linguistic' type of person, such as herself and her father who have learned some Urdu and Persian as well as English and mother tongue Arabic

it's not about only about applying OK er what I learnt it's all - also about being linguistic

However, she largely undermines this postulate when speaking of her father, in favour of place based language learning

learned these languages in the the life itself (yeah) in the work because um you know at the beginning – er in the 70s – OK the he used to like to work with er with Indian people (yeah) – different nationalities – so he learned the languages from them - (yeah) OK so er yeah the environment effect in your learning (yeah) OK.

It might be true that some people are more sensitive to language learning possibilities, but the effect of the environment is clearly seen by Fakhra as being significant.

Private school – different approach – close to immersion – 'surrounded' by English, even on the walls.

University

- discussion of literature in the classroom – challenging values – suicide of Hemmingway
- discuss quality of work with university teacher – challenge the teacher's assumptions about the student's work.
- deliberately targeting English teachers for out of class conversation

Codes

- Insipiently critical awareness of hermeneutic properties of discourse – found in the university
- emphasis on ‘play’ ‘it’s a game’
- participative awareness
- environmental awareness
- internal [school/college]/external [real-life]
- metaphorization ‘wall’ ‘blocks’ ‘inside the box’

Government School

The basics, modest, memorization, students not accepting communicative teaching, use of Arabic for understanding and discipline

Home

- peer learning with siblings
 - deliberately choosing projects that involve whole family
- bilingual upbringing of Fakhra’s children

Social Places

- malls
- hotels
 - as ideal place for college organized task-based projects in English

Interim places

- on the bus!
- university cafeteria
- projects in cosmopolitan Dubai – included father.
- library
 - movies, CDs in the library (without translation)
- peer editing – in school and at home
- writing competition
- Google – virtual place for learning
 - limitations – lacks personal interactions – these seen as essential for ESOL acquisition
- corridors – deliberately targeting English teachers for conversation

Reading

- the power of reading as universal access to English – any place, anytime
- poetry

Task-based learning

- having own work published
- English as a practice – *in vivo* term *implementation* use is essential not merely knowledge or memorization
 - E.g. getting food first in the cafeteria by going to the Filipino English speaker because her queue was shortest!
- self-expression focused learning [*I was focusing on the words instead of focusing on the idea itself*]

Friendship-based language learning

- friendship with the Filipino cafeteria waitress
- details of the coterie in the cafeteria – how an ostracized English speaking Arab student got drawn back into the group through attempts to include her and improve Fakhra's English learning

Subliminal language development

“Real-Life”

assumption about the pre-interpreted reality of social structure

Metaphor

- ‘loop’
 - This is used throughout the discourse – e.g. “I’m not seeing the loop in Al Gharbia... they... inside the box...”
 - So the ‘loop’ is a shoestring of places, getting outside the limitations of one place – a holism of place and inclusive and integrating movement both physically and mentally.
 - ‘inside the box’ = metaphor
- ‘work on myself’ – work on the teacher too!
 - Here we see Fakhra assessing and adjusting as if with mechanical tools her learning – there is a tension between working within herself and viewing herself from outside herself.

- ‘blocks putting them close together and establish a wall’
what happened later when I went to the university that I I started using these vocabularies these words OK it’s like this – I have this blocks OK putting them close together and er establish a wall OK happened in the real life in the these places in the super in the store for them I said Al Areej in the mall - the outside
 - So, we see in this passage a synthetic classroom approach of lexical blocks becoming a completed and functional wall when brought together in participative learning beyond the school.
- ‘tools’ interpenetration of technological discourse – links with the blocks/wall metaphor

Expressive values

- ‘shocked’ at rapid development
- ‘proud’
- ‘happy’

Work – practicum as English teacher – using English – kind of work placement

Peripheral Participation

- Conversational
- Deliberate choice to converse with English speakers
- Get involved in ‘real life’ – participate in actually existing communities of practice
 - Interactive link between motivation and participation in ‘real life’

Courage – being ‘brave’ enough to attempt to use English in all places where it’s possible, including watching movies without translation

Improvement/Safety in Possessing English

- Fakhra feels ‘safe’ – that she can express herself confidently in an English speaking context. This has further increased her self-confidence.
- English seen as a life improving experience

Grammatical Analysis

School

“I started learning English...”, “we used to start learning English...when we arrived Grade 4...”, “...but now it’s different they start from KG...”, “they were teaching us like the basics, the numbers, ABC...”

This selection of transitivity processes and participants above, taken from the first interview, provides insight to social relations and agency within the school. The declarative use of the gerund 'started learning' with Fakhra as the participant makes her agency partly opaque because we know that within the social relations of the school the decision of when to start learning English is decided by the education ministry. This is of course not only true for Fakhra but for her whole national cohort of pupils indicated by 'we' in 'we arrived. Again, arriving at Grade 4 is not determined by Fakhra and her fellow pupils but by the social institutions of education. This denuding of Fakhra's agency and devolving it to the agents of school bureaucracy is clearly illustrated when Fakhra notes how policy has changed since she was at school; now 'they start' from Kindergarten. The new national cohort did not decide when to start learning English but were 'required' to start from Kindergarten by the ministry of education. So in fact Fakhra and her fellow pupils have little agency over their learning and by dint of the social relations pertaining to the school the participants 'I', 'we' and 'they', whilst remaining the thematic and grammatical subject of the phrase, lose their role as 'actor', which is devolved to agents of the school; Fakhra and her fellow pupils cannot choose when to start learning, when to arrive at Kindergarten or grade 4, or indeed what level or aspects of English language they wish to learn. They can only chose whether to engage with the timing and type of learning school agents offer them. This unequally distributed agency of the school is embedded in the processes of teaching and learning and traced in the grammar of the discourse.

This analysis is further corroborated in the second interview where Fakhra's assumptions about the naturalness and inevitability of the school are clearly exposed:-

"...the classroom...is where you... are supposed ... to gain... to learn..."

Fakhra is critical throughout about the nature of classroom learning, particularly in primary and secondary schools, but as with all other participants in this study this is a matter of adjustment of teaching methodology not a root and branch questioning of the school as an institution. The opacity of the participant role as actor in the transitivity processes seen in the first interview is illuminated in the second interview, where the decision making actors are transparently the teacher and other school agents as in the following passage;

"they were giving us vocabularies... and we have to memorize it..." ...by the end of the week they have ...a dictation test...

The participants in the transitivity processes and their decision making roles are now quite clear. 'They' are the teacher and school agents who 'give' pupils vocabulary i.e. decide that vocabulary learning is primary and what vocabulary to provide. 'They' also determine that the learning methodology of the pupils, who are designated as 'we', is to memorize the vocabulary

provided. That the pupils have little or no agency over this decision is traced in the modal form of the phrase 'have to' which is a formal substitution for passivation and as such a grammatical metaphor for 'we are required to memorize'. That this is the embedded set of social relations of the school is further illuminated by the fact that the school agents 'have' a dictation test. This of course does not mean that the teachers and managers 'take' a dictation test but that they possess one. However, 'have' is collocated with examinations in student discourse '...we have an exam on Tuesday' rather than the more active '...we'll *take an exam on Tuesday'. And whilst the choice here may be influenced by Fakhra's inter-language competence it seems to systematically conflate teacher possession of the examination with students being required to take it. The subject 'they' is therefore also a conflation of teachers and a cohort of students. This common collocation heard by pupils across the English speaking appears to indicate a globalized conflation of teacher's possession of tests and students being required to take them (Shohamy, 2001).

