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EXAMINING INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS WITHIN DIALOGIC INTERACTION IN JAPANESE UNIVERSITY EFL EDUCATION

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JAPANESE UNIVERSITY EFL EDUCATION

A Dissertation Presented

by

ROEHL SYBING

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EXAMINING INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS WITHIN DIALOGIC INTERACTION IN
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DEDICATION

To Mark Weissman, Jason Pratt, Makiko Takahashi, Takako Watanabe, Matthew Wallace, and David Kluge, teachers who have shaped what I do to this very day, and teachers who love connecting with their students. To my mom, Glenda, and my dad, Fernando, who always pushed me to go further. To friends Jeanne, Katherine, Devin, Paul, David, Ashley, Hengyi, Emma, and Razia. And to all my students over the years from whom I have learned so much. You may not know it now because we are so far apart today, but my life's work might be far less fulfilling if not for each of you.

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required to meet the various milestones of my program. The work that takes place behind the scenes may be perceived as a thankless task but I owe them my thanks for their support and guidance nonetheless.

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The likelihood of one being successfully self-made is very rare, if the likelihood exists at all. It's more probable (and far more interesting) that a work attributed to one person is really the work of many, just as this dissertation was the product of abundant dialogue with and inspiration from countless people during my four years as a student at University of Massachusetts Amherst. So many of you have contributed to this project in ways big and small, noticed and otherwise, that I hope I have requited in some way. Wherever you go in this life, my hope is that the people around you are as supportive to you as you have been to me. As for what happens after this dissertation, you will not see me on this road again, but on other paths, I hope that we meet again and that I can be of similar service to you.

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation presents a study aimed at exploring the influences on language

learners' contributions to dialogic classroom interaction in a Japanese university EFL

(English as a foreign language) classroom context. Dialogic approaches to teacher

discourse rely on the contributions of students to classroom interaction as well as the

interpretive skills of teachers to facilitate understanding and co-construction of

knowledge. However, the contemporary literature has reported on challenges involved in

fostering mutual classroom dialogue with language learners, owing to challenges with

linguistic and academic resources and differences in culturally informed perceptions

regarding academic roles and expectations. This paper explores the need for teachers and

researchers to identify (1) shifts in pedagogical practices that occur during the course of

discrete episodes of classroom discourse, (2) the possible causes that prompt such shifts,

and (3) the power dynamics surrounding such shifts.

The study engages in observations of an EFL classroom and interviews with

classroom participants. In conjunction with discourse analysis and critical discourse

analysis, this study will employ discussions of instructional conversation (Goldenberg, 1992), challenges to dialogic interaction (Engin, 2017), and "bases of social power" (French & Raven, 1959) to understand how an L1 English-speaking teacher adjusts their pedagogical practices in response to L1 Japanese students' contributions to classroom discourse.

The findings of this study indicate that the teacher's instructional shifts take advantage of various interactional resources, opportunities for co-constructing meaning, and validation of students' knowledge and sociocultural identities in order to build a productive dialogue within the classroom. Ultimately, this dynamic classroom environment provides pathways for fostering rapport with and agency in students, two qualities that the contemporary research has associated with positive learning outcomes. Discussion of the discursive practices explored in this study should prompt researchers of and practitioners in language classroom contexts to transcend formulaic approaches of "teacher talk" and elicitation of language for its own sake. Instead, the attribution of rapport and mediated agency to dialogic interaction realized through instructional shifts necessitates a paradigm shift in the contemporary empirical research in language education toward a more sociocultural approach to understanding mediation between classroom interactants across differences of language and culture.

PREFACE

What if I had your heart?
What if you wore my scars?
How would we break down?
What if you were me? And what if I were you?
What if you told my lies?
What if I cried with your eyes?
Could anyone keep us down?
What if you were me? What if I were you?

- Five for Fighting

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Explanation
agency	A capacity of an individual and perceived by that individual to make decisions and act on their own (Wertsch et al., 1993)
alignment	A sense of mutual understanding, mutual affinity, and/or common purpose between interactants (as described by Hall, 1993)
interactant	An individual in communication with other individuals, whether by spoken, written, or pragmatic means (as used in Jaspers, 2013)
interactional space	A space, physical or otherwise, in which interaction takes place, defined by the affordances (Worgan & Moore, 2010) in the environment in which interactants communicate with each other (as used in Lee et al., 2008)
mediation	A negotiation of meaning or otherwise an effort to achieve alignment between interactants (Hall, 1993; Wertsch, 1985)
modality	A form of communication - spoken, written, pragmatic, or otherwise - an interactant employs in interaction (Jewett et al., 2016)
polytopic	Describing an environment that has, for the purposes of this paper, multiple languages, literacies, and/or cultures
rapport	A cohesive and/or mutually positive relationship between individuals (Mercer, 2011)
sociocultural resource	An overarching concept to mean interactive resources (Worgan & Moore, 2010), sociocultural identities, or affinities (Gee, 2011) that inform an interactant's contributions to discourse

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

M 7/8, PE1, Episode 10917

The students work together in groups of three or four with their desks arranged to form larger tables so that they can work together and discuss when necessary. Today's PE1 class focuses on a "dictogloss" activity, which involves the teacher, Mr. Nelson, reading out an English passage to the students, who have to listen, take notes, and try to reconstruct the passage in groups based on what words they remember hearing and their knowledge of English grammar to fill in what they did not catch. As a whole class, the teacher and the students reconstruct the passage on the board, as shown in Figure 1-1.
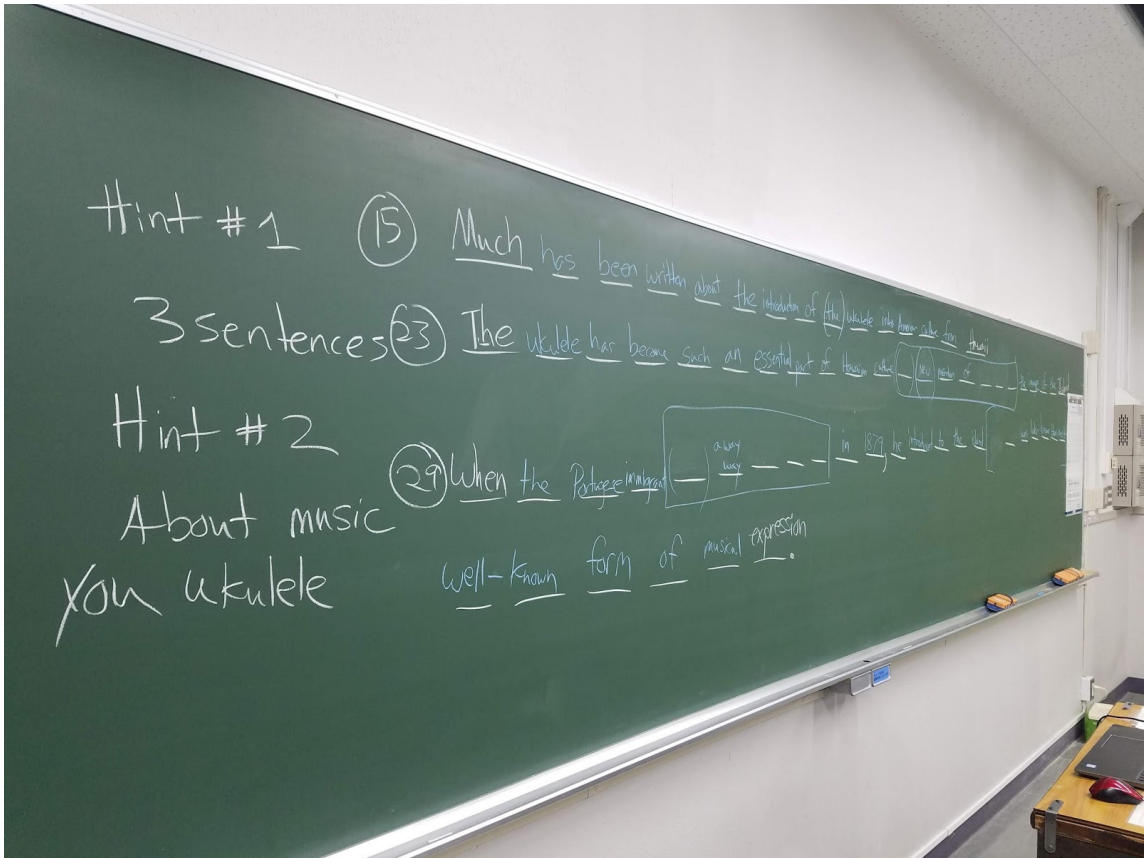
Figure 1-1 – teacher's board work for dictogloss activity.

Beforehand, Mr. Nelson (the pseudonym given to the teacher; all students mentioned in this dissertation also have pseudonyms of their own for the sake of confidentiality) has made some assumptions about what might help students and what challenges might cause them difficulty. He writes on the board that the passage is three sentences long. If the students know enough about English grammar, the unstated assumption goes, then they might know that a full sentence has, in almost all cases, a subject and a verb to form a main clause, and that any additional subjects and verbs require a conjunction that attaches to the main clause. That way, if a group of students take what they hear and produce more than three sentences, they can negotiate among themselves where the problem might lie and perhaps connect clauses together.

The teacher also provides a second "hint," that one of the words in the passage is "ukulele." As English did, Japanese also takes the word from Hawaiian. However, the first syllable sounds like "you" and differs in pronunciation from the loanword in Japanese (i.e., the first syllable sounds similar to the vowel sound in the English word "tool"). From Mr. Nelson's perspective, pointing this out might circumvent challenges students might encounter with an English word that sounds unfamiliar to them.

The presence of these hints on the board illustrates the conscious decisions Mr. Nelson makes before the start of the lesson. They demonstrate that the teacher has taken into consideration what students might and might know. Using that knowledge, he provides some hints that might make a still challenging activity more manageable. Such is the importance of careful planning based on familiarity with Japanese learners of English and English learning environments in general. Years of teaching within the same

program at this university have the potential to inform his decision-making processes about his lesson planning and instructional practices.

However, this dissertation seeks to highlight changes to pedagogy that occur within interaction just as much as they occur upon reflection. As Mr. Nelson elicits the students' answers, he writes out the passage, word by word, on the board. It is a long, perhaps tedious process, but the teacher is nonetheless in dialogue with the rest of the class, especially when they arrive at points of ambiguity or confusion.

> PE1 observation #15 - 07/08/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Alright, first word in the second sentence is…? What's
> 2   the first word in the second sentence?
> 3   Students: The.
> 4   Mr. Nelson: De? [writes on board] De? No, what…spell it.
> 5   Arisa: T-H-E.
> 6   Mr. Nelson: Alright. Okay, thank you. "The." Yeah. "The." Or "the."
> 7   Okay, nice, nice listening, good catch. How about the last word in that
> 8   sentence? Not sure? The last word in sentence two.
> 9   Students: Island.
> 10 Mr. Nelson: "Island." [writes on board] Okay? Yes? No? [laughs]
> 11 Island. Um…first word of the last sentence…? Anyone have an
> 12 answer? How about the very last word of the whole thing? The very
> 13 last word of the whole thing?
> 14 Students: Expression.
> 15 Mr. Nelson: Expression. Good. That's nicely done. [writes on board]

Throughout the activity, Mr. Nelson jumps back and forth in the passage, believing that it is not necessary to approach the passage in linear fashion. When the class navigates through the more challenging aspects of the activity, Mr. Nelson moves to a more accessible part of the passage, setting expectations that his students might find more easily attainable. When they do succeed in getting one of the words in the passage, he provides affirmation to their answers and validates their efforts to keep them interested and engaged in the activity.

At times, Mr. Nelson needs to clarify what he understands his students are saying. The correct word for one of the blanks is "the," but what his students say sounds to him like "de." He asks them to spell the word as a result, which provides clarity to correct answer. Maybe he understands what they are saying and he is just asking them to spell it so that they can practice the important skill of spelling, or he genuinely does not know what he heard from the students. During one of our asides as the students worked out the passage in groups, I suggested that perhaps he is demanding too perfect a pronunciation from his students, while he insisted that his time playing music and teaching music prior to his English teaching career led to a difficulty in hearing. Either way, his insistence on more detail prompts further contributions to the interaction, providing the means for greater alignment between Mr. Nelson and his students in order to complete the activity.

Eventually, after moving from blank to blank, providing hints when they might help, and giving students the answers only when they cannot produce them on their own, Mr. Nelson completes most of the passage with the students' help. After considerable time spent on the activity, the teacher declares that they have to leave the passage unfinished for another day, leaving some blanks to be filled in another class. Nonetheless, the interaction from this dictogloss activity based on what Mr. Nelson says is a text from a reading section of the TOEFL test provides evidence that he and his students have some degree of alignment with each other, particularly as he elicits their contributions and they respond in kind. Moreover, this provides the teacher with the opportunity to validate his students' understanding of collocations in English, further encouraging them to participate actively in class. While there are undoubtedly significant challenges for the

students to overcome, they are able to navigate most of them with the help of their teacher through dialogue.

Obviously, none of this dialogue is scripted, save for the passage that Mr. Nelson recites several times during the activity. The teacher had a plan in mind to carry out the dictogloss activity, but not much about how the students might fare or what they would say or do during the activity could be predicted. Instead, Mr. Nelson engages in a constant back-and-forth with students, providing important validation when they are on the right track and giving hints or indications when they need guidance. He makes full use of the blackboard while making gestures and facial expressions to convey to students meaning in addition to the words he uses to communicate with the class. However, he does so while being in dialogue with the students, making decisions in the moment as to what his next interactional move will be before pressing forward.

This example of dynamic and dialogic interaction may arguably be a necessary and, at least for many, a natural trait for human interactants. However, highlighting as much challenges notions that classroom teaching and learning, and particularly the teaching and learning of world languages, can be scripted, formulaic, or even predicted with significant precision. To effect positive learning outcomes, it is important for the dialogic teacher to be intentional about the decisions they make in interacting with learners (Engin, 2017), and thus be skilled in navigating what Anderson (1991) considers the unanticipated consequences and mutual implication encountered in dialogue.

The above excerpt of a classroom observation conducted for this dissertation highlights the importance for a teacher to remain attentive to both challenges and

opportunities to build a meaningful dialogue with students in a manner that facilitates learning. If teaching could be done in an exclusively formulaic or mechanical manner, then entire lessons could be scripted down to the word, and all anyone would need to do would be to follow a script, knowing what to say and what to do at exactly the right time. The context or the situation would hardly need to be taken into consideration, because scripted knowledge transfer would occur with the precision of a computer receiving programming instructions with perfect clarity.

This belief is woven, however unstated, into the most fundamental principles of education, particularly manifest in lectures and presentations where interaction is primarily, if not exclusively, monologic in nature. Even where pedagogies require some interaction with students, many pedagogical approaches carry formulaic prescriptions for teaching that limit opportunities for ideal learning outcomes. If Vygotskyan principles of teaching and learning call for guided assistance manifest in dialogue with students, a mechanical approach to teaching is less appropriate than is an expertise in navigating the dynamics of classroom interaction. Instead, I would like to describe a concept that is mentioned colloquially in professional literature as the instructional shift, while also providing some definition through empirical research to the concept as observed in classroom interaction in a manner that can be observed for theoretical and pedagogical guidance.

Statement of the problem

"In flight" is a term used by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) to describe that which happens within a particular activity or interaction in a classroom. While an aircraft pilot

decides on a flight plan ahead of time, they also make course corrections to that plan while in flight in response to the changing conditions in the sky, whether it is turbulence, inclement weather, or other aircraft. The ever-changing dynamics in the sky make it so that no flight plan can account for every contingency. A skilled pilot, however, is expected to navigate such changing circumstances while in midair. So, too, is a teacher with lesson plan in hand expected to negotiate the dynamics of classroom interaction through instructional shifts. Dialogue is a perpetual process in which speakers build on and react to previous contributions, meaning that the outcomes of negotiation and the meaning being constructed within an interaction cannot be fully predicted until the interaction has, in fact, occurred. A skilled teacher, in response to that which is encountered in dialogic classroom interaction, is expected to guide the classroom discourse through strategic use of mediational tools to facilitate understanding with their students.

With this in mind, dialogic classroom interaction, as with any dialogue between interactants who share a common purpose, is bidirectional (Bakhtin, 1981) in that it not only provides learners with a path to fostering knowledge through mutual understanding, but also teachers when student contributions to discourse inform pedagogical practices toward building that understanding. Acknowledging the dynamic aspects of interaction between teacher and student provides pathways for educators and researchers to devote focus on the processes of teaching and learning as well as their products (Mantero, 2008). Within the language learning context, there are issues of differing academic expectations arising from language and cultural divides, potentially posing challenges in expecting the

learners' full engagement in classroom discourse (Engin, 2017; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011). The teacher can thus make adjustments to their pedagogy once they become aware of these challenges by way of interaction with their students. Past research has raised awareness of these challenges through methods of retrospective analysis (e.g., Sampson, 2016; Vetter et al., 2018). The study that I present in this paper seeks to identify instances where the teacher makes reflects on classroom discourse and makes changes during the course of classroom interaction.