The University and Social Life

Participant roles and transitivity processes pertaining to the university and social life trace a significantly different set of social relations and participant agency. Consider for example the following passage:

what happened later when I went to the university that I I started using these vocabularies these words OK it's like this – I have this blocks OK putting them close together and er establish a wall OK happened in the real life in the these places in the super in the store for them I said Al Areej in the mall - the outside

In the social places referred to here, super [markets] and perfume stores [Al Areej], we interpret the subject 'I started' not as being inclusive of opaque agents but as Fakhra, the full tripartite subject; theme, grammatical subject and *actor* in the transitivity process. This is because the social relations of commercial service encounters are, at least at the point of contact, more equal or in the case of Fakhra who is an educated and professional Emirati women relating to expatriate store assistants, she is likely to feel socially superior which enables her to attempt English usage she regards as so important, without significant risk of loss of face through hesitation and erroneous language. As a result we interpret Fakhra's agency as her making a transparent decision to use English. And we must also take full cognizance of the associated change of transitivity process from 'learning' to 'using'. Learning is primarily a psychologically internal or cognitive mental process, characteristically linked to the process of 'teaching' within the classroom setting, and its associated unequal power relations. On the other hand 'using' is a material process tracing in the discourse the physical actions of moving toward the assistant, selecting posture, pose, gesture, facial expression and, what is after all, the fundamentally physical action of producing speech. This choice of

transitivity process is fully consonant with Fakhra's belief that it is essential to **implement* (*in vivo* term) formal classroom learning in social participation. It is a view similar to Saif's desire to see a practical language learning methodology even in the classroom and philosophically reflects Gadamer's rehabilitation of *phronesis*.

FAKHRA 2: More than participation, they have to get involved in the real life

We note also that in these commercialized places Fakhra also has full agency over the possession (*have*) of the building blocks of English vocabulary. This contrasts with the alloyed possession indicated by the same transitivity process (*have*) we noted above with regard to language tests in the classroom setting (Shohamy). In the commercial setting Fakhra also has full *active* agency over how to use the English she already possesses and this is traced in the selection of present transitivity processes with the progressive aspect; *putting, establish[ing]*. In pedagogic terms, what participation in commercial service encounters enables Fakhra to achieve, is the consolidation of a synthetic classroom learning methodology (the memorization of isolated vocabulary items) into an analytic experience of language in practice. This is metaphorized as the establishment of a wall. That Fakhra is not entirely sure about the details of this process is traced in her subsequent choice of the transitivity process 'happened'. In spite of an attempt to indicate the building process the wall seems to appear quite suddenly in the discourse and this is brought about by the 'OK' filler which replaces the subordinator 'which'. 'OK' in this and the antecedent position appeals to the interlocutor to imagine for himself how this move from synthetic to analytic learning occurred and fill in the speaker's inability to explain it. Simultaneously, it has a paratactic effect; *'I have these blocks/putting them together and establish[ing] a wall/happened...'* The discursive effect of this partial parataxis might be metaphorized as a set of time-lapse snapshots of the cognitive process of mapping a set of fairly randomly associated vocabulary items to the discursive needs of place-based actions i.e. service encounters in a commercial setting. For Fakhra, like other participants such as Abdullah, participative place-based learning occurs largely unnoticed. Upon analysis however we realize that for Fakhra it occurs because of her active agency, her decision to *implement* her formal English language learning as she participates in everyday social life.

See below another illustration of this at work in the University

I was pushing myself to go to the English and like open conversation with the people (right, right, yeah) not even not only in the shopping even in the university I met many many of instructors who who who was not teaching me like stopping them open conversation with them I start talking to them

Home Life

Again in relation to the home the social context enables Fakhra to have fuller agency over her participation in English.

I didn't pick any subject I used to like pick subjects and in purpose OK that er I can involve my family in

We note that she has both negative and positive control over her use of English enabling her to use family life as a source of ESOL acquisition. We note that she also takes a bilingual approach to educating her own children in the home and use of English with her husband – all with full agency expressed in the discourse.

Codes

- Differential agency between the school, university, home and social places
- Loss of actor role within the tripartite subject in school context, with SAME transitivity processes and modes. Identical discourse MUST be interpreted differently depending on its placement.

Appendix 3: Emerging Categories and Properties of Place

The categories of place are hierarchized under each research question as they emerged from analysis of the data of each interview. The bullet point system first shows the main categories and then subcategories and within these, either certain sub-types or key properties. Where properties are indicated this is marked by 'p' in square brackets [p]. For example, Environmental Awareness is an overarching category of place awareness. One of its subcategories is Causative Awareness and Situational Awareness is considered to be a noteworthy sub-type of Causative Awareness. On the other hand, within the subcategory of Qualitative Awareness, the next level bullet points indicate key properties rather than sub-types and are marked accordingly.

It should be noted in particular that under research question #3 the categories and properties of the classroom are merely stated and described along with all other places. Only later, under research question #4, are they directly contrasted with places in the other two domains.

The set of sources of these categories and properties is noted in parentheses e.g. (Saif, Fakhra, Ghaleb, Ghareeb, and Saeeda).

This is a working document from which items were selected for presentation in the analysis chapter. Due primarily to data management issues, not all items are presented; in particular Geographic Places have been eliminated and virtual places only touched on lightly.

Research Question 1: Awareness of Significance of Place

- **Critical Awareness.** [of hermeneutic properties of discourse within the university classroom + poetry as meaning making] (Fakhra)
- **Environmental Awareness.** (Saif, Fakhra, Ghaleb, Ghareeb, Saeeda)
 - *Deficit Awareness.* [limitations of rural setting opposed to cosmopolitan centres] (Abdullah, Khalil, Eva, Ghareeb, Hadi)
 - *Enhancing Awareness;* able to utilize of range of places on the learner agency cline to acquire English as life enhancing acquisition (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Hadi, Ghareeb)
 - *Causative Awareness;* (because) (Saif, Ghaleb, Fakhra)
 - *Situational awareness;* aware that *situations (in vivo)* require different language (Mariam)

- *Qualitative Awareness*; attributes qualities to the learning environment (Saif, Fakhra, Ghareeb)
 - Environment qualified as proper or good (Saif) [p]
 - Environment nominalized as hyponym; employing *environment* as overarching term for all significant places of learning naturalizes places in the discourse and renders opaque the agency of others that have been pre-interpreted them (Saif, Fakhra, Ghareeb) [p]
- **Participative Awareness.** Adroit, non-critical exploitation of a range of places within the school and community; such learners are able to synthesize the properties of place toward effective ESOL acquisition. (Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Eva, Saeeda, Ghareeb, Hadi, Mohamed, Shamsa)
 - *Differentiating awareness.*
 - Specifically aware of the degree of learning facilitation offered by the classroom, interim places and real world contexts (Saeeda)
 - *Holistic awareness.*
 - Aware of the interactive flow between classroom and community learning. (*'it's a whole thing'*[Delilah]); a continuum of school → college → interim places → home → work → social life (Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Mohamed [one chain], Shamsa [not stated explicitly but emerges from her description of the learning process] [p]
 - *Agentive awareness.*
 - Consciously aware of their own agency over a range of places which enables them to combine systematic language focused learning with participative learning (Ghaleb, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Mohamed) [p]
 - *Synergistic awareness.*
 - [of the synergistic power of the interplay between formal and informal learning] (Mohamed) [p]

Research Question 2: Specific Places

- *Classrooms*
 - school (Saif, Abdullah, Ghaleb, Budoor, Khalil, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam)
 - university (Khalil, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Mohamed)
 - teacher training college (Maha)
 - HCT Colleges (Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Mariam)