Purpose of the study

In this dissertation, I explore the phenomenon that I describe as an instructional shift within interactional moves in teacher-student classroom discourse. Understanding of this concept is necessary once one accepts that dialogue, particularly verbal dialogue, is neither mechanical nor formulaic. Within dialogic interaction, participants are expected to negotiate other participants' interactional moves, the substance of which cannot always be fully anticipated. In classroom contexts, successful negotiation is essential for positive and meaningful learning outcomes, thus requiring teachers to ably navigate a dynamic classroom environment that can compel educators to deviate from previously planned classroom activities when challenges or opportunities arise.

This dissertation presents a study to answer two research questions:

- RQ1: What are the instructional shifts that an L1 English teacher in a Japanese university English as a foreign language (EFL) program employs during interaction with and in relation to contributions by L1 Japanese learners in order to create spaces for dialogic interaction?
- RQ2: What elements of dialogic classroom interaction inform those instructional shifts?

These two research questions address instructional shifts from different theoretical perspectives but ultimately work in tandem to provide useful discussion for generating pedagogical implications. Just as important as understanding the concept of the instructional shift is the rationale for teachers to engage in unplanned interactional moves. To provide definition to both dimensions of the phenomenon, the study presented in this dissertation involves a two-month observation of EFL classes at a Japanese university. I observed these English classes at a time when mutual understanding between an L1 English teacher and his first-year, L1 Japanese students is still embryonic and developing as interactants in a polytopic space negotiate norms and expectations of that space (Lonsmann, 2017). The study intends to observe classroom episodes where instructional shifts emerge in response to ongoing classroom interactions in the moment (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988), how those shifts are received by students, and how the classroom dialogue develops as a result. The discussion of these episodes is intended to provide pedagogical implications for language educators but also theoretical implications on issues of dialogic interaction and classroom power dynamics, owing to notions proposed by Bakhtin (1981) that dialogue affects teachers as well as students.

Data collection involves classroom observations documented through field notes and audio recordings, as well as interviews of the teacher and their students. Discourse analysis (Gee, 2010) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995) will be employed to recognize discursive moves made by the teacher to evoke discussion and expression of ideas by the students, as well as expressions of power informing discourse practices among all classroom participants. Owing to discussion of research provided by Engin

(2017), classroom data will be analyzed to also identify perceived challenges in fostering dialogic interaction with students. This analysis is intended to find evidence of instructional shifts with respect to (1) changes in mediational tools (2) in response to students' contributions to classroom discourse. The efficacy of such shifts will be explored through discussions of instructional conversation (Goldenberg, 1992), challenges to dialogic interaction (Engin, 2017), and "bases of social power" (French & Raven, 1959).

Significance of the study

It may be intuitive to grasp that interaction is dynamic and what develops in any dialogue, let alone classroom dialogue, is seldom fully anticipated and is not always successfully mediated. Despite this, the current literature on classroom language learning continues to struggle with notions of more dynamic interactions between teacher and student. The contemporary research in EFL education places emphasis on mechanical sequences of questioning that evaluate students' verbal output on language accuracy and expression of topical knowledge, while unanticipated turns in classroom discourse have largely been viewed through terms such as "repair" or "breakdowns." This theoretical orientation tends to overlook that unanticipated developments in dialogue can be seen as opportunities for positive learning outcomes as well as challenges that require negotiation. Owing to this, it is important to acknowledge the need for the abilities of the teacher to move dynamically within interaction in order to effect successful guided assistance not just in terms of overcoming difficulties but also establishing a meaningful, positive dialogue with students.

The analysis of the data collected for this study identifies a number of themes and implications useful for discussion of teaching and learning, as well as interaction across differences of language, literacy, and culture. First, the notable use of interaction affordances that complement verbal dialogue within the classroom is seen as essential or at least helpful to the meaning-making processes that classroom participants employ during interaction. The use of gestures, body language, and supplemental tools such as Internet resources all contribute to the teacher's ability to engage in meaningful instructional shifts when verbal utterances alone are insufficient to fostering successful mediation. A discussion of such interaction affordances is intended to prompt expansions in the conceptualizations of dialogic interaction and guided assistance in order to transcend the spoken word as the primary means of the co-construction of meaning.

Moreover, much of the current literature with respect to teacher discourse (e.g., Gould & Gamal, 2017; Sato, 2015; Tsuneyasu, 2017) primarily focuses on the negotiation of meaning at the expense of other sociocultural resources that interactants attach to their dialogic contributions. Indeed, even much of the theoretical foundation supporting this dissertation (i.e., Engin, 2017; Goldenberg, 1992; Hall, 1993) emphasizes and perhaps even locates the co-construction of knowledge at the center of dialogic interaction. Nonetheless, the situated nature of social interaction requires a discussion of how an individual's relationships within a community shape that individual's understanding of knowledge (Ochs, 2004). As a result, the field can benefit from research that addresses classroom interaction for functions that address more than simply the communication of knowledge.

While this dissertation will address instructional shifts that assist in the negotiation of ideas and the search for a common ground among classroom participants, the discussion of the findings will also note how the teacher employs instructional shifts to establish rapport with students and mitigate power dynamics that are manifest from assumptions about "native-speaker" expertise. Particularly under Vygotskyan paradigms where guided assistance involves active participation from learners, I assert that teachers can benefit pedagogical approaches to classroom interaction that produce a more equal power dynamic with students in order to facilitate dialogue useful to successful mediation and positive learning outcomes.

Ideally, discussion of the resulting findings is hoped to yield both expansions of Vygotskyan theories of development and pedagogical implications for language teachers seeking ways to foster language learning through meaningful interactions with their students. Moreover, it is hoped that the implications presented in this dissertation, in keeping the principles of dialogism in mind, will address power dynamics in a way that can empower students in an environment that traditionally privileges the power and perceived expertise of teachers.

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE TEACHER DISCOURSE

Mercer (2008) asserts that, through classroom dialogue, "[g]ood teachers will almost certainly conceptualize a learning trajectory for their students" (p. 56). Thus, effective teaching that accepts this notion is purposeful and guiding, contrast with a meandering stream of consciousness of one speaker or a casual but ultimately directionless conversation between multiple speakers. Put another way, an effective teacher should at least have a direction in mind that their learners should follow before pursuing an effective learning outcome.

The sociocultural turn as applied to educational contexts suggests that arriving at this conceptualization requires an understanding of what students bring to the classroom in terms of resources of knowledge and identity (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Hall, 1993). On these assumptions, the research presented in this dissertation seeks to observe how a language teacher navigates classroom interaction in order to bring students into the classroom interaction, not as empty vessels to be filled with new knowledge, but as able participants in a more equitable environment than the traditional teacher-student relationship has afforded.

In the contemporary, such has not been a directive frequently found in either the empirical research or the professional literature relevant to world language education. A number of critical scholars (e.g., Holliday, 2005; Matsuda, 2003; Pennycook, 1994) have pointed out how EFL education in particular reflects L1 English speaker norms that may place non-L1 English speakers and their potential contributions to interaction at the

margins of classroom learning. In place of a purposeful approach to knowledge co-construction are discussions of how to compel target language output (e.g., Shea, 2017) or effectively frame students' exposure to target language input (e.g., Gould & Gamal, 2017). These discussions arguably perpetuate deficit models of classroom teaching that compel learners' compliance rather than the sort of active participation that elicits what learners desire to express.

To be sure, research and theoretical discussion on the discursive practices of the world language teacher are both abundant. Paradoxically, however, while language education and, in particular, EFL education have broken from the traditional, monologic lecture so commonly found in higher education spaces, at least certain aspects of the field have persisted in adopting a behavioralist approach to discourse. This means that, despite the opportunity to shift toward more dialogic or conversational approaches to classroom interaction, discussions of pedagogies for language education remain tied to assumptions about a unidirectional transfer of knowledge from teacher to student. Even those aspects of pedagogy that emphasize the maximization of output from language learners (Swain, 2000) do so with the assumption that simply more use of the target language is a means for language acquisition. In other words, co-construction of meaning is less a concern in the behaviorist literature than is the mere exercise of or exposure to language.

Recent conceptualizations in dialogic interaction and dynamic assessment carry the traditions of sociocultural research in applications for pedagogies intended to be more responsive to students. However, where Engin (2017) and Poehner (2008), respectively, frame both approaches in a formalized sense, similar to how instructional conversations

14

and task-based language teaching are purposeful, teacher discourse as a natural element of the classroom still requires exploration in terms of how it can navigate the dynamic circumstances of the classroom. This chapter thus outlines the development of teacher discourse to transcend more monologic traditions found in formal education contexts in the 18th and 19th centuries to the development of early approaches to language education, then to more contemporary discussions of teacher discourse that identify the research gap and necessitate the research in this dissertation.

From transmission to dialogue

The teaching and learning of any subject, let alone world languages, require more than a simple set of instructions conveyed from an expert to a novice. Methods of simplistic knowledge transfer in formal education contexts have been critiqued for their general inability to accommodate learners of various cultural backgrounds and bases of knowledge (Verner & Dickinson, 1967). Moreover, such traditional methods of teaching fail to take advantage of the full array of linguistic and pragmatic resources from which people derive meaning (Ochs, 2004). Simply being exposed to verbal descriptions of a ritual or a community is insufficient; mastery of any particular subject requires a higher understanding involving meta-cognitive awareness and inductive reasoning beyond surface comprehension of meaning. Therefore, the skills employed by a capable teacher should surpass that required for simple articulation of knowledge and allow for guided assistance of novices in the negotiation of meaning and knowledge (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

Sociocultural approaches to teaching and learning have sought to illuminate the role that discourse plays in the building of knowledge. Wells (2000) problematizes the proliferation of simple transmission methods of teaching as processes of commodifying knowledge as if it could be made a uniform product that could easily be passed from one person to another. As he writes,

> In this transmissionary view, classroom dialogue is, not surprisingly, seen as an unnecessary waste of time; all that students need to do is to read and listen attentively to the knowledge conveyed through authoritative texts and lectures, and absorb and remember it for subsequent reproduction. (p. 67)

As intuitively appealing as this may be to teachers in terms of practicality, this notion of banking is itself problematic as knowledge is perceived in different ways depending on one's identity, existing familiarity with knowledge, and proficiency in language and literacy. As a result, the knowledge that an expert understands is invariably bound to be different than that which a novice perceives, even if the expert is in direct communication with that novice (Freire, 2011).

On the basis of this understanding, Mantero (2008), in critiquing the assessment-oriented culture in United States public education, instead opts for an approach to teaching "which explicitly observes an ecology between the methodological choices a teacher makes and the resultant knowledge and understanding his or her students build and produce" (p. 81). In other words, an effective teacher examines the relationship between teaching practices and learning outcomes rather than focus simply on the learning outcomes under the assumption that knowledge transmission is sufficient.

It is thus essential to examine how communication between speakers confounds or facilitates the co-construction of knowledge in order to foster discussion about how teacher discourse in fostering dialogic classroom can have a positive effect on language learning.

Parallel to this, newer discussions within teaching and learning would necessitate alternatives to lecture that come to be seen as more capable of addressing expansions of the general definitions of literacy that transcends mere recitation or extraction of information and enters the realm of deeper reflection and critical thinking (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). Given the evolving standards of literacy necessary to be functional in society, Chickering and Gamson (1987) critiqued university education as impersonal and even incompetent. The unengaging lecture, in their view, produces disinterested and unmotivated students, prompting recommendations for a set of principles for what the authors consider active learning, which include giving feedback to students and developing a meaningful rapport with students. This located the responsibility of educators not simply to pass on knowledge, but to engage students and encourage them to interpret knowledge through their own lens.

Meanwhile, discussions about critical thinking dispositions (Ennis, 1985), at least within K-12 contexts, would reiterate the need for pedagogies to do more than convey knowledge but to actively determine the extent that learners were able to consider multiple viewpoints, support their positions, and critique opposing arguments. Examination of critical thinking dispositions is not necessarily a central focus of this research, but Ennis' treatise and its progeny within the contemporary literature underscore

the importance of dialogic engagement between classroom interactants in order to foster learning outcomes.

The task of eliciting what the student knows to foster the building of unfamiliar knowledge as an extension of existing knowledge is undoubtedly the responsibility of the teacher (Skidmore & Murakami, 2012). That is, while these newer paradigms call for learners to take a more active role in the learning process, the extent to which that role within the classroom is made real is operationalized through the teacher's practices in facilitating student engagement. The challenge associated with this task is that it is far more difficult to perceive what is being learned than it is to perceive what is being taught (Maley, 2003). Determining what learners know involves more than simplistic question-and-answer exchanges taken at face value, exemplified by the following excerpt of classroom interaction from Tharp & Gallimore (1988). This episode is taken from a case study of a teacher, named Grace, who is in dialogue with a teacher educator about her ability to foster dialogic interaction with her students. While she is able to elicit some interaction from her students, the teacher educator critiques her elicitations as promoting only embryonic forms of dialogism, as apparent through the choral responses provided by the students in the excerpt below.

1   Grace: Okay, was Reggie's sister able to change his mind?
2   Chorus: No.
3   Grace: No. Why? Why was Ira going to stand firm? What did he find
4   out?
5   [Inaudible]
6   Grace: He knew that Reggie wouldn't laugh at him. So did that give
7   him the courage to go through with what he wanted to do?
8   Chorus: Yes.
9   Grace: Did it matter if his sister was going to tease him?
10   Chorus: No.
11   Grace: Okay. So it's not important to him any more.

The authors reporting on the case study from which this excerpt is derived also relay the researcher's comments on the assumptions made by Grace that the yes/no questions posed to the class are sufficient for checking the students' comprehension of the text they were assigned to read.

> Stephanie [the researcher] comments that it is easy to be fooled by feeling "in sync" with the students when the yes/no answers flow smoothly. But Stephanie notes that Grace may find later that the students do not understand the text, that she has inadvertently "fed" them lines, rather than assisted comprehension. (pp. 231-232)

The "assisted comprehension" referenced in the above quote relies on a key Vygotskyan conceptualization of a learner's zone of proximal development (ZPD), which defines the capabilities of any given individual when assisted by more capable individuals in some situations or when left to their own devices in others (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). This zone expands as the learner internalizes experiences derived from assisted performance, allowing the cycle of teaching and learning to repeat with the development of the individual's more developed capabilities.

As discussion of the above episode highlights, the effective assistance that can be provided by a teacher typically transcends simple knowledge transfer through lecture or simplified questioning. Certainly, being a subject-knowledge expert is not in itself sufficient for rendering effective assistance. Rather, the dynamic nature of classroom interaction and the processes of understanding language and meaning involved in that

interaction require a disciplined approach to pedagogy in order to maximize the quality of learning outcomes (Sedova et al., 2014).

Existing theories and approaches to teacher discourse adopting a Vygotskyan orientation (Poehner, 2008; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978) speak to the teacher's instructional practices as an essential element for providing a mutually open interaction with and encouraging participation from the class. Acknowledging the importance of fostering the development of such practices in teachers, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) and Goldenberg (1992) helped to define an approach to teacher discourse that relied as much on the prior knowledge and beliefs that learners bring to the classroom as much as on the value of comprehensible input on the part of the educator. The conceptualization of the "instructional conversation" (IC) is a response to the almost-exclusive focus on recitation teaching during the 19th and 20th century education in the United States (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991). This particular approach was intended to emulate styles of teaching and learning seen in the idealized histories of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of ancient Greece in which teaching can have conversational aspects meant to stimulate thinking and reasoning skills (Gordon, 1990). Challenging paradigms of knowledge transfer that privilege the expert in the teacher-student dynamic, the IC model assumes that the student plays just as important a role in the meaning-making processes of interaction.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) highlight a simple example of a child who loses a toy and a father who asks guiding questions to deduce where the toy might be. The child

20

eventually finds the toy by herself, but not without the guidance of another speaker (i.e., the father) to help the child through the thought process. According to the authors,

> In this mundane interaction are the roots of higher mental functions. When the father organizes the strategic aspects of this simple recall task by a series of questions, it becomes clear that the child has the relevant information stored in memory. Without the father's assistance, she is able to recall only (as is typical for her age) isolated bits of information; she is unable to choose a strategy to organize the information toward a particular goal-oriented purpose. But with his assistance, her performance reveals a level of development to come. (p. 7)

In the above example, simple knowledge transfer is not a feature in the sense that the father is not giving the child unfamiliar information. Rather than "teach" the child how to find the toy, the father guides her through a dialogue which results in the child finds the toy on her own. In doing so, the father compels the child to build a thought process that otherwise would not have taken place had the child not asked for help.

Instructional conversation requires this sort of dialogue in order to build meaning and foster comprehension. Sedova et al. (2014) paraphrase a principle of Vygotskyan theory this way: "Vygotsky believed that there is a strong connection between thinking and speaking and that whatever a child is capable of saying is later internalised and becomes a part of its thinking" (p. 274). Echoing this principle, Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) discussed the power of conversation between speakers in order to empower and provide confidence in ideas those speakers discuss. The alternating acts of speaking and listening between two or more speakers allow the preservation and confirmation of ideas

that may be forgotten, or the creation of new ideas that may not have taken shape without a dialogue.

From their research, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) provide abundant examples of the sort of discourse that is both instructional and conversational. The following excerpt is of a case study of a teacher named Grace who is interacting with her students about a particular reading.

1   Grace: Okay, what did Cucullan say when he came over to Fin
2   McCool's home?
3   Summie and Louise: "Is Fin McCool at home?"
4   Grace: Ammm.
5   Kanani: She said, "No, Fin McCool is not home."
6   Isaac: "He went out to look for a giant named Cucullan."
7   Grace: Ahum.
8   Summie: His wife said "Fin McCool is stronger," but he said, "I'll
9   show you who's strong."
10 Grace: Okay. What could he do to show his strength?
11 Kanani: Lif' up the house.
12 Grace: Alright. How is he going to do this?
13 Isaac: Use his magic fingers.
14 Grace: Aha. Using that…okay. What else could he do to show his
15 strength?
16 Isaac: By sweating.
17 Grace: You show your strength by sweating? How do you show your
18 strength by sweating?
19 Tosufa: You go like this [child flexes her muscles].
20 Grace: Okay. What do you call it when you do that?
21 Louise: Show his muscles.
22 Grace: Yes. Show his muscles. But does that show how strong you
23 are?
24 Isaac: Soft muscles.
25 Grace: That you have soft or hard muscles? What could he do to
26 show his strength?
27 Kanani: Lift up a tree.
28 Grace: Lift up a tree. Sure. What else?
29 Summie: Lift up somebody's house.

(p. 240)

Analysis of this excerpt makes apparent several characteristics of the instructional conversation. Here, some of the questions that Grace asks direct students toward answers that she already knows (e.g., "What did Cucullan say…?"), while other questions elicit original ideas from students (e.g., "What else [could he do to show his strength]?"). The use of both kinds of questions illustrates a duality between the teacher's control of the conversation and the encouragement of open dialogue; at times, Grace needs to direct students to important details about the text, while at other times she wants to elicit original ideas from her students and allow them to express themselves without fear of failure or embarrassment.

Instruction in this excerpt takes the form of questioning with the intention to elicit key knowledge from students. Grace elicits important details about the text that the students read (e.g., what the characters do and say) through direct questioning whose answers she already knows. As the students answer her questions, she gives brief affirmations or praise (e.g., "Ammm" and "Ahum") when such answers meet her expectations, ensuring that students are aware of what basic information should be known about what they have read.

The conversational aspect of this exchange is particularly apparent through a number of discourse strategies employed by the teacher. What Goldenberg (1992) calls "general participation" takes place when Grace cedes some degree of control of the conversation to her students. In other words, when the teacher asks a question, she does not dictate which particular student gets to speak next; rather, Grace gives the impression that any participant is free to chime in at the natural end of a speaking turn, just as in any

undirected conversation. In the above exchange, five different students contribute to the discourse without Grace directing her questioning toward any particular student. In addition to this, the teacher asks questions for which she may not know the answers, or which may have more than one answer (e.g., "How do you show your strength by sweating?"). The students in the latter part of the exchange answer Grace's question in various ways (e.g., flexing their muscles, saying "[l]ift up somebody's house"). In balancing "known answer" and "unknown answer" questions, as well as employing a variety of other discourse strategies, Grace is able to guide her students toward an understanding of the text she provides them as the interactants within the class express and hear everyone's ideas.

This approach differs from traditional approaches to teacher discourse in language learning environments in ways that surpass an understanding of a teacher's speech acts as merely a model of target language. Dialogue may raise learners' awareness of unfamiliar language and content knowledge, but it is also intended to provoke thinking and reflection among learners, challenging simple paradigms of knowledge transfer. Goldenberg (1992) asserts that the IC approach adopts a constructivist orientation, placing value in the idea that learners construct their own understanding of knowledge, rather than merely receive it from knowledge experts.

Goldenberg (1992) provides a useful framework for identifying practices employed by teachers to elicit participation and expression of ideas and new knowledge under an instructional conversation paradigm. The elements of instructional conversation defined by Goldenberg are excerpted in Table 2-1.

Elements of the instructional conversation
Instructional elements
1.   *Thematic focus*. The teacher selects a theme or idea to serve as a starting point for focusing the discussion and has a general plan for how the theme will unfold, including how to "chunk" the text to permit optimal exploration of the theme.
2.   *Activation and use of background and relevant schemata*. The teacher either "hooks into" or provides students with pertinent background knowledge and relevant schemata necessary for understanding a text. Background knowledge and schemata are then woven into the discussion that follows.
3.   *Direct teaching*. When necessary, the teacher provides direct teaching of a skill or concept.
4.   *Promotion of more complex language and expression*. The teacher elicits more extended student contributions by using a variety of elicitation techniques-invitations to expand (e.g., "tell me more about that"), questions (e.g., "What do you mean?"), restatements (e.g., "in other words, –"), and pauses.
5.   *Elicitation of bases for statements or positions*. The teacher promotes students' use of text, pictures, and reasoning to support an argument or position. Without overwhelming students, the teacher probes for the bases of students' statements – e.g., "How do you know?" "What makes you think that?" "Show us where it says_____."
Conversational elements
1.   *Fewer "known-answer" questions*. Much of the discussion centers on questions and answers for which there might be more than one correct answer.
2.   *Responsivity to student contributions*. While having an initial plan and maintaining the focus and coherence of the discussion, the teacher is also responsive to students' statements and the opportunities they provide.
3.   *Connected discourse*. The discussion is characterized by multiple, interactive, connected turns; succeeding utterances build upon and extend previous ones.
4.   *A challenging, but nonthreatening, atmosphere*. The teacher creates a "zone of proximal development," where a challenging atmosphere is balanced by a positive affective climate. The teacher is more collaborator than evaluator and creates an atmosphere that challenges students and allows them to negotiate and construct the meaning of the text.
5.   *General participation, including self-selected turns*. The teacher encourages general participation among students. The teacher does not hold exclusive right to determine who talks, and students are encouraged to volunteer or otherwise influence the selection of speaking turns.

Table 2-1 – excerpt from Goldenberg (1992, p. 319).

Overall, this framework reflects Vygotskyan principles of taking into account

learners' knowledge as a means for providing guided assistance through the ZPD. In

particular, the emphasis on background and relevant schemata and promotion of more complex language and expression foster an environment where the expert guides novices through unfamiliar knowledge but in a way that is attainable for learners. Ultimately, this quality contributes to the "challenging, but nonthreatening, atmosphere" in which learners can develop without fear of negative consequences in the event of communication breakdowns or failure in participation.

Equally relevant to the inquiries in this dissertation is the responsiveness of the teacher in probing and validating what students contribute to interaction. After all, the teacher's perception of the student's ZPD is only as clear as the extent to which the teacher grasps the knowledge that the student brings to learning. In turn, it is the teacher's responsibility to elicit that understanding by encouraging the student's engagement in classroom interaction. The teacher who does so can facilitate the sort of interaction that can provide a clear means for guided assistance through the ZPD.

These discussions provide some early attempts at a descriptive rubric for academics to adduce the presence of mutual interaction between teacher and student. Rather than measure how much a student speaks in terms of the number of words, the amount of time, or even the proportion relative to the teacher's speech, an analysis of what is expressed and done during discourse provides a greater degree of detail into how teacher and student interact with each other to co-construct meaning.

The language education context

Within the context of world language education, early psycholinguistic research and its resulting pedagogical implications have largely focused on target language usage

for its own sake (Krashen, 1985; Swain, 2000). Under such an orientation, the co-construction of meaning may have importance to language learning, but it is not as important as the mere presence of comprehensible input or the elicitation of student output for the purpose of language acquisition.

To be sure, the development of pedagogies for language education has progressed beyond strictly monologic forms of teaching, as evidenced by treatises on task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003) and communicative language teaching (Richards, 2006), contemporary approaches that emphasize the role of students' engaged participation in classroom learning. That said, the rationale for eliciting student contributions to interaction under such approaches may differ from that found in paradigms for dialogic interaction or instructional conversations. Rather than having the teacher actively negotiate meaning with students, a sizable portion of the contemporary research on the subject of teacher discourse simply focuses on the elicitation of students' target language use for its own sake.

This epistemology leads to certain assumptions in the contemporary research and pedagogical literature regarding language education. For example, in the Japanese EFL context, and potentially in any classroom that has an L1 target language teacher among L2 target language students, silence among students in the classroom has been observed to be a commonplace circumstance (King, 2013) attributable in part to foreign language anxiety arising from various differences in identity and dispositions between teacher and student (Effiong, 2016). Moreover, recent research on compelling students to speak (e.g., Shea, 2017; Talandis & Stout, 2015) position the role of student output merely as a means

of facilitating knowledge transfer and language acquisition, rather than an aid for mutual meaning-making processes.

Arguably, discussions taking place along the input hypothesis/output hypothesis continuum are only an extension of historical trends in language education, which highlight the importance of modeling target language usage through teacher discourse (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2007). While scholarly debates over best practices regarding teacher discourse in language education are abundant and protracted, common is the framing of the scholarly debate around teacher discourse as an element to be examined for the support it provides to learners.

As a result, investigation into teacher talking time in language learning contexts remains an active focus in recent research (see Fareh, 2010, and Hitotuzi, 2005). The historical development of language education has seen multiple and disparate approaches to the teaching of languages relating to how much a teacher says in relation to what students produce. The introduction, proliferation, and decline in prominence of "teaching methods" such as the audiolingual method, Suggestopedia, and the Silent Way in language classrooms have demonstrated the broad range of approaches that have been discussed among teachers and teacher educators (Brown, 2001).

As teaching approaches have changed, the form and function of teacher discourse have changed as well. According to Brown (2001), the audiolingual method prescribes a "[c]entral and active teacher-dominated method," while impassivity and non-interference on the part of the teacher is a central feature of the Silent Way. Despite the evolution of these methods, the degree to which the teacher provides target language input to learners

remains a common narrative that persists well into contemporary discussion of current

approaches in communicative language teaching and task-based language teaching.

Largely missing from this discussion is the descriptive nature of the teacher's engagement

with students in terms of the substance of the knowledge being explored, whether

linguistic or topical in nature.

Applications of dialogism in language teaching

As Vygotskyan principles of teaching and learning have become more prominent

in recent discussions about pedagogy, so, too, have theory and frameworks for

understanding classroom discourse. While multiple, sociocultural approaches have been

proposed to address different aspects of Vygotskyan theory, the role of dialogue between

teacher and learner remains constant among them.

Recent scholarly literature on engaged interaction within the classroom has

accepted the foundational principle of mediated agency (Wertsch et al., 1993) in which

agency as well as meaning can be situated within interactions as it may be internalized

within individuals. One of the more active areas of research involves examination of

teachers' questioning strategies (e.g., Lumpkin, 2019; Milawati & Suryati, 2019). Such

research has emphasized assumptions that teachers should engage learners in a

meaningful way that transcends simple recall tasks (e.g., asking what year the

Declaration of Independence was signed) and guides learners through effective thinking

processes that guide learners from assisted guidance to unassisted performance. In other

words, discussions of dialogic approaches to teacher discourse affirm that the mere

facilitation of target language use is insufficient to the ensuring learners internalize

previously unfamiliar knowledge without the intentional processes of mediation through interaction.

Questioning strategies make up part of what can considered dialogue with students. Just as instructional conversations call for instruction and conversation to work in tandem, the act of eliciting students' thinking in interaction is seen as working in tandem with the teacher's contributions to the dialogue. As a result, dynamic assessment (DA), a response to traditional views of assessment seen as dichotomous to and separate from instruction, was conceptualized by a number of scholars to emphasize the process of learning and not the product (Lidz & Gindis, 2003) in order to provide guided assistance toward learner's accomplishments as a foundation for further development (Gauvain, 2001). While there is an evaluative aspect to DA as a function of determining the extent to which the students' ZPD has expanded through the teaching and learning process, it parallels the instructional conversation approach by calling for the teacher to elicit the students' perspectives to provide necessary mediation where necessary. Lantolf and Poehner (2004) explore this sense of assessment in DA through examples of language classroom dialogue. In the episodes they present, the teacher's directed questioning, feedback, and suggestions guide learners through the process of internalizing target language structures being studied, presented in a formative, dialogic manner that promotes development without fostering anxiety common to summative assessments. This more nuanced approach to classroom discourse has held important implications for observing and more explicitly directing students' learning through the dialogic process within the classroom.

Within discussions of DA, among the most significant critiques of traditional assessment is its potential shortcomings in recognizing that the knowledge and perspectives of individuals are malleable and subject to social construction (Feuerstein, 1990). While research on language assessment has addressed this as "washback effect" (Alderson & Wall, 1993), the scholarly discussions on assessment have largely viewed washback as an influence to be mitigated, lest it threaten assessment validity (e.g., Schissel, 2018), whereas the effects of assessment experienced by the learner within an interactionist DA approach are in dialogue with the mediational efforts of the teacher. Going further, Kozulin (1998) defines this mediated learning experience as a tool for helping novices internalize interactions to build knowledge in a meaningful way. For interactionists, this cycle of mediation and the subsequent effects align interaction through DA with interaction outside the classroom, as either sort of interaction allows novices to connect meaning to their experiences with the world in a manner that transcends principles of simple knowledge transfer.

The main takeaway from this brief exploration of dynamic assessment that is relevant to this dissertation's focus on classroom discourse is the possibility that the interactions between teacher and student can ably facilitate the internalization of knowledge such that guided assistance is no longer needed. Most forcefully, the discussions about DA provide the assertion that the dialogic qualities of DA and other similarly interactive pedagogies can provide this internalization to a greater extent than can more mechanical or monologic approaches to teaching. How to shape this dialogue to maximize positive learning outcomes is then the next question.

Among the more recent applications to employ, or at least measure, dialogue as a tool for learning, Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Inquiry Tool (DIT) applies a rubric to classroom discourse to determine the extent to which students engage with their teacher as a result of the teacher's practices. Whereas Goldenberg's (1992) instructional conversation approach and Ennis' (1985) framework for critical thinking dispositions list descriptive aspects to identify within classroom interaction, the DIT places episodes of classroom discourse along a continuum of degrees of dialogism, scoring the teacher's pedagogical moves for the dialogue they elicit from students.

The purpose of this dissertation is not necessarily to critique the classroom interaction presented within this study as monologic or lacking dialogue relative to a normative standard. The implications of Reznitskaya's research, however, shift dialogue away from a dichotomous conceptualization to a more nuanced approach to interaction that can accommodate analysis of a broader range of classroom contexts. Within this nuance, we can establish a continuum between the monologism of lecture teaching, in which a ratified expert controls the entirety of the discourse, and the dialogism in Tharp and Gallimore's (1988) father-daughter exchange, where no new knowledge is conveyed by the expert to the learner. We can then use this continuum to observe the varying degrees of dialogism that may take place between teachers and their students.

As stated in the previous chapter, the goal of the research in this dissertation is to examine how a teacher may shift practices in dialogic interaction such that classroom interactants can achieve mutual understanding. Kathard et al. (2015) takes advantage of this continuum in defining "transitional teacher-learner interactions" as a bridge between

monologic and dialogic discourse. If there are intermediary pedagogical moves that help to facilitate positive learning outcomes, we can imply that there are intermediary pedagogical moves to provide guided assistance for students to overcome challenges and other considerations encountered in the classroom.

The research gap

The opportunities for novel inquiry lie in how teachers come to understand students' contributions to dialogic interaction and, as a result, how they respond in kind to provide pathways to more positive learning outcomes in the classroom. Rather than problematize learners' dispositions seen through normative lenses as undesirable to classroom interaction or adopt a deficit model for language acquisition, it may be more productive to view such dispositions as evidence requiring teachers to shift their instructional practices. In exploring embryonic forms of dialogic interaction, Engin (2017) presents research that indicates students face challenges owing to differences in linguistic resources, understanding of the content presented by the teacher, and understanding of academic expectations and their own roles in the classroom. As a result, absent thorough analysis and reflection, teachers, particularly when their L1 differs from their students' L1, should exercise caution with attributing different reasons for students' silence or lack of participation in the classroom dialogue (Harumi, 2011; Hennebry et al., 2012). The goal of dialogic interaction in addressing silence or reticence among students, however, is not to forcibly compel spoken utterances just for the purpose of having interaction in the first place. Rather, a dialogic approach to teaching exists for teachers to more fully understand the knowledge and resources that students bring to the classroom

discourse for the benefit of facilitating learning, and adjust teaching practices accordingly.