- *Interim educational places* (defined as in, or managed by the school but not in the classroom (Budoor, Saeeda, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb)
 - *Non-classroom formal places within the school*
 - independent learning centre for reading experiences (Hadi)
 - library (Fakhra, Hadi)
 - DVDs without translation (Fakhra)
 - Must have quietude as property [p]
 - debating society (Budoor, Saeeda)
 - English Club (Budoor, Saeeda, Shamsa)
 - writing competition (Fakhra)
 - spelling competition (Eva)
 - morning assembly (Eva)
 - summer school – non-formal task-based activities (Ghareeb)
 - summer school, Abu Dhabi British Council, Jordan University (Eva)
 - cafeteria/canteen (Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda)
 - *Non-classroom informal places within the school*
 - non-specific but not in classroom (Mariam)
 - corridors (Fakhra)
 - *Places peripheral to the physical educational institution and those beyond over which stakeholders of the educational institution retain some agency.*
 - projects/Work Placement (Budoor, Eva, Delilah, Fakhra, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - hostel (Khalil, Budoor)
 - dormitory (Ghareeb, Hadi)
 - sports fields (Ghareeb, Maha)
 - college bus (Fakhra)
 - university bus (Fakhra)
 - virtual places such as college partnerships through Blackboard and/or chat rooms (Mohamed)
 - *Informal places beyond the school*
 - These transition into the community proper e.g. reading outdoors in the desert beyond the home (Delilah)
- *Community Places*
 - *Home* (Abdullah, Saif, Khalil, Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - learning & using English in own room (Abdullah, Khalil, Hadi, Mariam)
 - use of computer (Abdullah, Khalil, Delilah, Fakhra, Mariam, Shamsa)

- reading (Abdullah, Saif, Eva, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda,; home as 'cosy', Mohamed, Hadi, Mohamed)
- writing independently at home (Shamsa)
- watching DVD movies (Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Fakhra)
- watching TV (Eva, Shamsa)
- listening to songs (Abdullah, Delilah, Maha)
- speaking English with housemaid (Fakhra, Delilah, Shamsa)
- family conversations (Ghaleb, {in US}, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra)
 - other people's homes (Eva, Ghareeb, Mariam, [aunt's home])
- *Work* (Saif, Budoor, Fakhra, Eva, Delilah, Ghaleb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Saeeda)
 - ESOL facilitative (Ghaleb, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed) [p]
 - ESOL non-facilitative (Saif, Delilah) [p]
- *Activities that imply place*
 - attaining general services (Saif, Ghaleb, Mohamed)
 - shopping (Saif, Fakhra, Mohamed, Mariam)
 - shopping on the internet (Shamsa, [Amazon])
 - camping (Saif)
 - concerts (Saeeda)
 - drinking coffee (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil)
 - sport (Abdullah, Khalil, Maha, Ghareeb)
 - Volleyball, football, tennis, Frisbee, basketball, handball
- *Specific Places*
 - service encounters
 - malls (Saif, Fakhra, Shamsa)
 - supermarkets (Abdullah, Khalil, Eva, Saeeda, Mohamed)
 - grocery (Mariam)
 - gas station (Ghaleb)
 - bank (Mohamed)
 - hospitals (Delilah, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - clinics (Saeeda, Mariam)
 - hotels (Fakhra, Mariam)
 - college organized projects (Fakhra)

- *Social Meeting Places*
 - Cafes (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Mariam)
 - As employee (Ghareeb) [p]
 - Restaurants (Mariam, Shamsa)
 - Beaches (Ghaleb)
 - Parks (Delilah, Hadi, Mohamed)
 - Internet Cafes (Abdullah, Khalil)
- *Virtual places*
 - World of War Craft (Abdullah)
 - Google (Fakhra, Shamsa)
 - Reading as Virtual Place (Abdullah, Saeeda, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi)
- *Places of recreation*
 - Camping Sites (Saif)
 - Informal participation (Saif) [p]
 - College organized events/projects (Saif) [p]
 - Gym (Ghaleb)
 - Recreation Centres (Mohamed)
- *Places of Entertainment*
 - Cinema (Abdullah, Khalil, Hadi)
 - Theatre (Saeeda)
- *Cultural Places*
 - Cultural Centres (Saeeda)
 - Libraries (Saif, Abdullah, Mohamed)
 - Art Galleries
 - college organized projects (Eva)
- *Industrial Places*
 - Oil Fields
 - college organized projects (Saif) [p]
- *Places of International Scope*
 - International Fairs (Hadi)
 - Western Region Date Festival (Mohamed)
- *Geographic Places*
 - *Local/Internal* [p]
 - UAE – Abu Dhabi [Bani Yas], Dubai, Sharjah (Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Ghaleb, Fakhra, Mariam)
 - Madinat Zayed/Western Region (Abdullah, Khalil, Saif, Ghaleb, Eva, FM)

- *Global/External* [p]
 - outside the country (Abdullah, Ghaleb, Eva, Maha)
 - Access to language determining access to international place (Ghareeb) [p]
 - Assumed right of governmental budget holders to determine international placement according to language possession (Ghareeb) [p]
 - pen friends (Maha)
 - US (Saif, Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Mohamed)
 - Chicago (Hadi)
 - Colorado and Greely (Mohamed)
 - UK (Abdullah, Eva, Ghareeb, Maha)
 - England (Maha), Birmingham and Wolverhampton (Maha)
 - Germany (Ghaleb, Mariam)
 - Lebanon (Ghareeb)
 - France (Ghareeb, Mariam)
 - Palestine (Eva)
 - North Africa (Maha)
 - Algeria (Maha)
 - Amman Jordan (Saeeda)
- *Interpenetration of local/internal & global/external as catalyst for ESOL learning* (Abdullah, Hadi, Maha) [p]

Research Question 3: Key Properties of Significant Places Identified

- *Peripheral participation in a community of practice* (Ghaleb, Fakhra, Abdullah, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Mohamed)
 - Types of communities of practice
 - work related practices (Saif, Ghaleb, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda)
 - classroom related practice
 - participation, involvement in the classroom through teacher agency (Saif, Khalil, Eva, Fakhra, Maha) [p]
 - study at tertiary level as peripheral participation in academic community of practice (Budoor, Mohamed)

- educational interim practice
 - English Club (Budoor, Saeeda, Shamsa)
 - debating society (Budoor, Saeeda)
 - peer correction (Fakhra)
 - peer to peer conversations within the university Dyad relationship between advanced and less advanced learners (Hadi, Mariam) [p]
- virtual communities of practice
 - World of War Craft (Abdullah)
- *Properties of peripheral participation evidenced in the discourse*
 - task focused rather than language focused (Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
 - grammatical back-grounding of agency toward language and fronting of agency toward task participation (Abdullah) [p]
 - emphasis on play (f. Gadamer) (Abdullah, Saif, Budoor, Fakhra) [p]
 - real world goals (Fakhra) [p]
 - publishing own writing in English (Fakhra) [p]
- subliminal ESOL acquisition (Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Fakhra, Hadi)
 - through readings (Saeeda, Hadi)
- numinosity (Abdullah, Saif, Delilah, Hadi, Maha, (Saif, Camping Event), (Hadi, feeling like drunk), (Saeeda, sudden leaps forward) (Maha, childhood Arabic still there) [p]
- understanding of social situation required in order to participate: Incident, Action, Scenario (Saif) and Occasion (Mohamed) [p]
- practical learning *phronesis* (Saif, Ghareeb, Abdullah) [p]
- no option but English (Saif, Ghareeb) [p]
- intrinsic value (Saif, Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Ghareeb, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
- interactive relationship between motivation and participation (Fakhra) [p]
- informal (Abdullah, Saif, Delilah, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed) [p]
- conversational – c.f. Gadamer (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Shamsa) [p]
- cultural understanding key aspect of participative competence; periphery → centre (Saif, Delilah, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed) [p]
 - judgment as aspect of participative competence; periphery → centre (Ghaleb) [p]