Again, much of the early research on dialogic interaction has focused largely on the role of the teacher for the very valid reason that the teacher bears the greatest responsibility in fostering dialogue that is beneficial at co-constructing knowledge. Skidmore and Murakami (2012) emphasize this point in placing the task of providing the shared sense of responsibility of sustaining dialogue on the teacher. Because of that early research, observation of dialogic interaction in the classroom has relied on a number of analytical frameworks (e.g., Alexander, 2008; Arnett, 1992; Goldenberg, 1992; Reznitskaya, 2008; Todhunter, 2007) useful in discursive analysis of exchanges between teacher and student. As a result, it is possible to see elements dialogic interaction reflected in certain aspects of teacher discourse in language learning contexts.

The current research prefaced by Vygotskyan theory can also benefit from a discussion of the extent to which learners' contributions to dialogic interaction in the classroom can have an effect on the teacher and, by extension, their instructional practices in situations where there are challenges in fostering dialogic interaction (Engin, 2017). One of the larger goals of dialogic interaction conducted in a conscientious manner is to provide opportunities for learners to develop their own academic identity and establish their competence within the learning space (Walqui, 2006). To do so in the language learning context requires not only listening to learners and their ideas, but also addressing challenges owing to language and cultural divides contributing to potential misunderstandings or shortcomings in the learning process. That, in turn, requires the

teacher to accommodate their learners through pedagogical and instructional shifts aimed

at addressing those challenges. Ultimately, exploring this aspect of a teacher's evolving

expertise can further discussion of Bakhtin's (1981) assertion that dialogue has a

multidirectional effect on all speakers, challenging notions of simplistic, transmissionary

learning under traditional approaches to education.

An examination of instructional shifts through a framework of dialogic interaction

allows for the possibility of observing instructional change during the course of

classroom activity. As dynamic and dialogic interaction is conducted, a teacher should

constantly reassess the resources of language and knowledge students bring to the

dialogue, which in turn define the opportunities for mediation of meaning available to

both teacher and student. In so doing, a teacher can determine the efficacy of their

practices for eliciting their students' contributions and facilitating progress toward class

objectives. Tharp & Gallimore's (1988) action research and recent research in

applications of discourse analysis (e.g., Bloome et al., 2005; Schieble et al., 2015; Vetter

et al., 2018) speak to analysis and reflection of past classroom experiences for the sake of

improving pedagogy for future teaching.

The aforementioned studies utilize the time and space in between and after class

sessions for retrospective recall. However, what appears to be less observed, if observed

at all, is the potential for reflection and change of pedagogical practices during class, as

the teacher is reacting in the moment. Put another way, post-instruction reflection may

not fully provide for the sort of temporal analysis necessary to capture reflexivity and

dialogic trajectory, two concepts specified by Mercer (2008) in emphasizing time as a

feature of classroom dialogue, let alone any dialogue. If a feature of dialogic interaction is to take advantage of the dynamic nature of spoken discourse to reach across differences in knowledge bases and sociocultural identities, highlighting the adaptations a teacher may make during the course of a class session can prove just as useful as highlighting such adaptations across teaching experiences.

Narrowing the potential of instructional change to only consider longitudinal scales poses limitations for understanding rapport between classroom participants when reflections for improvement are only left for retrospective discussion and reflection of discrete teaching events and not addressed during the course of teaching. Sampson (2016), for example, notes one episode where he chastised students for lack of preparation, only to leave it unaddressed for another day. One particular student, in their journals collected for Sampson's research, noted feelings of guilt and a general negative feeling about the class as a result. While that study exemplifies the importance of post-teaching reflections contributing to changing instructional practices for the better, it overlooks opportunities for shifts in practices that might occur as classroom interaction develops. For all of these reasons, a study that examines instructional shifts in flight owing to interaction with students is warranted for the sake of emphasizing the importance of instructional change within discrete moments as well as across events.

Finally, there is a prominent gap that has been identified in the current research on dialogic interaction that remains largely unaddressed. Among contemporary scholars, Hall (1993) extends Freirean thought on differences in knowledge to differences in sociocultural and ethnic identities, providing context and complexity to expressions of

knowledge. Moreover, the conceptualization of dialogic interaction is further thought to be situated within varying local and global contexts, from the classroom to the larger schooling context to the outside world around interactants, all informing interaction and the ideas expressed within them. In asserting this concept, Hall presents implications for teaching and learning in that, within dialogue, negotiation of meaning is just one aspect interrelated with those of culture and power dynamics, among others. It is thus necessary to conduct and have a discussion on empirical research that unifies theories of knowledge, sociocultural identities that can more comprehensively observe teacher-student interaction across differences in language and culture.

However, the pedagogical frameworks presented for instructional conversation, critical thinking, and dialogic inquiry have, thus far, largely viewed knowledge and epistemology among learners in isolation of Hall's identification of sociocultural and ethnic identities. Engin's (2017) discussion of dialogic interaction exists as an outlier on this point, as she asserts that difficulties in facilitating dialogue within the classroom may arise from differences in expectations for classroom participation. Nonetheless, the literature has looked on mediated interactions as the means for building mutual understanding of knowledge, while providing insufficient focus to the sociocultural and affective dimensions that are shaped because of interaction in polytopic spaces.

This overlooks opportunities to recognize different knowledge bases as situated within boundaries of language, literacy, and culture that further separate interactants and require mediated interaction in the first place. To take all of this into consideration, a comprehensive theoretical framework that synthesizes theories of dynamic pedagogies

and power dynamics in a larger discussion regarding the co-construction of meaning is thus required for the purposes of conceptualizing and defining the dimensions of instructional shifts. In doing so, there is potential to capture the changing dynamics of the relationship between a teacher and their students in order to provide useful discussion as to what instructional practices are effective in promoting language learning in environments where interaction can take unexpected turns.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section explores three socially constructed concepts grounded in existing research and used for providing the theoretical underpinnings of this study. First, a treatment of dialogue is necessary to provide sufficient context for the classroom interactions observed and analyzed in this dissertation. This is followed by a conceptualization of the instructional shift, whose presence within classroom dialogue is asserted by this dissertation. Finally, a discussion of power dynamics (involving bases of social power in particular) closes this chapter in order to problematize potential misunderstandings in polytopic spaces (a term I use here to conceptualize spaces involving multiple languages, literacies, and/or cultures). This discussion aims to add another layer of rationale for instructional shifts as a function of rapport between teacher and student.

Mediated dialogue

Mediation within the context of this dissertation relates to how interactants employ interactional resources to align with each other to construct a common understanding of the world around them. It stands in contrast to more competitive aspects of interaction (e.g., debate, argument) and does not presume a resulting "winner" or "loser." Rather, discussion of mediated interaction presupposes a shared, almost symbiotic relationship among interactants to co-construct knowledge in as equitable an exchange of ideas as possible. This characteristic, when acknowledged by both teacher and student, carries assumptions of equitable contributions to knowledge and, thus, resists

deficit models of instructional practices that emphasize normativity. Particularly where L1 target language-speaking teachers hold a power of expertise over target language learners, promoting a classroom environment that strives toward a more equitable interaction between teacher and learner can invite more engagement from students.

Furthermore, the sociocultural orientation that this study adopts looks at alignment as a goal of mediation in terms of not just mutual understanding of meaning but also mutual acceptance of the disparate worldviews, sociocultural identities, and other resources that interactants bring to any dialogue. In accepting this conceptualization, we can locate meaning not within words, phrases, or even actions employed by individuals, but in the negotiation among interactants to socially construct meaning.

One of the most basic underpinnings of interpretative phenomenological analysis and sociocultural theory is the assumption that beings do not interact directly with the world, but through their attempts to make sense of the world. Put another way, individuals rely on (and, often, take for granted) their own ability to ground their perceptions of what they experience around them in meanings that they assign to them. This confounds interaction because the interpretive lens invariably differs between individuals, producing differences in meanings assigned to concepts, especially socially constructed concepts for which no "true value" objectively exists. Ochs' (1992) research on gender across cultures, for example, highlights how assumptions about motherhood are culturally embedded and, thus, differ between cultures. These differences, when encountered in interaction, raise the possibility of breakdowns in understanding attributed to one's lack of awareness of the other's understanding of context (Jacquemet, 2011). In

understanding the world and this research through a sociocultural lens, we can view the data collected for this study for the potential meanings constructed between speakers and analyze the interactions and the dynamic moves of the interactants.

Such differences in understanding between speakers require mediation manifest through interaction for that interaction to be successful, for "man's social world is not constituted of objects that have intrinsic meaning, but that the meaning of objects lies in man's plans of action" (Denzin, 1989, p. 6). In other words, sociocultural theory emphasizes that meaning is not held by any one individual but constructed within the interaction taking place between individuals. While a person may have determined by themselves a meaning assigned to a concept (even if they are informed by the forces of social construction), that meaning must be aligned with that of other beings within any particular interaction before mutual understanding and common purpose can be established.

The possibility of the lack of alignment is established when Bakhtin (1990) describes the process of creating works as existing within "a state of intense and essential axiological interaction" (p. 198). In the strictest sense, Bakhtin contextualizes axiological interaction within the creation of literary works, which are composed partly of ideas that are taken from or influenced by previous works while also filtered through the creator's own aesthetic preferences. Such interaction between ideas and aesthetics produces a singular creation whose meaning is open to different interpretations, as consumers approach such works with differing ideas and aesthetics that filter what they perceive. In citing Vygotskyan principles, Wertsch (1985) establishes a parallel to this concept by

41

asserting that, in the contemporary, "psychological functioning is now governed by biological constitution *and* sign use" (p. 23). The employment of the term "sign," in the sense that is employed in Saussurean semiotics, is essential to this treatment of mediated dialogue, as interactants socially construct the meanings of signs through the knowledge and sociocultural resources that they bring to interaction.

Hall et al. (2004) extend this discussion to all acts of individual creation that contribute to meaning-making processes, such as spoken utterances and other acts that play a role in social interaction. In extending the application of axiological interaction to dialogue between individuals, the authors thus place meaning-making and learning "in social interaction rather than in the head of the individual learner" (p. 3). As a result, alignment between interactants is an essential goal of dialogue, which is less likely to foster negotiation of meaning and mutual understanding without such alignment.

Moreover, the Bakhtinian concept of axiological interaction highlights the necessity of interactants to engage in mediation since interactants seldom, if ever, attain new knowledge in isolation. On a surface level, this concept validates the notion that interactants can view the same idea or object in completely different ways owing to how their aesthetic preferences inform their respective worldviews. Also, it establishes that alignment between speakers is achieved not just through a mutual understanding of ideas but through a variety of sociocultural resources through which interactants view and hold those ideas. Such an expansion of theory regarding dialogue across languages and cultures has given rise to research on language ideologies and speech communities, and

necessitates this study's use of ethnographic approaches to understand the various dimensions of dialogic alignment taking place in the classroom.

Barrett (2006) highlights the importance of alignment within a given speech community and the effects of disalignment across speech communities (i.e., in contexts where mediation of meaning across differences is not found in abundance). In his examination of practices in a Mexican restaurant managed by Anglo-Americans and staffed by Hispanic employees, Barrett identifies alignment along lines of language and practice as Latino workers develop a mutually understood set of codes and practices while also coming into conflict with their English-speaking employers. As Latino workers align with and have a mutual understanding with each other, they are able to move forward through practices of resistance against inequality. Meanwhile, the collective disalignment between employee and employer, each possessing different linguistic resources, contributes to tension and communication breakdowns, with employers holding assumptions that such tensions arise because Latino workers are lazy or unintelligent. This disconnect between the two speech communities in Barrett's study emphasizes the tensions generated from the differences in interactional resources between the employers and their employees, leading both groups to commit to actions that perpetuate the lack of alignment.

Interactants can endeavor to mediated the absence of alignment, if problematized, through effective dialogic interaction. Within the context of individual interactants communicating with each other (as opposed to mass mediation, as explored by Spitulnik, 1997), Hall (1993) conceptualizes dialogic mediation as a function of establishing

alignment through shared interactive resources such as speech and the various

sociocultural and ethnic identities adopted by interactants. As differences become more

pronounced, whether because of language, literacy, or culture, the capacity for mediation

becomes more limited even as it becomes more necessary. Alignment pursued through

mediation is further complicated by the notion that such resources and identities are

invisible to the naked eye and only constructed through interpretation. As a result, the

thought processes that contribute to interaction are also invisible (Maley, 2003), requiring

one individual's processes of inductively determining what and how the other thinks in

order to establish a mutually constructed understanding. When (and if) mediation is

effective, interactants operating from different bases of knowledge and perspective then

have the ability to negotiate and co-construct a shared understanding of language and

culture, thus allowing the potential to foster the open and dynamic exchange of ideas.

However, the temporal nature of any dialogue, let alone mediated dialogue,

further complicates the function of establishing alignment. Arnett (1992), citing

Anderson (1991), summarized elements of a framework for what constitutes dialogue as

follows:

1. *Presence*. Dialogue requires a willingness to follow the conversation as it leads in "unrehearsed" directions.
2. *Unanticipated consequences*. Dialogue cannot be predicted to assure an outcome known a priori to an exchange.
3. *Otherness*. The mystery and uniqueness of the other is accepted.
4. *Vulnerability*. Willingness to engage in some risk when knowing the outcome of an exchange is not apparent at the outset of a conversation.

5. *Mutual implication*. We discover in message interpretation something about our communicative partner and much about ourselves in the unique way we hear the message.
6. *Temporal flow*. Dialogue presumes some historical continuity of communicative partners and a sensitivity to the time of the address—past, present, and future anticipations enter the conversation.
7. *Authenticity*. A presumption of honesty, until proven otherwise, is offered to the other.

(p. 11)

As briefly touched on above, this framework excludes certain interactions where interactants do not seek out alignment with others. Kent and Taylor (2002) stress that "[d]ialogue is not synonymous with 'debate'—which is about the clash of ideas—but rather, dialogue is more akin to a conversation between lovers where each has his or her own desires but seeks the other's good" (p. 27). The above framework supports this characterization by defining dialogue along lines of, among other things, the acceptance of the other, a recognition of vulnerability, and an openness toward mutual implication, characteristics not largely present in debate as defined by Kent and Taylor. If we accept that the teacher in any classroom is caring, empathetic, and culturally responsive, then we can accept that their interactions with the students in that classroom are likely to be dialogic in nature as they have their students' needs and goals in mind.

One of the main commonalities running through the definitions of the elements of dialogue is the possibility of unanticipated outcomes in unrehearsed interactions, particularly the possibility of having one's perspective change or at least become informed by that which is heard or received in dialogue. As interaction progresses temporally, the perspectives of interactants constantly change and shift as representations

of ideas accommodate the dialogue to facilitate historical continuity. The frameworks for

instructional conversation and critical thinking (Goldenberg, 1992, and Ennis, 1985,

respectively) echo this need for temporal flow as dialogue in development calls on

interactants to connect their utterances to previous contributions to discourse or to take

other or previously stated viewpoints into consideration.

What this also emphasizes is that an interaction that involves two or more

speakers does not necessarily constitute dialogue. Moreover, dialogue does not describe a

dichotomous concept, but one that describes various degrees of engagement. The IRF

(initiation-response-feedback) framework (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), used commonly

in research analyzing questioning strategies in teacher discourse, provides a basis for

observing some of the more embryonic forms of classroom discourse. An IRF exchange

in the EFL context can be typified by the following dialogue excerpted from Arizavi et al.

(2015):

1	T1: What's the name of the new governor of California?
2	S1: Arnold.
3	T1: That's right.

(p. 542)

In this brief exchange, the teacher *initiates* the interaction by asking a question, to

which the student provides a *response*, which prompts the teacher to provide *feedback*

meant to assess the response. At the most basic level, a minimal form of dialogue can be

said to take place as the teacher must accept the possibility that the student might provide

the wrong answer, while the student is vulnerable to negative feedback if their answer is

wrong. Under Reznitskaya's (2012) framework for determining the extent of dialogic

teaching within an interaction, however, this IRF sequence would largely be considered a

monologic interaction without further elicitation of details or opportunities for active

engagement from students. This fails Anderson's (1991) criterion for mutual implication

as there is limited potential for reflection about interactional practices between

participants.

As established in the treatment regarding instructional conversations and dialogic

teaching, the contemporary research on teacher discourse has similar parallels to the

above principles of dialogue that transcend what can be found in simplistic IRF

interactions. The more extended exchange between Grace and her students presented in

the previous chapter demonstrates in greater detail the aspects of dialogue that both

presented frameworks that allow for a more open and equitable exchange of ideas

between a teacher and their students. As Grace shows, not only does a more dialogic

interactant invite details and ideas from their discourse partners, they also build on their

ideas and are open to taking the exchange in unexplored directions.

One final layer adding complexity to mediated dialogue, in keeping with Hall's

(1993) treatment of dialogic interaction, involves consideration of the context of the

interaction. Worgan and Moore (2010) proposed the existence of the interaction

affordance, a specific application of affordance theory first proposed by Gibson (1977,

cited by Aronin & Singleton, 2012). In their treatise, they asserted that "humans

manipulate their utterances to maintain, optimize, and reveal a shared set of affordances

and that this drive would take priority over the clear transmission [of language]" (p. 341).

Put another way, the environment in which an interaction takes place informs the nature

of the communication between interactants.

The interactional space that provides these affordances may be physical (as is the case in Lee et al., 2008), although technology has demonstrated that physical proximity is not an impediment to interaction. If the interaction takes place during a telephone call, for example, the speakers have fewer contextual cues (e.g., facial expressions and gestures) on which they can rely for understanding, precisely because they cannot see each other, and thus cannot see their facial expressions, gestures, or the context that the other occupies during the call. Absent those resources, the interactional space that speakers inhabit affords the usage of fewer interactional resources than that afforded in an interaction conducted in person.

Conversely, a classroom environment in which the teacher employs a blackboard for written work and other visual aids, for example, allows for resources beyond verbal utterances to be used in interaction. Classroom participants can see each other and draw meaning from what others show and do in addition to what they say. Within such an environment, where interactional resources are more abundant, speakers in interaction aim to establish a mutually understood code of communication with other speakers rather than achieve a "perfect" form of language for its own sake.

As a result, this "mutually understood code" (put in quotes because interactants can only infer its mutuality) has the potential to transcend strictly verbal forms of communication, as Worgan and Moore contend that meaning found in spoken interaction does not exclusively lie in the movements and products of the human voice. Gestures, facial expressions, and other nonverbal actions all contribute to the spoken word or sometimes make up the whole of the interactant's communication when no spoken word

is present. Indeed, the notion of multimodality (Jewett et al., 2016) has opened up avenues of research that examines how individuals make sense of meaning with other individuals through interactional resources that transcend verbal utterances (Arnold, 2012; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013).

Thus, in the face of challenges in interacting with language learners, a language classroom practitioner may rely on various interactional resources to clarify meaning and elicit participation. As a result, this dissertation refers to individuals, not as speakers, but as interactants. Similar to how Jaspers (2013) uses the term, and as demonstrated through the findings in this dissertation, interactants employ a code involving the entire array of interactional resources available to them in order to engage in successful mediation.

This code, however, depends on mutual acceptance of affordances as much as it does mutual awareness of the ability of speakers to employ affordances. If Aronin and Singleton (2012) broadly define an affordance as "relating essentially to the perceived opportunities for action provided by any given entity for any given actor" (p. 174), interactants engaged with one another are thus required to agree upon a mutual perception of what their shared environment affords them. A critical approach to language invariably argues that power dynamics manifest in language policies (Piller, 2016) may interfere with the consensus-building of mutually accepted affordances contributing to productive and meaningful communication. The research problematizes such power dynamics in terms of rapport, which is a key finding discussed later in this chapter. Given Mantero's (2008) assertion that "[t]eacher-student interactions can affirm students' cultural, linguistic, and personal identities in order to create classroom

conditions for maximum identity investment in the learning process" (p. 68), it would be beneficial to explore how mediated dialogue can address power dynamics through rapport.

Overall, what is important here is that practitioners within the language classroom exist on a continuum between the unrestricted use of interaction affordances and the use of prescriptive language policies. This has an effect on the breadth of resources that the teacher employs and allows the students to employ while co-constructing meaning within the classroom. In short, the sort of dialogue in which mediation takes place is a dynamic concept that eventually resists a mechanical or formulaic approach to interaction, relying on not simply the knowledge and dispositions of the interactants but the context in which that interaction occurs. To understand the moves within dialogue that contribute to the dynamic nature of interaction, then, requires a deeper treatment of the shifts interactants may make to maintain participation in discourse and further align (or fall out of alignment) with each other, particularly within paradigms that assume asymmetry between speakers in terms of power and/or knowledge.

Instructional shifts

An instructional shift is any sort of change that a teacher makes to their pedagogy. As the term suggests, instructional shifts do not occur in isolation, and must be informed by some perception by the teacher that a change in mediational tools is needed to produce a better outcome than what was previously attempted. The term has been used in previous empirical research and professional literature to refer to a variety of changes an instructor makes in response to new developments. Brennaman (2016), for example, uses the phrase

"instructional shift" to refer to changes to classroom strategies made by reading and mathematics teachers in response to Common Core State Standards in educational contexts in the United States. The study reported in that article focused on the relationship between instructional shifts and changes in test scores, but the main takeaway here is that teachers are in dialogue with a number of factors both large and small in scale, and make instructional shifts informed by that dialogue. Instructional shifts can be pedagogical or curricular in nature, suggesting that changes can occur on scales that transcend a single class session or even a single classroom interaction, informing traditional debates about the best teaching approaches to apply prescriptively within the language classroom (e.g., Nishino, 2008; Sato, 2010).

In this study, the sort of instructional shift being observed relates to changes made by the teacher to their interactional practices, as informed by some element of classroom interaction. In that sense, the conceptualization of the instructional shift most appropriate for this dissertation more closely aligns with Wortham et al.'s (2011) brief definition of an interactional shift. While interviewing subjects for research regarding interethnic tensions in urban contexts, the researchers become aware of shifting degrees of alignment of previously established perspectives as a result of the interactional aspects of interviews. In Wortham et al.'s most telling example, one respondent attributes the potential for theft in their community to interethnic tensions in one interactional move; however, as the interviewer tries to build on that answer through attempts to follow up, the interviewee then connects muggings to dependence on drugs. This interactional shift on the part of

51

the interviewee occurs not in isolation, but in response to the interviewer's change in stance (i.e., the desire to build on a particular narrative started within the interaction).

This demonstrates that the concept of temporal flow allows for interactants to shift their perspectives and produce new contributions to dialogue that may complement or even contradict already established representations. Furthermore, interactants produce these new and contradictory contributions in response to a sense of evolving otherness found in those with whom they interact. Wortham et al.'s discussion of the interactional shift they identified provides implications for understanding how individuals change not only across experiences, but within and because of them. This dissertation's use of the instructional shift narrows the focus of the more general interactional shift to how a teacher accommodates and negotiates discourse in a way that affects learning outcomes within the classroom, similar to how Brennaman perceives shifts to pedagogy.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) make a distinction between preparations for and adjustments to lessons and curricula, which occur before and in between classes, and adjustments made "in flight," or during the course of a lesson. Whereas professional development and analytical reflection can similarly change the course of the evolution of a teacher's instructional practices, the adjustments made during classroom interaction also have the potential to navigate unanticipated challenges in fostering alignment with students. Indeed, Tharp and Gallimore assert that "[in-flight adjustments] are necessary if the teacher is to assist performance in the ZPD, because it is not always possible to anticipate what ideas and knowledge students will bring to a text" (p. 234). It may be intuitive to argue that instructional shifts at any scale, in the hands of a responsive

teacher, can foster a more cohesive learning environment. However, the sort of shifts emphasized in this dissertation (i.e., the shifts that occur in the moment) are necessary when recognizing that preparation beforehand may not adequately account for unforeseen or unpredictable elements within interaction with students.

Poynor (2012) addresses such shifts when synthesizing literature that asserts "teachers' traditional understandings and beliefs can change when they confront their own past experiences and current beliefs and when they become cognizant of the contradictions between what they themselves experienced and what they want their students to experience" (pp. 162-163). Because teachers encounter such contradictions during classroom interaction, among other instances, so, too, can the teacher's perspective change within discrete moments in the classroom. It is the sort of change that occurs in the moment, during classroom interaction, for the purpose of fostering dialogue with students that is the focus of this study.

Through this narrowed focus, shifts in instruction, if viewed as changes from the intended instruction planned beforehand, occur in response to a particular development or shortcoming that may not have been fully expected by the teacher beforehand. Engin (2017) asserts that such challenges arise from a lack of linguistic resources, unfamiliarity with content knowledge, differing perspectives in academic expectations and roles (e.g., students remaining silent in deference to the teacher's status and expertise), or an absence of structured tasks that contribute to a safe environment for dialogic interaction.

Discussion of such shifts more specific to the classroom space can be found in the contemporary empirical research on teacher discourse in EFL classroom contexts.

Arizavi et al. (2015), for example, examine excerpts of classroom discourse to explore the teachers' use of referential and display questions when interacting with students. Some of the exchanges in Arizavi et al.'s discussion present embryonic forms of dialogism (e.g., when the teacher gives positive feedback in a simple initiation-response-feedback, or IRF, pattern), but some present situations where a teacher becomes cognizant that additional mediation is required to accomplish certain classroom objectives. In one example provided below, a teacher struggles to elicit the students' oral participation to discuss a story that is the focus of a particular lesson. As the students remain silent or provide minimal answers, the teacher reacts and makes changes to their approach to elicitation, with mixed results.

1   T2: Ok. First of all what should Lorenzo do? Any suggestion? What
2   should Lorenzo do?
3   Ss: (Silent)
4   T2: What's the suggestion?
5   S3: xxx
6   T2: Say little louder. How about your group? What should Lorenzo
7   do? What do you think he should do? Who can give me an answer?
8   Ss: (Silent)
9   T2: Come on. Somebody gives me an answer or we just waste time.
10 Ss: (Silent)
11 T2: You don't know. Should he stay with his wife and children, or
12 should he get divorced and to be with his lover?
13 Ss: (silent)
14 T2: What do you think?
15 Ss: (Silent)
16 T2: How would you feel if you were Lorenzo?
17 S4: he should divorce and…keep in touch with his children.
18 T2: Ok. Leave his wife. And keep in touch with his children.

(p. 543)

At first, the teacher encounters silence from the students when he asks a relatively open-ended question (i.e., "what should Lorenzo do?"). One student, S3, provides some

response but is otherwise inaudible to the teacher, while the rest of the students remain quiet, despite the teacher's audible frustration. After further silence, the teacher narrows the question to provide choices (i.e., "Should he stay with his wife and children, or should he get divorced and to be with his lover?"). Eventually, S4 provides an answer that the teacher can validate by repeating their words.

In this excerpt, I perceive two different shifts, the instance where the teacher goads the students (i.e., "Somebody gives me an answer or we just waste time") and the instance where the teacher narrows the open-ended question to two choices. Without knowing more about the teacher, there is a possibility that one shift, the latter, is more intentional than the other, as frustration is arguably an expression of instinct. Regardless, the brief scolding of the students is largely unsuccessful and yields only further silence from the class, while the narrowing of the question ultimately produces a response that the teacher finds desirable.

Beyond simple description, this episode can be analyzed in terms of the mediation employed and the forces informing the choices of mediation. An analysis of the mediational strategies defined through an instructional conversation framework, the elements informing the shifts in mediation, and a discussion of power dynamics in the classroom through theories of social power can provide an avenue for theoretical and pedagogical discussion warranting a more focused study of dialogic classroom interaction.

In the above episode, the teacher interprets classroom silence as undesired (or, at minimum, unexpected), as evidenced by the frustration they express (line 9). Missing

from the discussion of that episode in the original research is the source from which the perceived challenge of classroom silence arises. When the teacher narrows the question being asked to two possible answers, leading the students to produce a desired response, it is possible that the challenge arises from a lack of linguistic or topical resources on the part of the students, but this is not made clear in a discussion centered around the types of questions the teacher should ask. More fully exploring the dimensions of such challenges is consequential to providing some definition to pedagogical implications for more effective teacher discourse practices.

Power dynamics

In scolding the students, the teacher expresses a coercive power in the excerpt provided by Arizavi et al. (2015) when asserting that their silence is evidence of wasting time. Yet, the silence itself can be interpreted as an act of resistance on the part of the students, and the power of that resistance prompts the teacher to change the mediational strategies they employ in order to move the lesson forward. While classroom silence is seen in the traditional literature on language teacher as problematic (Harumi, 2011) and requiring remedy (Shea, 2017; Talandis & Stout, 2015), viewing prompts to instructional shifts as both challenges and expressions of power dynamics can provide an important starting point for discussion on promoting mutual dialogic interaction.

The exploration of pedagogical, discursive, and pragmatic moves that place more of an emphasis on the ideas that learners bring to the classroom can help to serve theoretical and pedagogical purposes. Applications of Vygotskyan theory in pedagogies that rely on eliciting learners' knowledge do so for the sake of their development (Tharp

& Gallimore, 1988; Goldenberg, 1992). However, the expression of knowledge by students in classroom contexts contrast with the knowledge of the teacher can also have an empowering effect. As Freire (1974) asserts, students who contribute to the classroom discourse in a substantive way "are liberated as they begin to learn...in spite of the strait jacket imposed by the role of educator" (p. ix). Analysis of episodes of instructional shifts that provide evidence of transformational learning can spark discussions of social justice and pedagogical applications that can mitigate distances of power brought about by differences in language and culture.

In turn, this expression of ideas helps to inform pedagogical discussions in language education, as made apparent by research employing discourse analysis and retrospective discussion. The importance of teachers understanding students through dialogue as an alternative to hegemonic pedagogies that overly privilege the teacher's status as a knowledge expert is an emerging narrative in the relevant literature on teaching and learning. Noticing and validating the contributions of students to the classroom discourse serve both a pedagogical purpose and an imperative of social justice. Discussions of who possesses expert knowledge and how such knowledge is used to establish dominant roles over novices (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011) have profound implications on pedagogy and the potential extent to which students can contribute to knowledge within the classroom.

Studies from Harumi (2011) and Engin (2017) both explore sociocultural factors as well as linguistic and contextual knowledge as rationales for explaining the extent to which language learners contribute to the classroom discourse. Parallel to this, Chaudron

(1988, cited in Nunan, 1991) cited research that observed language teachers making modifications in their speech with respect to pace, word choice, and pronunciation in order to sound more comprehensible to language learners. This brief review of language education research allows us to suppose that student contributions to discourse provide indications to teachers of the necessity of changing their pedagogical practices to accommodate learners, thus providing room to discuss the extent to which learners do, in fact, have power in the classroom to affect the teacher's discourse.

French and Raven (1959) provide theoretical discussion for an understanding of "social power" between people, acknowledging that power is situated between people and takes many forms depending on the situation. The five bases of social power defined by French and Raven (with my summary of each description) are as follows:

- *reward power* – derived from a perceived ability to convey a benefit
- *coercive power* – derived from a perceived ability to punish
- *legitimate power* – derived from being perceived to have status or authority
- *referent power* – derived from being perceived to have a shared or aspirational characteristics
- *expert power* – derived from being perceived as having useful knowledge or skills

Acknowledging that there are different forms of power is intended to provide dimension to what is traditionally perceived as an asymmetric power dynamic that privileges the teacher as an authority over the classroom. Within the empirical research on language learning, social power theory has been used to assert the exercise of power as a means of preserving or threatening the social status of learners (Agustina & Cahyono, 2016) and mitigating power differences with learners for the benefit of improving teacher practices (Abraham, 2015).

Considering instructional shifts from a dimension of power dynamics allows us to discuss where classroom dialogue is asymmetric in power relations, leading to shortcomings in dialogic interaction, and how teachers can mitigate power distances to foster more mutually dialogic classroom discourse. Especially in relation to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language, where English has historically been "defined not so much by its uniformity but by the social status of its speakers" (Pennycook, 1994, p. 116), negative stereotyping of English language learners as a result of perceived power distances has long exacerbated cultural divides that privilege the power of speakers for whom English is a first language. Within this status quo paradigm, the potential for genuine dialogism, where all participants within the interaction recognize and validate each other's ideas (Bakhtin, 1981), is limited.

Particularly in contexts where teacher and student come to the classroom from disparate contexts of language and culture, it is especially important for the teacher to learn from the student as much as it is the other way around for the purpose of fostering mutual understanding and productive learning outcomes (Lowenstein, 2009). To understand this quality in teacher discourse, an understanding that dialogism might be related with mitigated power distances between teacher and student is required. As a result, there is potential to understand that, in fostering dialogic interaction within the classroom, the language learner can be on more equal footing with the teacher with their own expression of power. A new study undertaking a new analysis to meet this end is thus required.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT

Any language classroom is its own local context existing within a larger global context, as Hall (1993) asserts when conceptualizing dialogic interaction at the center of a number of concentric layers, each more global in scope but eventually relating to and influencing the localized exchange between individual speakers. Given this assumption, this chapter outlines the layers of context that are at play within this dissertation, beginning with the most overreaching layers and ultimately centering on the circumstances of the classroom and its participants.