- no comfort zone (Ghaleb, Delilah, Hadi) [p]
 - self-confidence as aspect of participative competence; periphery → centre (Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi) [p]
- agentive flow; flow of agency as the learner switches between participant, beneficiary & observer roles (Saif, Mohamed) [p]
 - balance between observation, benefaction and participation (Saif) [p]
 - illustrates the process of movement toward the centre (Saif, Mohamed)
- language nominalized as practice (Saif) [p]
- language verbalized as practice (Fakhra, in vivo *implement/use*) [p]
- *Geographic Places*
 - interpenetration (Abdullah, Hadi) [p]
 - local/internal =Acquisition -itive- global/external =acquisition +itive (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Hadi) [p]
 - outdoor setting (Ghaleb, Delilah) [p]
- *General/specific – Explicit/Implicit* (Saif, Ghaleb, Mohamed)
 - overarching reach of ‘environment’ all places offer learning potential (Saif) [p]
 - places implied through participants and processes – esp. school (Saif)
 - no-option but English (Abdullah, Khalil, Eva, Fakhra) [p]
- *Real opposed to (Virtual)*
 - assumes pre-interpreted social world as given (Abdullah, Saif, Fakhra, Hadi) [p]
- *Virtual Places*
 - numinosity – (C.G. Jung) powerful dreamlike qualities – unforgettable, hence powerful learning property (Abdullah) [p]
 - reading as virtual place
 - access to English in any place (Delilah, rural setting, Fakhra, bus, Saeeda, cosy home, Ghareeb, dormitory) [p]
 - universal access to text rendered place – Virtual cultural reality (Hadi, Mohamed) [p]
 - radio/, SH/console games/YouTube/on-line gaming/internet (Abdullah, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - internet source of multiple perspectives (Mariam) [p]
 - internet as part of ‘real life’ (Mariam) [p]
 - expressive value – interesting (Shamsa) [p]
 - transferability - virtual English use transferable to ‘real life’(Abdullah) [p]

- inter-linguistic - communication between non-mother tongue participants (Abdullah) [p]
- availability (universal) (Abdullah, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi) [p]
- conductivity – conduit for interpenetration of places (Abdullah, Hadi, Fakhra) [p]
- metaphorized as real place – ‘walls’ (Abdullah, Saeeda, Fakhra) [p]
- peripheral participation (Abdullah) [p]
- internet cafes (Abdullah, Khalil)
 - as above + face to face conversations with international gaming set [p]
- *Classroom*
 - ‘no option but English’ (Saif, Budoor, Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Eva, Ghareeb) [p]
 - English language policy in HCT – conflict of interest (Budoor) [p]
 - use of Arabic (Abdullah, Khalil, Saif, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda, Shamsa)
 - Arabic used because of poor communicative competence of teachers (Eva) [p]
 - Arabic used because students reject communicative teaching methodology in English (Fakhra) [p]
 - the basics – (Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) not even the basics (Abdullah, Khalil), the basics plus inspiration (Maha) [p]
 - lacks practical learning - *phronesis* (Saif, Fakhra, Ghareeb) [p]
 - lacks participative/communicative learning (Ghaleb, Saif, Abdullah, Budoor, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mariam) [p]
 - critical/evaluative function of the teacher – focus on accuracy/mistakes (Saeeda, Mariam [negative – appraisal instead] [p]
 - friendship/relationship between learner and teacher essential for acquisition literacy (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam) [p]
 - virtual technology detracts from ESOL acquisition – e.g. joint-distance-classroom [Delilah] (Delilah, Fakhra) [p]
 - personages and activities opaque/transparent to various degrees (Ghaleb {fully opaque}, Saif, Ghaleb, Khalil, Ghareeb, Mariam {mostly opaque}, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi {less opaque}, Maha {considerable transparency} [p]

- systems approach (technological interdiscursivity metaphorized as a system (Ghaleb, Hadi, Mohamed) [p]
 - instrumental approach *tools* metaphor (as above) (Ghaleb, Delilah, Fakhra, Mohamed) [p]
 - mechanism (Ghareeb, Mohamed) [p]
 - chain (Mohamed) [p]
 - instrumental/extrinsic motivation of esp. school *push* not *help* (Abdullah, Khalil) [p]
 - transferable in short term (Ghaleb)[p]
 - not memorable (Ghaleb) [p]
 - retention achieved through implementation in participative acquisition (Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
- negative expressive quality (boring, burden) (Abdullah, Ghareeb, Hadi, Mariam [neutral], Maha [of non-communicative classroom) [p]
- comfort zone – all stakeholders aware that it is a learning situation – this is the answer to ‘where am I’. (Saif, Fakhra, Mariam) [p]
- mutual interpenetration with home (Saif) [p]
- tertiary level institutions (Khalil, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Delilah, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - incremental learning (Khalil, Mariam) [p]
 - significant place for ESOL acquisition (Budoor, Saeeda, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
 - student agency of topic and task (traced in transitivity process choice (push/help/encourage/need/advise) (Khalil, Delilah, Fakhra, Shamsa) [p]
 - advisory agency of the teacher (Shamsa) [p]
 - self-expression focused learning (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Mariam) [p]
 - enabling teacher/student friendships (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Hadi, Maha, Mariam) [p]
 - challenging teacher assumptions about quality of student work (Fakhra) [p]
- *Interim places*
 - increased agency (Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Maha, Mariam) [p]
 - marked by use of the interrogative mode (Mariam) [p]

- interim risk level between classroom and ‘real life’ (Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda) [p]
- collaborative (Maha, Mariam) [p]
- *Learning in rural setting – not urban (Saif, Delilah)*
- *Songs*
 - reversed euphemism (Abdullah,) (Songs) – addiction^{-negative} {t} addiction^{+positive} [p]
 - evoking curiosity toward English (Delilah, Maha) [p]
 - concerts (Saeeda)
- *Cinema/Film/TV*
 - ‘popular’ i.e. Oprah, Big Loser, Doctors etc. (Shamsa)
 - Islamic religion and culture in English (Shamsa)
 - general (Maha)
 - horror (Abdullah, Budoor)
 - action (Budoor, Mohamed [American])
 - news programs (Budoor)
- *Home*
 - private (Abdullah, Khalil, Hadi) [p]
 - open to re-interpretation (Delilah) [p]
 - penetrated by school (Abdullah, Maha) [p]
 - social relations – (e.g. metonym – ‘host family’ = *home* as place – subconscious focus on the social relations embedded in places (Saif, Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam) [p]
 - interim comfort zone (Ghaleb)
 - bilingualism of offspring encouraged (Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Mariam) [p]
 - valuing/devaluing English at home; expressive influence e.g. English teaching mother/many parents ‘hate’ English (Abdullah) Eva, Ghaleb, Fakhra, Maha, Mariam, [aunt/grandmother] Hadi [sister] [p]
 - English speaking maid (Delilah, Eva, Shamsa)
 - use of English at home (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Mariam [aunt’s home])
 - bilingual upbringing of children (Delilah, Fakhra) [p]
 - peer collaboration on school projects among siblings (Fakhra) [p]
 - English script situated in the home as inspiration and means toward learning English (Fakhra, Hadi)