At the center of the research context being studied is Mr. Nelson's Practical English classroom, the venue for a required English course in a public university in Japan. In varying ways and at varying degrees of influence, the program's language policies, the historical background of EFL education in non-L1 English contexts, and even the larger historical context of higher education in Japan all play a role in shaping the interactions within Mr. Nelson's classroom. On still another level, my personal lens as a researcher and a former English teacher influences the discourse practices I observe in this study. All of these layers will be thus described in this chapter.

Researcher positionality

Because this dissertation describes and presents an ethnographic study, I acknowledge that my positionality informs the descriptions of the contexts presented in this chapter. Figure 4-1 visualizes the layers of contexts relevant to this study while also

making clear that representations of the context and the data collected within this context

are products of the perspective that I bring to the research.
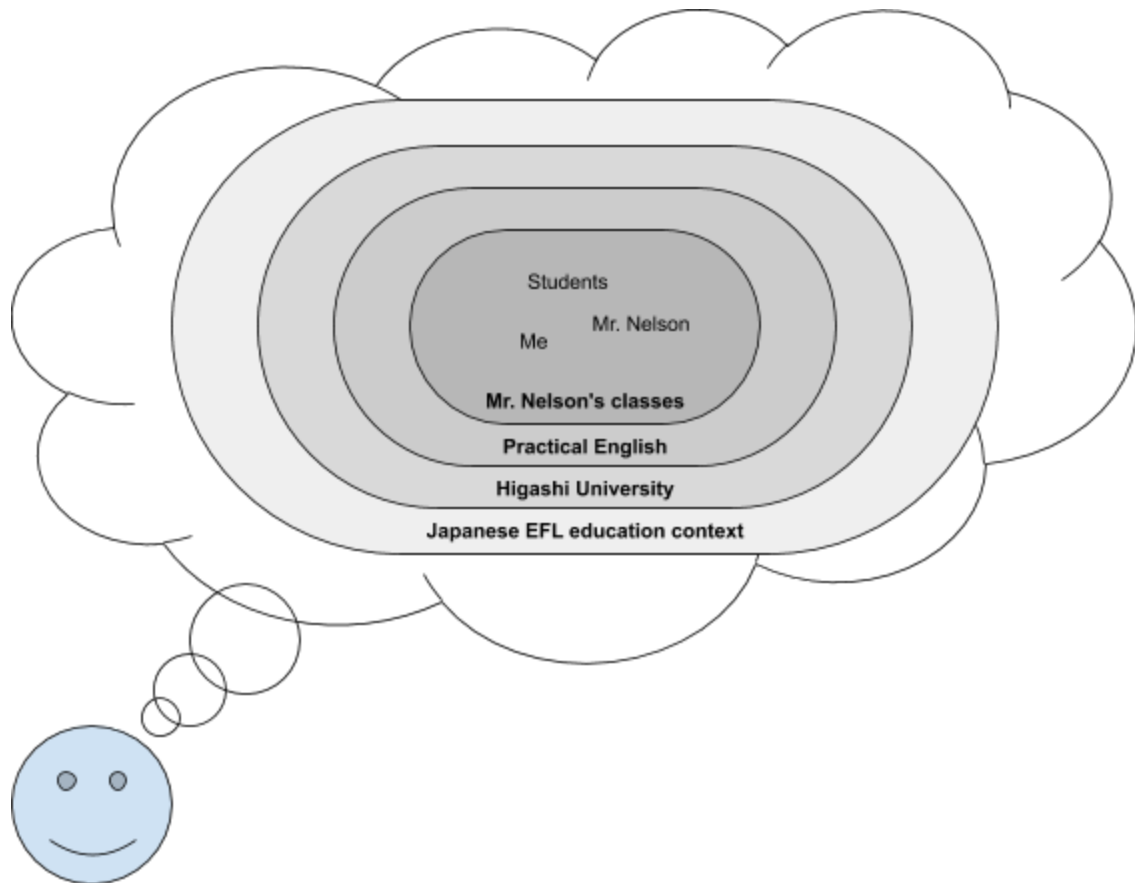
Figure 4-1 – visualization of the description of the study's context.

At least in terms of physical spaces, there is an objective accuracy to the defined

concentric layers that describe the overall research context. As depicted above, Mr.

Nelson and his students (and I, for a time) occupy a Practical English classroom within

Higashi University. Conversely, students in other Practical English sections are not a part

of Mr. Nelson's class, nor are other English students at other universities. In this sense,

the boundaries separating each concentric layer of the study's context are firmly

established, with limited exceptions. However, defining what transpires at each layer and

how each layer interacts with each other is an interpretive task that is informed by the positional lens of the individual making that interpretation. As such, the consideration of the researcher as a research tool necessitates an understanding of the potential for positionality to affect how data is collected, understood, and analyzed.

Rather than take a transcendental perspective that requires a bracketing of personal perspectives, I find the approach to hermeneutic phenomenology (Laverty, 2003) more useful to this study, given my experience as a former English teacher and considerable contact time with Japanese learners of English in university contexts. This experience is useful in order to (1) understand the developments occurring within the classroom and (2) report such developments in a way that is meaningful to those both familiar and unfamiliar with the context. As a result, the perspectives that I bring to this research ultimately inform and color the observations that I will report in this dissertation.

As the primary instrument for collecting data, I am a doctoral candidate at University of Massachusetts Amherst while researching socialization and dialogic interaction in classroom contexts, particularly language classroom contexts in Japan. I am a second-generation Asian-American who became an EFL teacher in Japan shortly after completing my undergraduate studies at New York University. I have taught English at language school, senior high school, and university contexts in Japan for nearly eleven years. I am also conversational in Japanese, which allows me to understand, at least in part, students as they converse amongst themselves in Japanese.

During doctoral studies, I conducted two ethnographic studies and was part of a team of doctoral students in an anthropology course conducting a larger-scale

ethnography. At the start of data collection for this study, I had gained useful experience with ethnographic research methods in addition to learning about the theory and methodology of ethnography through coursework. That said, my sociocultural identities and experiences in Japanese EFL education also inform my practices for participant observations and interviews. I will present a greater treatment of the methodology employed for this study in Chapter 5, particularly with respect to how my positionality informs the data collection process and the representations of data in this dissertation. However, what is important here is that, while I have endeavored to engage the research context in a rigorous manner, my prior interactions with Japanese learners of English and fellow colleagues in Japanese EFL education influence at least part of my decision-making process while conducting research.

Some of the excerpts from interviews I have conducted with students, for example, illustrate how I have tailored my questioning strategies to mitigate anxiety on the part of the students to ensure that they can participate in interviews. While I have a set of predetermined questions for stimulated recall interviews (listed in Table 5-1), I found that I also tend to ask yes/no questions as follow-ups to students' answers. While my intention in such cases was to ensure L1 Japanese students understand what I am trying to ask, such probing may carry assumptions that I may not have intended.

What is important to take from this treatment of positionality is the recognition that there are potential tensions and considerations formed as a result of my previous experience as a teacher and my current experience as a researcher. On one hand, I may seek to establish rapport with participants by creating a safe space for them to contribute,

while that search for a connection may have implications for answers or interactions that I elicit. Just as Wortham et al. (2011) negotiate shifting interactional stances with their participants, I find that, during the data collection period, I have addressed the search for rapport in a manner that, at times, may align with how a teacher would interact with students but may yield caveats for how to approach the data that I have collected. The best claim that I can make about my descriptions of the context and the collected data, as a result, is that such descriptions should be viewed through the lens produced by my positionality formed by my identities and experience.

The Japanese EFL education context

At least on the surface, formal schooling in Japan has many parallels, some related and others coincidental, to that found in Western contexts. These parallels relate to the need for providing education to all people and the indexing of education to Western norms. However, there are also numerous differences between contexts that contribute to the polytopic nature of the classroom being examined that provides useful conditions for observing dialogic interaction.

As developing standards for literacy fostered a desire outside of the elite or ruling classes for formal education, Japanese society has approached the question of mass schooling with various approaches to formal education in order to enfranchise prospective students who would otherwise be excluded by way of gender or economic status (Duke, 1986). A wave of progressive reforms during the Meiji Restoration would make schooling compulsory and available, ideally, to all Japanese. More sweeping changes to university institutions would further transform education in postwar Japan

owing to reforms recommended by the First Education Mission commissioned by the

occupying United States (1946). The imposed reforms of the occupation would then see

Japanese post-secondary education align more closely with higher education institutions

in the United States (Murata, 1969). As a result, formal education in Japan has

increasingly aligned with that found in the United States context, with twelve years of

formal education in primary and secondary contexts, as well as two to four years in

postsecondary education for an undergraduate degree.

As a result, those educated in contemporary Western contexts may find enough

similarities in formal schooling in Japan to take for granted an alignment with Japanese

learners that may not exist at the outset. Indeed, Nagatomo's (2016) treatise of female, L1

English-speaking teachers in Japan highlights the potential absence of alignment between

such teachers and their surrounding Japanese colleagues. Within EFL education overall,

much has been made about the clash of professional identities and cultures resulting from

the imposition of structures of professional development in language education (Holliday,

2005). As a result, it is problematic to assume that the teacher's beliefs and knowledge

easily overlap with that which students and other stakeholders bring to formal education

in Japan.

Meanwhile, EFL education in Japan in recent decades has encountered, or

perhaps faced the imposition of, professionalization shaped by Western perspectives

(Holliday, 2005). The L1 English teacher is a constant, if not ubiquitous, presence in

Japanese EFL education. At minimum, the "native English speaker" plays a dominant

role in many Japanese EFL classrooms, either in direct contact time with learners,

curriculum planning or materials development. The resulting evolution of education and EFL education in Japanese contexts has led to the commonplace circumstance of L1 English-speaking teachers providing instruction to large numbers of L2 English-speaking students. The differing perspectives of both teacher and student in such a polytopic environment thus emphasize the importance of mediation in classroom interaction.

As a result, EFL classroom contexts in Japan are likely to provide the sort of challenges that arise in teacher-student interaction because of differences in knowledge and sociocultural identities as outlined in Chapter 3. Despite these challenges, however, the English education in Japan is a required subject in public elementary schools beginning in the fifth grade and continues for most students through their university education. Moreover, many Japanese learners of English in primary and secondary schooling contexts come into contact with L1 English-speaking teachers through the government-sponsored Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme and other smaller initiatives to hire teachers from overseas to assist in duties related to EFL education. According to their website (2019), the JET Programme in 2019 hired 5,234 assistant language teachers from 30 countries to provide or assist in providing English instruction in public school classrooms around Japan.

This number does not include L1 English-speaking teachers directly hired by local municipalities or through private dispatch companies. Moreover, it does not include teachers in language school or preparatory school contexts, which provide additional opportunities for Japanese learners in English to practice English with and learn from teachers whose perceived expertise by way of "native-speakerness" is seen as valuable

for attaining English proficiency. Finally, most, if not all, students entering Japanese universities enroll in required English courses, where they typically encounter further instruction from L1 English-speaking teachers. Put simply, students in EFL education in Japan are bound to interact with teachers whose language resources, topical knowledge, and sociocultural identities may vastly differ from their own.

Research on English and English education has long documented the cultural power of the language around the world (Pennycook, 1994) and in Japan in particular (Furukawa, 2015; Miyazato, 2009). That cultural appeal has long informed stakeholder policies regarding L1 English-speaking teachers, whom the JET Programme and other similar initiatives appear to hire more for their native-speaking qualities than for any tangible teaching credentials or qualifications (Nagatomo, 2016). Within Japanese university contexts, the almost eight-fold increase in the number of faculty members coming from overseas between 1970 and 2015 (Hiroshima University Research Institute for Higher Education, n.d.) is almost certainly reflected in the growth in the numbers of L1 English-speaking faculty in EFL education at the university level.

Discussions of pedagogy are particularly important in multicultural contexts, where teachers and students are likely to diverge on bases of knowledge and practices, with perceptions of expertise in ratified knowledge (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011) as the main factor in deciding who wields power within the classroom. With the post-war commodification of English as a tool for communication and a perceived means for prosperity and access to the globalized world (Horibe, 2008; Pennycook, 1994), English education has become a major component in Japanese universities, with completion of

67

English courses or some certification of English proficiency a requirement for graduation in most institutions. Many universities have filled this need for English education by hiring L1 English-speaking teachers, who bring Western institutions of professional development (Holliday, 2005) further into the culture of education in Japan. Research has long documented the differences in pedagogies brought about by these differences in language and identity (e.g., Miyazato, 2009; Nagatomo, 2016; Sato, 2010), prompting discussions about what pedagogies are most appropriate for Japanese learners of English at the university level.

What is important to establish here is that the differences between teacher and student are potentially vast, not just in language and culture, but specifically what styles of teaching and learning may be most familiar to each classroom participant. As Engin (2017) notes, challenges to a productive dialogue may arise from differences in expectations about what constitutes successful classroom participation. As a result, this requires a closer examination of instructional practices with regards to mediation within any particular classroom and the dynamic moves between its interactants. Naturally, this requires a closer look at the particular context studied for this dissertation.

Higashi University

The study examines a classroom in a public Japanese university, which has been given the pseudonym Higashi University. Located in a suburban region of a prefecture neighboring Tokyo, it is a small city university with an undergraduate enrollment of about 4,000 students and a faculty of almost 700 members. In contrast, the national University of Tokyo boasts nearly 14,000 undergraduate students with over 2,400

full-time faculty members, per Wikipedia (n.d.). As a city university, it is smaller in prominence relative to its prefectural and national counterparts. However, it is well-known in the region for its medical programs, which are pathways for students to become doctors, nurses, and other medical practitioners.

Higashi University has four campuses, and the campus in which I conduct this study is a 25-minute limited express train ride to the city center and a 40-minute limited express train ride to the outer edge of Tokyo. In other words, the immediate area around the campus, while it can be described as a suburban bedroom community with a large shopping center and some major retail stores of its own, is easily accessible from the major urban centers in the capital region of Japan (which is comprised of Tokyo and its neighboring prefectures). Otherwise, the surrounding town is relatively quiet, with the university campus being a focal point for a significant portion of local activity.

Besides having buildings for lecture halls, classrooms, seminar rooms, and offices for faculty and staff, the campus itself has the basic facilities commonly found in a Japanese university, including a cafeteria, a gymnasium, a convenience store, and a public square for students to spend their free time. Students can arguably spend their entire day on campus, and many do so because of classes in the day and extracurricular, student-led club activities in the late afternoon and evenings.

Practical English

Proficiency in English, at least as measured by standardized assessments, is a requirement for all undergraduate students at Higashi University. The university does not have an English department through which students can major in English, but its

"Practical English" program provides the university's EFL education to its undergraduate students. In order to complete the Practical English component of their university education, undergraduate students enrolled in Practical English must attain a score of 600 on the TOEIC test or a 500 on the TOEFL ITP test at the end of the semester. Those who do not attain such scores must "repeat" the course in future semesters in order to fulfill graduation requirements. For reference, *The Japan Times* (2016) reported that the average TOEIC score among test-takers in Japan was 514 in 2014, with 990 as the highest possible score. On the TOEFL ITP test, 677 is the highest possible score and a score of 500 is indexed to the B1 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Educational Testing Service, 2017). Incoming undergraduate students must take a placement test for the purposes of streaming, and those who achieve either one of the necessary scores receive an exemption from the program (while given the option to enroll in the elective Advanced Practical English course).

Of importance is an explicit English-only policy within the classroom, presented by the administration of the Practical English program to its teachers. In brief, teachers are to give instruction primarily, if not exclusively, in English based on assumptions that reliance on Japanese would foster dependence on the students' first language for task compliance. This overarching policy and other policies about language use is bound to have an impact on the mediational strategies employed between teacher and student, and on the power dynamics within the classroom as a result.

Students can take the TOEIC and TOEFL tests during the semester in order to complete the Practical English requirement. The university administers these tests for

students at least once during the semester, while students who want to take the test more than once can do so at their own expense off-campus. Completion of the Practical English requirement, like exemption through the placement test, affords students the ability to enroll in optional Advanced Placement English courses. Otherwise, the required one-semester course is the minimum amount of English instruction required for graduation.

The Practical English program has a library of graded readers – simplified texts for students to read in English outside of class time – and the library also doubles as a lounge for students to come in and study. The lounge has a "conversation hour" staffed by PE faculty during the lunch period between second and third periods in the class schedule. In the lounge, only English can be used, but students are free to talk with each other and with faculty about any topic, providing students with additional exposure to and practice in English.

Mr. Nelson's classes

Two sections of the Practical English course, called PE1 and PE2, provide the classroom context for this study. These sections are comprised of first-year students who had the highest scores on either the TOEIC or TOEFL test that were not high enough to warrant exemption from the Practical English requirement. Students in PE1 scored higher on the TOEIC or TOEFL test than did their PE2 counterparts but, in interviews, Mr. Nelson, the teacher of these sections, said that he did not notice any substantive difference in English proficiency between the two sections.

The course itself meets for 90 minutes per class session. In principle, three class sessions per week are scheduled during the 15-week semester, except for public holidays and Mr. Nelson's personal leave. Most of Mr. Nelson's classes begin with a warm-up activity focused on speaking, then spend the remainder of the class time on an objective decided at the teacher's discretion. Four units from the course's reading textbook have to be covered as their material serves as prompts on the end-of-semester speaking test.

Each of the two Practical English sections has 22 students. PE1 has seven male students and 15 female students, while PE2 has 10 male students and 12 female students. Mr. Nelson does not assign seats but, with few exceptions, students generally choose where they sit based on gender (i.e., the male students sit to the teacher's right with the female students to the teacher's left) and seldom change seats from one class session to the next. When asked why this was the case, students that I interviewed tended to say it was Japanese culture or just what they were used to. Few students in either section sit at the front of the class, as most students occupy the seats toward the back of the class.

The classroom itself is situated in one of the older buildings on campus. It has enough movable desks and chairs for 55 students, all of which face the front of the classroom at the beginning of class. As the desks are movable, students often turn their desks to face each other in pair or group activities. At the front is a teacher's podium, a blackboard covering the entire width of the classroom with chalk provided, a projector with an accompanying screen that covers the blackboard when in use, and an audio/video cabinet to accommodate the use of electronic resources such as a laptop or a stereo that plays compact discs. The classroom that Mr. Nelson uses for most of his classes,

including the two PE classes observed in this study, overlooks the campus square through

windows situated along the teacher's right side of the room.

In interviews, a number of students describe PE class as an opportunity to practice

English rather than to study English. One of the PE2 students, given the pseudonym

Nami, echoes a sentiment about Mr. Nelson's class that is reflected in a number of

interviews with other students about PE class in comparison to English class in high

school. In lines 3-4 of the excerpt below, Nami says, "PE class only my chance to speak

English," and that "[h]igh school class, is, uh, only grammar, grammar only" (line 19).

> Student interview #09 - 07/03/2019
> 1 Roehl: Is it, is it fun to be in PE class?
> 2 Nami: Fun.
> 3 Roehl: Why?
> 4 Nami: Speaking English is difficult for me. But PE class only my
> 5 chance to speak English.
> 6 Roehl: Sure.
> 7 Nami: So, and Mr. Nelson is very friendly.
> 8 Roehl: Okay.
> 9 Nami: So…
> 10 Roehl: Alright. Um, did you have a native, or did you have a native
> 11 speaker teacher in high school?
> 12 Nami: Uh, sometimes native teacher.
> 13 Roehl: Only sometimes. How often?
> 14 Nami: Once a month?
> 15 Roehl: Once a month? Wow. Alright. How about this? Um, your
> 16 English class in high school and PE class. Is it the same or different?
> 17 Nami: Different.
> 18 Roehl: How is it different?
> 19 Nami: High school class is, uh, only grammar, grammar only. And
> 20 Japanese teacher read textbook and I hear and I write only. Speak,
> 21 speaking, sometimes speaking, group work. But PE class is all
> 22 speaking.

Here, Nami is describing high school English as a grammar-oriented endeavor,

likely for the purpose of passing university entrance exams or getting desirable results on

any of a number of standardized English tests well-known to Japanese learners of

English. At least two PE1 students emphasize that the sort of English focused on in class

relates to *nichijou kaiwa*, translated as "everyday conversation," and not the more formal

variety of test English to which they are accustomed, which is covered in their

"e-learning" homework component.

Student interview #01 - 06/10/2019

1   Roehl: So, e-learning is…
2   Toru: Very effective.
3   Roehl: Very effective? Mm-hmm. It's good pract—is it good practice
4   for TOEFL?
5   Toru: Yes.
6   Shoji: Yes.
7   Roehl: Is it good practice for, um, English in the classroom?
8   Toru: Um…
9   Roehl: For PE class?
10 Toru: Maybe, um, so conversation skills can't develop, but all kind of
11 other things can be developed in e-learning. You know, I heard you
12 and Mr. Nelson are talking, the thing, what I can't understand is
13 maybe it's not so difficult thing, trifle conversation [*nichijou kaiwa* –
14 everyday conversation].
15 Roehl: So, yeah, okay. Yeah, not a heavy conversation, right? It's just
16 small talk.
17 Toru: Because we have learned about environment problem or
18 something like kind of it, we have learned many time but, um, [*nan
19 ka, kudaranai nichijou kaiwa hodo* – something, trifling everyday
20 conversation], we hadn't learned.
21 Roehl: Hm, yeah.
22 Shoji: Sorry, um, English, English for the exam, English for exam is,
23 uh, English for the exam, uh, we can, we can English for exam, sorry,
24 sorry. [laughs] We can learn English for exam with e-learning.
25 Conversation or talking, [*nichijou kaiwa*], it's PE.
26 Roehl: Right. So, if I talk about, you know, just going to Yokohama
27 for shopping, everyday English, right? That's different than test
28 English.
29 Shoji: Yes.
30 Toru: Yes.

The two students, interviewed at the same time to discuss a particular episode in class, but also asked about the course in general toward the end of the interview, confirm each other's thinking about the presence of a clear distinction between English for daily conversation, which appears to be the focus of PE class, and English for test purposes, which is not a focus of PE class. One more student, Sakiko in PE2 class, aligns with this thinking and is probably most critical of the usefulness of Mr. Nelson's class while describing it as friendly environment in which to speak English in an informal manner.

Student interview #15 - 07/17/2019
1   Sakiko: For me, PE is not English class. PE is to make friend.
2   Roehl: I see. Okay. You say it's not English class. Why?
3   Sakiko: [*etto, etto* – (thinking utterances)] Until now, until high
4   school, in my high school, [*etto ne*], I studied same style.
5   [...]
6   Roehl: Uh, has your English improved, [*joutatsu shita*]? What do you
7   think? Or stayed the same, or go down?
8   Sakiko: Go down.
9   Roehl: Really? I see.
10   Sakiko: [*tabun nan ka, PE tte mo, TOEFL test, TOEIC test, nan ka,*
11   *yatte nai kara* – maybe, just PE, I haven't been taking the TOEFL test
12   or the TOEIC test]. Only PE class, [*ano dake de* – only that]. I study
13   English, so, [*jikan* – time] study time English, English study time, [*ka*
14   *ne* – (interjection)], decreased, [*dakara, joutatsu shita to omowanai*
15   *kara* – so, I don't think I have improved].
16   Roehl: I see. Oh, that's too bad. Um, but you do say PE class is for
17   making friends.
18   Sakiko: [*un, tomodachi dekita* – yes, I have made friends]

Everyone interviewed for this study, ultimately, seems to enjoy the PE class, despite differences in the perceived usefulness of what is being studied or practice in class. Many of the students say that PE class is typically more informal and more unstructured than their other courses, and the 4.5 hours of contact time they have for PE

class appear to provide for ample opportunity for students to become familiar with each other.

Participants

The students are all Japanese learners of English, whom I presume, by the nature of compulsory education in Japan, have studied English beginning in junior high school, if not earlier. If there are any further broad strokes to note with respect to the students in PE class, it is that the students are attentive (or at least compliant) when the teacher is speaking and tend to be respectful of each other without being rude or overly disruptive. Many students in interviews noted that they feel comfortable when being in PE class, which speaks to the safe space that Mr. Nelson has provided for English study. Most positively, the interviewed students noted that they tend to support each other during pair and group activities. There is little conflict or tension between students that can be characterized as disruptive or requiring intervention by the teacher. In short, the students in both of Mr. Nelson's class appear cohesive and work well together during class sessions.

This section details the teacher and four focal participant students, two from each PE class. A brief treatment of focal participants is provided in the section of Chapter 5 regarding interviews, but in short, these are students with whom I was able to establish a working rapport during the observation period, and whom I believe can provide useful insight about their PE class.

<u>Peter Nelson</u>

The instructor is an L1 English-speaking teacher from the midwestern United States. He has over a decade of EFL teaching experience in Japan, with significant teaching experience in the Practical English department at Higashi University and other part-time work at other universities and institutions. He is active in professional development for EFL education, having presented at various language education conferences and being a member of multiple professional development organizations over the years. He is married, raising a young daughter and, unlike most expatriate teachers in Japan, he owns a home which he says has rooted him to Japan and the capital region, as opposed to allowing him career mobility, which is a consideration in an industry where contract work without tenure is the norm for L1 English-speaking teachers.

Mr. Nelson indicated that he adopts a task-based language teaching approach to his instructional practices, emphasizing the importance of communicative competence (Paribakht, 1985) to overcome gaps in language and cultural knowledge. An excerpt from an interview with the teacher illuminates the emphasis on negotiating these gaps:

> Teacher interview #01 - 06/14/2019
> 1 Mr. Nelson: I tell them, "You want to buy this, this is the thing you
> 2 want to get. [...] And you're in a store in New Zealand or you're in a
> 3 store in, in South Africa or someplace, India, someplace where you
> 4 use English to communicate. And you want to find this thing but
> 5 you've forgotten this word, what do you do?" And I say three options,
> 6 you give up and go home, you pull out your dictionary, which can be
> 7 convenient but isn't always going to give you the right definition, or,
> 8 you know, things happen, and in conversation you don't want to keep
> 9 referring to a dictionary again and again, it's annoying. Um, so the
> 10 third, when you hit that vocabulary wall, I give them this gesture.
> 11 Roehl: The wall.

12 Mr. Nelson: The wall gesture. You find another way to say that word
13 and, so it's like, it's an exercise in description, an exercise in trying to
14 flexify (sic) your, your brain to come up with other ways to say
15 something.

In a number of instances during the observation period, Mr. Nelson has reiterated the assumption that students may know what to say but may likely not know how to express it in English as a possible reason for the periods of silence in class when he asks a question or is trying to elicit a particular word or phrase. In observations of his class, I noticed that he tends to elicit student output for building on language learning rather than present the concept and the intended meaning or the concept in which it is found. In one instance, when teaching the word "rich," he points to me and tells the students, "I am very poor, but he [Roehl] is very…?" This approach appears intended to involve the students in a whole-class dialogue and avoid lecturing about new language or tasks.

Almost with unanimity, the students interviewed for the study describe Mr. Nelson as funny, friendly, and helpful. He tells many jokes during class, which often elicit bouts of laughter (or, at minimum, polite laughter) that have come at the end of many sequences where the teacher holds a dominating share of the discourse and the students are largely silent. From time to time, students ask him questions when he is walking around and monitoring their progress in pair or group activities, or after class when the students have been dismissed.

As for my connection with the teacher, I feel comfortable conversing with Mr. Nelson about interacting with and teaching Japanese learners of English, as well as with students in either English or Japanese to get a sense of their knowledge and perspectives. With respect to the former, a number of times during observed classes in both this study

and a prior pilot study in 2018 (discussed in Chapter 5), Mr. Nelson asked me for advice with respect to what I might do in his place, owing to my prior experience in EFL education in Japan.

I have a professional relationship with Mr. Nelson as we were colleagues in the same professional development association (i.e., the Japan Association for Language Teaching) for a number of years during my time teaching in Japan. During and after that time, we have consulted with each other on our respective professional development activities, namely reviewing each other's papers in preparation for publication and presentations at language education conferences. During my observation of Mr. Nelson's classes in the previous pilot study, we have shared ideas about how to plan for certain classroom activities. The manner of consultation is such that it is apparent that he finds value in my supposed expertise about teaching English as a foreign language, even though I try to maintain the notion that we are of similarly equal expertise. In all, this has contributed to the sense of friendship both of us share in person and over social media, particularly outside of professional development activities and research. There is little doubt that this relationship plays a role in the power dynamics of the classroom being observed and the interactions taking place during class, thus warranting this discussion to describe the filter inevitably applied to the collection and analysis of the data.

This discussion of power dynamics between me and Mr. Nelson with respect to expertise is most apparent and most consequential on one occasion in class while discussing the definition of "mainland" in a reading passage students were required to read for homework. Given a multiple choice response item in the textbook asking

students whether "mainland" meant "the most important part of a country" or "the largest part of a country," Mr. Nelson polled the students about the correct answer, took a position I and some students had disagreed with, and proceeded to ask me about it in front of the whole class. As a former teacher, I was reticent to contradict his instruction and challenge his authority in front of his students, but when pressed, I agreed with the students with whom I had come to the same answer. What came after that was a lengthy discussion in front of the class that I felt could have implications for how the students perceive their teacher. Nonetheless, Mr. Nelson felt the exchange was helpful and useful for class, owing to his desire to see the students take a more critical look at the reading passages in their textbook. Still, there is undoubtedly a tension generated between my desire to be a participating and cohesive element of the classroom and Mr. Nelson's use of what he perceives is my expertise of English teaching.

As a result of my teaching experience, many of the observations I have made likely accompany questions of what I would have done in Mr. Nelson's place. On a number of occasions during the data collection phase, I have observed prolonged moments of silence, particularly when Mr. Nelson expects an answer from the students who, in turn, do not volunteer an answer. At other times, being mindful through classroom experience that language learners respond differently to jokes that are linguistic in nature (i.e., wordplay) than to jokes that require cultural reference (Bell, 2012; Petraki & Nguyen, 2016), I tended to have a reaction to the jokes and humorous anecdotes that Mr. Nelson tells his students for the benefit of eliciting their participation.

In the most extreme situations, I have noted when I felt discomfort for the students in the raw field notes but tried my best to be as supportive as possible of Mr. Nelson's efforts.

In interviews, Mr. Nelson has said that he is mindful of missteps that he identifies in his teaching, partly because of the reflective interviews and my participation in class, but also because of his own self-awareness and self-reflection as an experienced teacher. More importantly, he has said that he able to determine the effectiveness of his teaching through being able to gauge how he perceives the extent to which his students understand the meaning he represents in his discourse and pedagogy. It is this aspect of Mr. Nelson's expertise that is a critical element of instructional shifts being observed in this research, in the hopes that a sufficient explanation of possible subjectivities I have as a participant observer provide abundant enough context to negotiation of findings in a rigorous manner.

Arisa

Arisa is a PE1 student who is studying in Higashi University to become a nurse. She has a significant interest in learning English, as she uses social media to make friends with others around the world. She makes use of the PE library during conversation hour to practice English with Mr. Nelson and other PE teachers. Arisa aspires to be a nurse in a developing country where she can use English.

Daigo

Daigo is a PE1 student who is motivated to study English and wants to travel to English-speaking countries. In particular, he is less interested in the formal aspects of English that he perceives is a part of classroom English learning than he is in the sort of

informal communication in English that is found in emails (e.g., he said he was really interested in learning what English shorthands for Internet usage like "LOL" mean).

Ayaka

Ayaka is a PE2 student who wants to study English because her extended family lives in Brazil and she, having spent some time there, had to use English to communicate with them. She belongs to one of the extracurricular groups in university that focuses on sports and has a part-time job, meaning that her daily schedule is particularly busy, especially as she adjusts to doing homework for university classes.

Kotaro

Kotaro is a PE2 student who plays baseball and wants to use English to, as he said in his interview, "communicate with baseball player in foreign country." He likes Mr. Nelson's class because, while it is a four-skills class, he perceives it as focusing more on speaking than reading or writing, which he does not like, and because Mr. Nelson tells many jokes or uses humor which he says makes class interesting.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the methods I employed to generate the assertions advanced in this dissertation. In keeping with how mediated interaction as conceptualized by Hall (1993) involves interactants to co-construct mutually shared knowledge with each other, I have designed this study's methodology with the key goal of gathering multiple perspectives of classroom participants about discrete interactional episodes. How classroom participants interact with each other and make adjustments to their interactional moves to attempt greater alignment within classroom discourse is important to understanding the concept of instructional shifts as proposed in Chapter 1 and defined in Chapter 3. Simply gathering data from the perspective of the teacher is insufficient to observing this negotiation; as a result, it is essential to understand the viewpoints of the students while also accounting for the observational lenses through which I witness mediated and dialogic interactions.