- *Work*
 - ESOL acquisition facilitative (Ghaleb, Budoor, Eva, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi) /ESOL acquisition non-facilitative (Saif, Delilah) [p]
 - English language community of practice facilitative (Ghaleb, Eva, Fakhra) [p]
 - Arabic language community of practice non-facilitative (Saif, Delilah) [p]
- *Camping Sites*
 - peripheral participation (Saif) [p]
 - numinosity (Saif) [p]

Research Question 4: The Properties of Classrooms and their Relation to Other Places

- assume classroom as natural/primary place in spite of critique of its properties (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) (Relates negatively to 'critical awareness' question) [p]
- classroom as synecdoche for educational institution (Saif, Abdullah, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Budoor, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed)
 - Hyponymy of Conflation Abdullah – *school* {=} *classes* (Abdullah, Budoor)
- assumes the subject positions of teacher and learner – participants and processes – that occur in schools (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
- school or college and its learning activities as a generalized place through nominalization (Saif, Ghaleb, Abdullah, Khalil, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) (Relates negatively to 'critical awareness' question) [p]
- differential agency between school and community beyond school (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - advisory agency (Saif, Shamsa) [p]
 - use of 2nd conditional 'if they can control the environment' (Saif) [p]
 - directed only toward non-student stakeholders (Saif) [p]
 - (consistent with official participant advisory role in local government) (Saif)
 - loss of agency over definition and fulfilment of needs (Ghareeb) [p]
 - dual negation of learner/student agency via simultaneous negation and passivation (Saif) [p]
 - differential systematic choice of transitivity processes (Khalil, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed [geographic UAE/US], Mariam, Shamsa) [p]

- loss of actor role within the tripartite subject position in school context compared to other contexts with identical transitivity processes and modes (Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam) [p]
- differential systematic choice between passive/modalized (school) and simple declarative modes (community, home etc.) (Saif, Budoor, Eva, Ghareeb, Maha, Mariam) [p]
- modal grammatical euphemism (Saif)
 - Indicating incommensurable values between the regulative function of the school and participative learning in other communities of practice (Saif, Ghareeb) [p]
 - Indicating place as agent in activating passive linguistic knowledge into participative competence (Saeeda) [p]
- differentiates between *learning* (in school) and *using* in 'real-life' (Saif, Abdullah, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - knowledge as *fodder* for passive consumption in school (Saif) [p]
 - contrasted with participation in 'real-life' (Saif, Fakhra) [p]
- logical connectors used to indicate difference between school and UAE University learning
 - causative/because (Abdullah) [p]
 - differential student/teacher agency (Abdullah) [p]
 - to indicate bifurcation of school and other significant place/s
 - enforced/participative learning (Abdullah, Ghareeb, Maha) [p]
- assumption of pre-interpreted common social reality (Abdullah, Saif, Ghaleb, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi)
 - universal 'you' indicating putative common subject position in assumed pre-interpreted world (Abdullah, Saif, Ghaleb)
 - pronominal 'you' as part of exophoric reference system (ubiquitous 'you know') (Abdullah, Saif, Ghaleb)
 - real stories (English News programs) (Budoor)
 - aware of the difference between school and Life itself (Abdullah, Fakhra, Saeeda, Hadi, Ghaleb, Maha, Ghareeb, Mariam, Mohamed, Shamsa)
 - learning or for life (Shamsa) [p]
 - real life (Fakhra, Abdullah, Shamsa)
 - real authentic situation (Saeeda, Hadi) [p]
 - no compensation for the learner key property (Hadi) [p]
 - basic life/natural life (Ghaleb, Maha [too natural] [p]

- English use beyond the classroom is natural (Ghareeb) [p]
 - actual life (Mariam, Hadi, Maha)
 - ‘normal’ life (Hadi, Mariam)
 - reality and life (Mohamed)
- interim world indicated by exophoric reference system (Abdullah)
- synonymy of polar transformation e.g. – *forced {SPT} encouraged (with laughter Saif)*. Present in relation to informal situated learning, desired but not always present in formal classroom learning. (Abdullah, Saif, Budoor, Ghareeb, Mariam)
- grammatical euphemism (Saif, Maha, Khalil, Eva, Delilah, Budoor, Mariam)
 - mostly to mask passive semantics and loss of actor aspect of student agency (throughout all samples)
 - involve/force (*with laughter*) (Saif)
 - encouragement often present in tertiary classroom setting (Khalil, Delilah, Eva, Saeeda, Mariam)
 - in the form of advisory agency (Shamsa) [p]
 - *virtuous cycle* of encouragement, incremental participation, success and attribution of positive expressive value to the classroom experience (Saeeda, Mariam)
 - push (*with laughter*)/help (Khalil,) Bifurcation of school and UAE University properties
 - punish (Budoor)
 - modal as grammatical euphemism for passive (Maha)
- homonymy of opaque agency Abdullah– *learn* (teach) *{Homo} learn* (acquire) (Abdullah)
- negative/positive polarity between school and other significant place(s) (Abdullah)
 - bifurcation of school and community by
 - language skill (Saif, Saeeda)
 - school - academic, structural, memorization, language focused learning, synthetic = emphasis on literacy (Ghaleb, Saeeda, Saif, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
 - community – practical usage, needs focused, task-based, message-focused, analytic = emphasis on spoken communication (Abdullah, Saif, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]

- (corrective data) – this bifurcation can be bridged in the communicative classroom which has the following properties
 - a teacher who focuses on the message [p]
 - develops personal relationships with the students [p]
 - includes team listening [p]
 - encourages conversation (Maha, Mariam, Delilah, Shamsa) [p]
- participative properties (Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
- expressive values (Abdullah, Budoor, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha)
 - (corrective data) – positive expressive values of tertiary learning in interim places (Fakhra, Maha) [p]
 - (corrective data) – positive expressive values in Communicatively orientated Language School – related to the specific conditions of rural, politically controlled environment that issue propaganda (Iran) in contrast to the liberal culture embedded in the teaching methodology and materials (Hadi) [p]
- metonymical clustering (Ghaleb, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Mohamed)
 - beyond the classroom = participating/sharing/using (practicing)/communicating/conversing/judging/negotiating/ implementing/independence/self-managing/self-auditing (Ghaleb, Delilah, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Mohamed, Shamsa) [p]
 - Anticipate, participate, collaborate (Mohamed) [p]
 - the classroom = learning/studying/practicing/doing exercises/memorizing (Ghaleb, Abdullah, Khalil, Fakhra, Ghareeb, Saeeda, Hadi, Mariam, Shamsa) [p]
- negation of key aspects of metonymical clusters
 - UAE schools are ‘non-participative, non-sharing, non-practicing’ (Ghaleb) [p]
- reversal of negative/Positive Polarity {CORRECTIVE} Necessity for school/college-based structural/synthetic learning to enable learner to exploit participative opportunities in community (Saeeda, Maha)

- school as pervasive (multiple forms of presence in participant discourse), necessary but not sufficient part of English language learning (Hadi, Maha, Mariam)
 - complementary relationship between classroom and its properties and community and its properties (AH {no}, Budoor, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra, Ghaleb, Ghareeb, Khalil, Saif, Saeeda, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed, Mariam, Shamsa)
 - differential synonyms and associated collocates for school and community (Saeeda)
 - disproportionate effect of peripheral participation in communities of practice over synthetic classroom learning and learning through literacy (Hadi, Maha)
 - necessity but insufficiency of reading (Hadi, Mohamed)
 - parataxis used in place of adverbial to increase power of expressive value in relation to school or other significant place/s (Abdullah, Saif, Fakhra, Hadi)
 - logical connectors used to indicate bifurcation of school and other significant place/s (Abdullah)
 - endophoric system bifurcating school and significant other place/s (Abdullah)
- reversed metaphorization of place 'fields of study' (Ghareeb)
- explicit integration/interpenetration between/of school, home and community (Ghaleb, Mariam, [language cross-over 'catering']) (Shamsa)
 - integration of school learning, home motivation and community participation facilitates ESOL acquisition better than immersion during foreign study tour (Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva)
 - simulated acquisition, in school simultaneously with systematic use of language focused learning e.g. grammatical tools. Penetration of school by 'natural/real/basic/actual' life (Ghaleb, Saif, Budoor, Fakhra) [p]
 - application of structural learning within places of acquisition (penetration of 'natural' learning by the school) (Abdullah, Ghaleb, Eva)

Research Question 5: Critical Awareness of Place in ESOL Learning

- critical awareness [of hermeneutic properties of discourse within the university classroom] (Fakhra)
 - memorization limits own thinking (Shamsa)
 - critical entitlement in school and home (Mohamed)
- incipient awareness of embedded interests (Abdullah)
 - loss of agency of the teacher within the institution (Maha) [p]
 - with reference to English only language policy (Budoor)

- increased voice of school pupils gained when acquiring the ability to speak English in the classroom (Delilah, Eva, Fakhra) [p]
- curriculum developed by society [in US] (Mohamed)
- internet as source of different opinions (Mariam)
- transfer of culture through language (Saif, Delilah, Hadi, Ghareeb, Maha, Mohamed, Shamsa)
- learning environment encompasses school and all other significant places (Saif)
- seeks to penetrate the school with practical (*phronesis*) learning from life (*'incident itself', 'action itself'*) but does not question existence of the school (Saif, Ghaleb, Delilah, Eva, Fakhra)
- peripheral participation
 - cultural/class understanding as aspect of participative ESOL competence; periphery → centre (Saif, Abdullah, Khalil, Ghaleb, Budoor, Delilah, Ghareeb, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed [unpacking cultural stereotypes]
 - agency over adoption or adaption of cultural values (e.g. alcohol, girlfriends) (Ghaleb, Delilah, Shamsa, Ghareeb, Hadi, Mariam [avoidance of issue], Shamsa [denial])
 - participation in community of practice (e.g. academic practice) in English leads to different modes of thought about the practice (Eva, Fakhra, Mohamed, & Shamsa [memorization v. critical thinking])
- home – metonym – ‘host family’ = *home* as place – subconscious awareness of the social relations embedded in places (Saif, Ghaleb)
- agency over inhabitation of place (Saif – camping)
- ESOL acquisition as ADDITIVE to access to place (Abdullah, Khalil, Budoor, Delilah, Fakhra, Hadi, Maha, Mohamed [cultural collaboration], Mariam [increased confidence & independence – enable to ‘add value’ {in vivo} to a situation] Shamsa [cultural insight] [p])
- ESOL acquisition as SUBTRACTIVE of access to place
 - loss of other second language French (Ghareeb)
 - devaluing and or loss of native Arabic esp. writing (Mariam, Shamsa)
- metaphor
 - open mind (Khalil, Budoor)
 - Inside the box (Fakhra)
 - breaking down psychological walls (Saeeda)
 - building a wall (Fakhra)

- pressed the button – of sudden grammatical understanding of English syntax leading to participative competence (Saeeda)
- self as ‘Magnet’ drawing language and culture embedded in different places toward self (Delilah)
 - opened the Gate [of college classroom] (Delilah)
 - struggle (Eva, Ghareeb)
 - ‘loop’ (Fakhra)
 - ‘tools’ (Ghaleb, Delilah, Fakhra, Mohamed)
 - ‘process chain of learning’ (Mohamed)
 - ‘fields of study’ (Ghareeb)
 - ‘burden’ – implying slavery (Ghareeb)
 - ‘begging’ (Ghareeb)
 - ‘fodder’ (Saif)
 - like being ‘drunk’ (Hadi)
 - ‘leap forward’ of first opportunity to participate in authentic conversation (Hadi)
 - ‘stepped into’ middle school (Hadi)
 - ‘foggy’ English cleared the fog! (Mariam)

Appendix 4: Member Checking

Member Checking E-Mail

Dear (Name of participant),

I will shortly submit my doctoral thesis. I wonder if you could take the time to consider the 7 statements below about my research findings. I would be grateful if you could make a **very brief** comment on each saying if you disagree or agree. If you disagree or do not fully agree please say why. If you would prefer to respond by phone please call me any time.

1. *The study you did inside your English classrooms at school and college helped you learn only the basics of English.*
2. *You think learning English inside the Classroom is necessary but you must practice in real situations outside the classroom in order reach a good level of ability.*
3. *Your English classrooms did not give you enough control over how you learned English.*
4. *You had more control over how you learned English at home, at work, on-line and in your social life than you had in the classroom.*
5. *You learn English best when you join in interesting activities using English but do not think about the language itself.*
6. *Places inside your school or college such as the library, Independent Learning Centre, corridors, cafeterias and sports fields helped you learn English more effectively than your classrooms.*
7. *Places your school or college sent you to such as other colleges (for competitions etc.), companies and government offices (for work placement and projects etc.) helped you learn English more effectively than your classrooms.*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the significant contribution you have made to my research. I will let you know as soon as the thesis is published and ensure it is made available to you.

Member Checking Responses

1. *The study you did inside your English classrooms at school and college helped you learn only the basics of English.*

Budoor

Well to began with schools so yes I learnt only the basics of English. But after joining Higher Colleges of Technology I have learnt and practiced English in many different

ways like reading , speaking, writing and listening, which was not available in the schools. Most importantly, the diversified faculties in HCT who provides the best education to all students which helps them to learn English in effective way.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

The study I conducted helped me a lot to improve my English language a lot since I had to read research (books/online...etc.)

Hadi

Correct! Simple basics, but good foundation!

Maha

I do not quite agree, because classrooms helped me learn more than the basics of English (e.g. boosted my motivation and confidence to learn English in the classroom and beyond (listening to music in English, watching films, socializing ...).

Shamsa

I agree my study at school and college helped me to learn only the basics of English, but I think I learned in HCT triple than school. In the school just I learned the peels of English this because we studied all subjects in Arabic. Also, most of students did not concerned about it because there is no universities or colleges in the WR and they cannot enrol other universities in the other Emirates. Nowadays, we have Madinat Zayed Women's' College, so you will find students enrolled to HCT with good English level and the government spend a lot of money to improve students levels in the high school instead of spend double that when they study at universities and colleges.

2. *You think learning English inside the Classroom is necessary but you must practice in real situations outside the classroom in order reach a good level of ability.*

Budoor

Yes I totally agree with the written sentence that English must be practiced in real situations but not only inside the classrooms. Because practicing English will encourage students to communicate in English where they do not have any choice expect speaking in English. As well, it helps to motivate and increase the level of confidence in each student when they see themselves that they can communicate easily in English even outside the classrooms. In addition to that, it helps to increase students personal level and morale. As these days most of the organizations prefers those students who can communicate in English because of high competitive working environment.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

I totally agree and encourage any ESL speakers to practice their English and use the new words they learn in real situations because it's really helpful and encourage you to learn more new words.

Hadi

Correct! Although classroom provides a valuable foundation, one never actually acquires active language proficiency unless practiced in real life situations.

Maha

Yes, fully agree as we need a purpose to practice English, such as finding directions, following instructions (real-life situations). Therefore this kind of tasks should be created in the classroom to simulate real-life situations.

Shamsa

I completely agree, from my point of view practice is very important to enhance and improve English level. For example, my cousin Mariam just finished high school, but she had good English level. This because went to London many times for her mother treatment. The need to adjust to life there learn her English. She used in hospitals, shops, taxis.....etc. I think she will not have good English level if she had not lived in London and conducted different people in different places in London. Another good example, is my classmate Dana, she lived in the US around 5 years.

3. *Your English classrooms did not give you enough control over how you learned English.*

Budoor

Well my English classes has provided me with all different sources to learn and practice English such as: classroom discussion, debates, reading stories and summarizing, watching movies and writing down important notes/events. Doing presentations in classrooms.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

Nothing to add.

Hadi

Correct! The approaches and methods used exerted too much control over what and how of learning. This made outside learning even more important.

Maha

I disagree because the English classroom helped me gain confidence in using English as I was learning in a safe and relaxed environment (i.e. trying out the language without worrying about making mistakes). Of course this had a lot to do with the English teacher her beliefs, methods ... She provided the right conditions to learn English.

Shamsa

I disagree this statement. I didn't learn enough English in foundation, but teacher advices helped me a lot how to learn English plus his recommendations for assignments. For example, Mr. X gave me thesaurus web site which helped me and expand my vocabs. Also, other different web sites, magazine, newspaper that help me a lot.

4. *You had more control over how you learned English at home, at work, on-line and in your social life than you had in the classroom.*

Budoor

Well not totally, as at homes we use our own Arabic language with family members. However, among friends it's like combination of both languages Arabic and English. As well, we used to write and SMS in English most of the time. Therefore, I believe the control at work and social life is more than at homes.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

Of course!!

Hadi

Correct! Outside the classroom environment, I could be the character I wanted to be and I had total control on the WHAT and HOW of learning.

Maha

I agree but both classrooms and social life (trips to UK, social life) helped me have control on how I learned English. In class, I gained the confidence and took this with me outside the classroom.

Shamsa

I think the classroom give the guidelines to learn and then person can improve his level different way. Work and social life will increase you confident to speak English and improve it as the same time. Home and on-line will help you also when you lose the direction or need someone to help you.

5. *You learn English best when you join in interesting activities using English but do not think about the language itself.*

Budoor

I believe both joining interesting activities and language itself are linked together. Because to learn any language is extremely important to have interest on that which motivates you to join in interested activities to learn that language joyfully and easily.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

This is exactly what happened with me. I always try to communicate with EFL people and try to be comfortable by interacting and discussing with them various subjects.

Hadi

One inevitably thinks about language, but at an increasingly less conscious manner as one approaches Advanced level. Interesting activities give language items the meaning they lack on their own. This leads to what I term Active Proficiency.

Maha

True, as thinking too much about the language itself can hinder communication (one example of carrying out interesting activities is task -based learning as the focus is on the outcome, so we are not at all worried about the language, but any language problems can be dealt with later on).

Shamsa

I fully agree this statement. I like to read or join interesting activities because I like and passion more than focus how to learn the English or other language. I believe if I enjoy reading or practice you will learn indirectly because you feel interesting and it is not compulsory.

6. *Places inside your school or college such as the library, Independent Learning Centre, corridors, cafeterias and sports fields helped you learn English more effectively than your classrooms.*

Budoor

Well every place in college has its own different activities which helped me to learn English more effectively. So I believe both places are very effective (classrooms and different places in college). In the classrooms we have teachers who can correct our mistakes immediately and advise us how to improve our English language. On the

other hand, in other places in the college students gets opportunity to learn by themselves and find our their own mistakes, gets chance to communicate in English with other staff working on those places.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

I do believe that learning the language is not related to the place but it's more related to the moment which I call "learning moment". Everybody should hunt and look for this moment.

Hadi

Real life situations help a lot in developing and internalizing one's language ability. This is because one choses what s/he wants to do, and that's exactly what life is!

Maha

I agree, but all are important (classrooms, library, cafeterias). The classroom is also important, depending on learners' styles and their educational background. Sometimes some learners need a place like the classroom and a teacher as a guide to learn English.

Shamsa

It helped me in somewhat but not more that classrooms. It support what I learn in the class. For example, when I learned new vocab I use them in the suitable place whatever library.....etc.

7. *Places your school or college sent you to such as other colleges (for competitions etc.), companies and government offices (for work placement and projects etc.) helped you learn English more effectively than your classrooms.*

Budoor

The places which I went for my work placement were banks and it really helped me a lot to learn English and practice as banks are private organizations and uses English in their work place. So it's a good chance to go to different organization outside the classrooms to increase students' confidence level and encourage to learn more.

Eva

Agree

Fakhra

No comment

Hadi

I think I've already answered this!

Maha

I agree. I learned more when I was sent to UK for a holiday (cultural exchange) arranged by the state.

Shamsa

I completely agree above statement. I think competitions help students to learn English and other skills. For example, I remember when I was in first year Mr. X1 joined us in competition on the Madinat Zayed Women's' College. After we won in the local competition we nominated for in the Dubai Men's' College competition. It was amazing experiment and improve my English since I practice many times in English, learn new vocab and in the road we was practice with Mr. X2. We wanted to show Madinat Zayed Women's' College in good reputation among other colleges and it was, because we won from over than 60 teams. Companies and government offices it helped me also because I use English in the work placement and I presented in lot of training in English about what I learned, recommendations to improve training and my achievements during training period. Lastly, most of the projects during my study in the Madinat Zayed Women's' College need to get information from specific company, so I conducted many companies in the Madinat Zayed by calls or interview. Moreover, I did calls to companies outside the Western Region in order to get information that I need to do my projects. Also, I did questionnaire for these companies. Finally, project is very important to learn English more than other sources because we practiced by conducted with people through phone, questionnaire and interview. Then, we analysed the information and wrote the report. Afterword, we presented in front of teachers, students and guests.

Appendix 5:

Consent Form



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the research project.

I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation.

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.

All the information which I give will be treated as confidential.

The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

University of Exeter, Graduate School of Education ethical approval reference for this project: D/10/11/8

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher

Contact phone number of the researcher: +97153302474 or +971506113076

E-mail address of researcher: pws202@exeter.ac.ae

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact Peter William Stanfield in the first instance.

The supervisor of this project is Dr. Salah Troudi at Exeter University

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researchers(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.



Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guidelines/> and view the School's statement on the GSE student access on-line documents.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Name: Peter W. Stanfield

Student No: 570037612

Return Address for this Certificate: The Chair of Foundations Program, The Higher Colleges of Technology, Madinat Zayed and Ruwais Colleges, PO Box 58855, Madinat Zayed, Abu Dhabi, The United Arab Emirates

Degree/Programme of Study: Doctorate of Education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Dubai.

Project Supervisor(s): Dr. Salah Troudi

E-mail Address: pws202@ex.ac.uk

Tel: +971503301474 & +97156113076

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my ~~dissertation~~ / **thesis** (delete whichever is inappropriate) **to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.**

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:.....*Peter W. Stanfield*.....date: *1st Nov 2010*.....

Certificate of Ethical Research Approval

Student No: 570037612

Title: The Significance of Place in TESOL: Toward a Transformational Curriculum

Brief Description of the Research Project:

The aim of this thesis is to explore how taking account of the *place* in which learning occurs may improve the efficacy of TESOL practice and make it a transformative experience.

The professional literature on English language curricula tends to assume the college classroom to be the natural place of teaching and learning and consequently fails to take account of the significance of other *places* in which TESOL might occur. This thesis takes the stance that such a lacuna of *place* indicates deep seated assumptions which relate to the control of knowledge through the classroom. It holds that to improve the efficacy of TESOL practice and make it a transformative experience it is necessary to explore and reflect on these assumptions and the social relations which give rise to them.

The central element of this thesis is, therefore, an exploration of TESOL learners' assumptions about the significance of *place* for their successful acquisition of English. In accordance with common practice in exploratory studies qualitative data is collected and interpretative methods are employed. The data is sought and analysed at two levels. Firstly, semi-structured written or spoken reflections on successful language learning experiences are requested from the participants and analysed in order to access the immediate perceptions of the significance of *place* in TESOL and levels of awareness of the issue. These perceptions are then coded and placed in preliminary categories according to the possible assumptions that may have given rise to them. Secondly, in order to confirm, disconfirm and elaborate these preliminary categories participants are invited to reflect during in-depth face to face interviews on the significance different *places* of learning may have had on their successful acquisition of ESOL.

This study is situated within a critical research paradigm, specifically Critical Discourse Analysis, which places societal power relations at the centre of educational research. The thesis does not, however, seek to politicize TESOL but takes a critical stance for two reasons. Firstly, because Critical Discourse Analysis offers the linguistic tools which enable the researcher to access participant assumptions. Secondly, because education is primarily a value driven practice, and as such the efficacy of TESOL and the possibility of transformative English language learning can be achieved only as teachers and learners reflect on the values that permeate their social relations. Indeed, one of the ethical strengths of this thesis is that such reflective practices are recognized as central to effective educational change.

Details of the Participants in this Research:

The participants in this research are comprised of the following groups:

1. Five (5) successful ESOL students from among post foundations classes in Madinat Zayed and Ruwais Colleges, one of the institutions within the Higher Colleges of Technology, a federally funded body in the United Arab Emirates. These students are young adults above the age of 18 years who have completed secondary school and one or more foundation years at the college.
2. Five (5) speakers of English as a second or other language among the teaching faculty at Madinat Zayed and Ruwais Colleges. These teachers are adults with a mother tongue other than English and hold first and second degrees.
3. Five (5) speakers of English as a second or other language among the professional and business community in which Madinat Zayed and Ruwais Colleges are situated. These participants are included in accordance with the place orientated perspective of this thesis and are adults working in the professions, business and local government.

All 15 participants are initially invited to reflect generally in writing (or interview if they prefer) on their successful ESOL learning experiences. After these reflective protocols have been provisionally analysed and interpreted with regard to *place* of learning, all 15 participants are further invited to reflect specifically on the significance of the *places* in which their ESOL learning occurred during in-depth interviews.

Details Regarding the Ethical Issues of:

a) Informed Consent: An example of the consent form accompanies this document.

I will follow the policy of Exeter University and BERA on informed consent. With reference to the 5 student and 5 faculty participants I will first seek consent from the Director of Madinat Zayed and Ruwais Colleges to conduct this specific piece of research within the institution. All 15 participants will be offered the attached consent form and I will meet each one personally in order to make them aware of what is expected of their participant roles and the purposes of the thesis before asking them to sign. I will record the time and place of these meetings and maintain records of the signed forms. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time and that if they should choose to withdraw their written reflections, recorded interviews and any related transcriptions will be destroyed. In particular, I will make my preliminary findings from the analysis of initial general reflections clear to participants before renewing my invitation to in-depth interviews with specific reference to the *place* of their ESOL learning, giving them the explicit opportunity to continue or discontinue their participation at this secondary stage of data collection.

I will actively listen to and take account of the views of participants. Whilst seeking to bring my own assumptions to consciousness in order to enable the hermeneutic processes of qualitative research I will actively refrain from imposing my views on the participants. In particular, I will respect the cultural and political sensitivities of participants as well as other differences such as education, gender, religion, and socio-economic status.

b) Anonymity and Confidentiality

All forms of data whether e-mail, word processed documents (e.g. in MS Word), hand written protocols from participants and researcher notes, audio recordings and transcripts will be kept secure. In the case of digital data these will be password protected and run under AVG virus protection. Paper based material will be kept under lock and key available only to the researcher. Data will be organized using alpha/numerical systems that do not include participant names. All data will be securely disposed of once it is no longer required for research purposes.

Details of the Methods to be used for Data Collection and Analysis: factors that ensure no harm, detriment or unreasonable stress are caused to participants:

Initial Semi-Structured Written Protocols

In this stage participants will be requested to reflect *in general* on their ESOL learning experiences in written English or spoken interview if they prefer. The medium will be e-mail, word processed attachment to e-mail or digital recording of an interview. As I wish in part to assess *levels of awareness* of the significance of place in TESOL, *place* as a construct for exploration will not be made explicit at this stage in order to avoid introducing an intervening variable to this strand of the study. However, this poses a mild ethical issue, in that participants may object to a specific focus on place in my subsequent analysis and interpretation. I will therefore, as stated above, make specific allowance for this by making my initial analyses and interpretations and specific focus on place explicit to participants before attempting to proceed to the second phase of in-depth face to face reflective interviews. This mild ethical issue is to some extent further compensated for by the reflective nature of the thesis' methodology. As stated above and explicated in the literature review, the process of reflection in education is recognized by several authorities as being beneficial to professional practice and change management.

Secondary Semi-Structured Face to Face In-depth Interviews

In this stage individual interview protocols will be developed based on preliminary analyses and interpretations to allow specific in-depth exploration of *place* related perceptions and possible causative assumptions in the initial general reflections. Permission will be sought to

digitally record these interviews for subsequent transcription and analysis. My aim here will be to draw out specific strands of participant reflections on the significance of *place* in ESOL and to certain degree raise awareness of the issue but as stated above I will actively listen to participants and ensure that I am aware of cultural and political areas that may be inappropriate for in-depth probing.

Details of other ethical issues which may arise from this project:

Possible conflicts of interest are of some concern in this thesis. Firstly, the researcher is a prominent member of the management team of the colleges under scrutiny. Students and faculty must, therefore, be assured that the data they provide will not be used in any way for decision making regarding professional and academic matters. However, as detailed in the methodological section of the thesis, there are circumstances within the institution that militate against such conflicts of interest. Primary among them is a transparent management style and open relationships between management, teachers and students. Secondly, there may be some conflicts of interest between the external participants. The community is relatively small and tight-knit and they may feel constrained in their responses by the fear that these might negatively influence the researcher in his professional role and hence have consequences for the future academic careers of their family members, neighbours and fellow community members. Full assurance will be given that no such professional influence will occur.

Details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

The government of the United Arab Emirates eschews open political debate in favour of consensus. Hence care must be taken in applying the preferred methodology, namely Critical Discourse Analysis, which refers explicitly to matters of societal power relations. Justification for employing this methodology on the grounds of its analytical insights are given above and detailed in the thesis. The researcher will ensure that Critical Discourse Analysis will be used only to achieve understanding of participant assumptions about *place* in TESOL and the possible source of these assumptions in the values inherent in society without raising explicit questions about national or regional politics.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: 01-11-2010 until: 01-11-2011

GSE unique approval reference D/10/11/8

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