To collect these varied perspectives, I position ethnographic research methods (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010) as the centerpiece of data collection through participant observations and interviews with the intent of organizing data into meaningful episodes of dialogic interaction as this study's units of analysis. Data analysis during and after data collection consists of a grounded theory approach that incorporates a synthesized analytical lens consisting of theories of dialogic interaction (Engin, 2017; Sedova et al., 2014) and bases of social power (French & Raven, 1959). Almost from the point when I begin to have a meaningful body of collected data, I examined the data to draw useful

insights from episodes of instructional shifts and apply them to further iterations of analysis (Saldaña, 2013). I undertook this recursive analysis to facilitate generation of meaningful themes and narratives to explore the nature of instructional shifts and their contribution to interaction within Mr. Nelson's classroom.

The following description of data collection and analysis addresses five of the eight criteria that Tracy (2010) defines for determining the "excellence" of qualitative research, specifically rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, ethics, and meaningful coherence. The other three criteria, namely the presence of a worthy topic, resonance, and establishment of a significant contribution, are addressed in Chapters 1 and 8. Ultimately, through a comprehensive treatment of the methodology, I aim to demonstrate that the methods undertaken for this study comprehensively reveal how I explore the object of inquiry, the episode of classroom interaction in which instructional shifts are perceived, and the degree to which data collection and analysis adheres to principles of research ethics and rigor.

At the outset, it is important to acknowledge that, especially in research that employs participant observation and inquiry into sociological concepts, data collection and data analysis do not occur exclusively of each other. The sensitizing approach (Denzin, 1989) of ethnographic research provides that reflections of events witnessed in the field influence the research in terms of the participant observer adapting methods to more effectively pursue data relevant to research inquiry. As Saldaña (2013) urges with respect to coding qualitative data, I have developed my analytical framework as events within the classroom provoke new and different thinking about instructional practices in

ways that, at the outset, I did not readily anticipate. As a result, data collection and data analysis not only influence the overall research design, but ultimately influence each other, and, for a time, occur recursively and simultaneously. Nonetheless, both phases involve their own discrete and separate processes; this chapter is thus my best attempt to define both data collection and data analysis while also detailing changes made during the course of observations while in the field.

Basic assumptions

The two research questions presented in Chapter 1 address the ontology and the epistemology, respectively, revolving around the object of inquiry (i.e., the instructional shift). Put another way, discussion of RQ1 aims to describe the various forms that instructional shifts take in Mr. Nelson's class, while RQ2 explores why Mr. Nelson engages in instructional shifts. To a certain extent, direct observation of classroom participants during dialogic interaction may be able to capture the outer dimensions of this phenomenon (i.e., what the teacher and his students say and do). Understanding the rationale for and intentions behind changes in instructional practices *in situ*, requires capturing the attitudinal dispositions, knowledge bases, and sociocultural resources of the classroom participants involved in interaction, in keeping with Hall's (1993) conceptualization of mediated dialogue.

To address both research questions, I employ methods associated with ethnography to collect data relating to understanding episodes of dialogic interaction involving shifts in instruction. The methods of observation and inquiry of participants put together allow for data triangulation necessary to synthesize description and

85

interpretation of sociological phenomena such as instructional shifts. Understanding and awareness of an instance of an instructional shift during participant observation allows me to describe and analyze the discourse and pragmatics within episodes of dialogic interaction. With this initial understanding in hand, I then follow up with the teacher and students through stimulated recall interviews to capture as best as possible their perspectives during these moments of dialogue.

Data collection and data analysis work hand in hand as reflection of insights generated from observations and interviews yields a more developed understanding of social phenomena such as instructional shifts which, in turn, informs subsequent iterations of the employment of data collection and analysis methods. The flowchart provided in Figure 5-1 summarizes the methods and steps that I have used in this study and their relationships to each other, ensuring as best as possible that new insights sensitize and inform the research, allowing for methods to be refined and adapted in order to expand understanding of the phenomenon of the instructional shift.

Theories of dialogue

Bases of social power

Generate initial codes

Predicted moves

Confirmatory moves

Preliminary phase

Interviews

Intuitions about patterns

Informal chats

Data collection

Coding

Analytical memos

Suggestions for new codes

Participant observation

Identify episodes

Dismiss irrelevant observations

Data collection phase

Find negative cases

Organize data

Identify episodes

Determine categories

Confirm warrants

REPORT

Determine assertions

Recode

Confirm patterns

DA/CDA

Post-data collection/data analysis phase

Figure 5-1 – flowchart for this study's methodology.

I emphasize the recursive approach to qualitative research in both the data collection and post-data collection phases as it informs the researcher's sensitization of data collection and data analysis as they build new insights to warrant changes in research focus. Ultimately, this recursion aims to achieve research rigor through theoretical saturation as described by Bowen (2008) in order to establish a sufficient presence of confirmability regarding discussion of instructional shifts. Theoretical saturation is the concept that a full accounting and analysis of the data inform the assertions advanced from the research, and that the collected data and the assertions I generate from analysis do not conflict with each other. Bowen and Adu (2019) agree that data analysis can achieve theoretical saturation once analysis no longer yields any new insights requiring development of the assertions and theories generated from the data. Denzin (1989) refers to the search for negative cases that may contradict and thus require an expansion or

revision of propositions being developed from the data analysis. As a result, I rely on the

standard of theoretical saturation as being found when no further negative cases can be

found to threaten the confirmability of the assertions that I generate within the collected

body of data as analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Guest et al., 2006). Once that

saturation is achieved, I can report meaningful findings based on a full awareness of and

reflection on the theoretical contributions generated from the evidence that I adduce from

the data.

Access and rapport

If a primary goal of ethnographic research is to deeply connect with participants

in a research context to understand their practices and perspectives, then "[e]thnographers

[...] always should seek and foster the formal and informal support of members of the

population under study" (Schensul et al., 2013, p. 42). Particularly under Bakhtinian

paradigms where meaning can be found within interaction and not solely in the

possession of individuals, I valued establishing a meaningful rapport with Mr. Nelson and

his students. As a result, through this rapport, I can more ably elicit their perspectives

about the classroom dynamic in a manner that transcends "the superficiality of surveys

and questionnaires" (Metcalf, 1998, p. 326). Thus, gaining access into the classroom

described in Chapter 4 in a manner that makes it possible to thoroughly interact with the

teacher and his students is the most important but also most precarious stage of the

dissertation study. Prior to data collection, I spent considerable time in planning how I

would make a good first impression with students to ensure they would welcome and

trust me well enough to offer their informed consent, without which I could not conduct this research.

Prior experiences as an ethnographer contribute to decisions I made during this study in connecting and forming a relationship with classroom participants. I based my dissertation research on a pilot study I conducted of Mr. Nelson's classes at Higashi University in June 2018. In that study, just as in this one, Mr. Nelson presented me to his students as a friend and colleague who was doing research about university English classes and wanted to observe his classes for a set period of time. Over the course of that data collection, I recorded class sessions with an audio recorder, documented observations of events of interest in field notes, and took pictures of the teacher's board work and handouts to students. From time to time, I also participated in some of the class activities, particularly when the teacher needed to model questions and answers in front of the students. Otherwise, I sat at one of the student's desks and took notes from my vantage point of the classroom during whole group activities. During small group or pair activities, I walked around the room and monitored interaction among students. Occasionally, I asked students various questions that were relevant to their current activity and recorded those exchanges via audio recorder.

While, as a group, they welcomed me and allowed me to record their classes and interview them, it was clear that I had an influence on the participants and activities in the classroom. I sensed, at times, instances of students' anxiety in using English in front of a newcomer and a second L1 English speaker in the room. When I drew near to at least some of the students to ask a question or otherwise engage them in conversation, they

would turn to a classmate asking what they should do, as if I presented a disruption in their usual routines. Likewise, Mr. Nelson, while viewing me as an equal by way of our personal and professional relationship over the years, often asked for my advice during class, indicating that he wanted to rely on my expertise as a researcher and a former English teacher. These observations helped to inform the decisions I made during the dissertation study in terms of establishing a more meaningful rapport with students and probing more deeply into Mr. Nelson's instructional practices.

Based on the meaningful experiences gained in that pilot study, I centered my research focus around teacher discourse in world language learning contexts, particularly with respect to the degree to which co-construction of meaning in adherence to Vygotskyan principles occurred between teacher and student. In defining this research agenda, it was clear that Mr. Nelson's classroom was an ideal venue for further study. The abundant interactions I had observed during the pilot study seemed, to me, potentially useful for understanding mediational processes in the classroom through discourse analysis. During the dissertation proposal process, I reached out to Mr. Nelson and his supervisor at Higashi University again to gain permission to observe Mr. Nelson's classes for a second, more comprehensive study. Once the supervisor granted access, Mr. Nelson and I mutually agreed on a schedule of observations.

In explaining the terms and conditions of informed consent (e.g., my role in Mr. Nelson's class, the research methods I would employ, the procedures for data confidentiality I would use), I presented this study as a chance for students to practice English with another L1 English speaker who was not their teacher. As I expected, based

on my experiences in the pilot study, a number of students responded by nodding their heads, indicating that they understood while, perhaps, also welcoming such an opportunity.

All of Mr. Nelson's 44 students, and Mr. Nelson himself, returned signed consent forms by the end of the first week of the dissertation study. Most students had signed their forms immediately after my explanation of informed consent, while the remaining students were absent that day and provided their completed forms later in the week after I sat down with them individually to explain my study. Data collection began almost immediately after my introduction and explanation of my research. Based on consultations with Mr. Nelson, I observed up to six first-year class sessions per week, each class being 90 minutes long. I observed two sections of first-year English courses, each of which met with Mr. Nelson three times per week.

Data collection

My goal in this study was to observe Mr. Nelson's teaching practices and how Mr. Nelson changes course when negotiating situations that arise during classroom interaction. To perform analysis to address this research inquiry, I relied on the need to collect observational data within the classroom environment and perspectival data from classroom participants. Moreover, I expected that I would need to document my own perspectives since, in any ethnography, my own positionality informs the analytical lens through which I collect and come to understand the data.

As a result, I employed ethnographic data collection methods including field notes of class sessions, audio recordings of classroom observations and interviews with the

teacher and their students, and recording of images related to classroom interaction and language learning. Between class sessions, I wrote reflective memos, either in formally written prose or informal observations in the margins of my field notes. These reflections documenting my insights about classroom observations provide the means to more capably identify episodes of classroom interaction with instructional shifts. I documented these insights in the hopes of later addressing the research questions regarding how instructional shifts come about and what changes in mediational strategies represent those shifts.

Identifying these episodes requires at least some criteria to determine when the classroom interactions I am observing involve an instructional shift. As this dissertation posits the mere act of the instructional shift without relying on abundant, existing theory, my search for such acts depends on my ability to develop greater insights about what those shifts might look like. At the outset of data collection, I had a descriptive set of criteria in mind for recognizing that I was observing an instructional shift taking place. These initial criteria relate to actions and utterances that I could observe and document during data collection (i.e., what someone does rather than what someone thinks). First, I would have to observe some sort of breakdown in communication or a pause in classroom interaction that impeded the flow of the classroom activity taking place. In the face of such a challenge, I would then have to observe whether and to what extent the teacher changes his utterances or practices in order to achieve a more desirable outcome. Alternatively, the teacher might say something that signals in explicit terms that he is changing or adding to his intended plans (e.g., "I just thought of this now"). Finally, I

note any changes, positive or otherwise, that occur in interaction (e.g., whether there are expressions of understanding or further confusion by students, whether they contribute to dialogue in a seemingly productive manner).

Naturally, these descriptors do not take into account those thoughts and perspectives that the participant observation lens would miss. During the course of data collection, this set of criteria would evolve as I collected new insights from classroom participants. I discuss these changes in detail in the subsection regarding interviews, but the main point here is to acknowledge that the sensitizing approach to research allows for preliminary suppositions, whether supported by existing theory or otherwise, so long as data collection and analysis inform and influence those suppositions in the generation of formal propositions.

In order to generate such propositions in a rigorous manner, I rely on the triangulation qualities of the methods in this study. The use of multiple research methods to collect multiple forms of data "aims at broader, deeper, more comprehensive understandings of what is studied" (Flick, 2018, p. 17). In other words, this study sought to capture different and complementary forms of data that contribute to a richer understanding of a particular object of inquiry. This approach is particularly useful when acknowledging that it is not possible for one source of data or one research method to sufficiently capture the phenomenon of dialogic interaction.

As this study builds on the pilot study in terms of observing Japanese university EFL classroom settings, it became possible to narrow the focus of participant observations based on prior experience (Jorgensen, 1989). From my experience in the

pilot study, I noticed behaviors in the teacher and among the students that formed the basis for assumptions that could inform later data analysis. For example, the teacher did not assign seats to students, leaving them to largely group together based on gender; in other words, with few exceptions, the female students sat on one side of the room while the male students sat on the other. Taking this into account, Mr. Nelson conducted warm-up activities that grouped students together in different ways other than gender. In pilot study interviews, he indicated that he did so to ensure interaction among as many students as possible. For example, his "question of the day" activity, involving students making small talk in English about a particular question (e.g., "What time did you leave campus yesterday?"), required the class to line up in order depending on their answer (i.e., students who left early line up closer to the left side of the room, those who left later line up closer to the right side). To a certain extent, this ensured that students would be paired up with classmates that they did not choose because of affinity or rapport.

These insights, in addition to other observations, helped to inform my search for the instructional shift. Particularly as interactional challenges arose during the pilot study between teacher and student, I became interested in how the teacher might negotiate such challenges. Reflecting on this, I used the time before the dissertation study to review the literature on student-to-student interactions and found competing theories about the influence of peer role models (Ruddick & Nadasdy, 2013) and the selection of classroom friends based on affinity rather than aspirations in academic performance (Smirnov & Thurner, 2017). I engaged in such reviews of the contemporary research in hopes that their propositions would prove useful in understanding the wide array of circumstances

and eventualities that could have a possible effect on classroom interaction with respect to language and literacy.

Given that the teacher's practices were bound to change in the time between the pilot and dissertation studies, I believed it was important to maintain an expansive lens on data collection to take into account all such influences on dialogue. This includes influences that I perceive but also those that I may not readily consider as an outsider to the classroom environment. Figure 5-2, based on Luk and Lin's (2007) visualization of Hall's (1993) model for dialogic classroom interaction, provides a visual representation of the aspects of classroom discourse that discussion of the relevant data aims to explore.
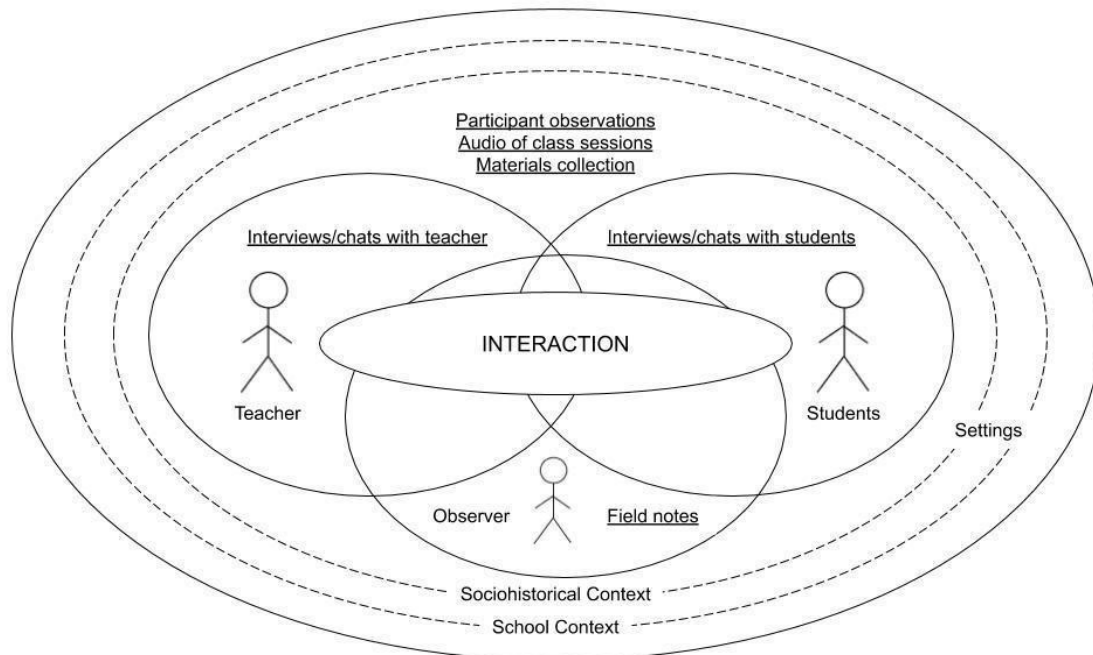
Figure 5-2 – visualization of data collection, using Luk and Lin's (2007) representation of Hall's (1993) model for dialogic interaction.

In keeping with considering discrete episodes of interaction as the units of analysis, the above figure centers the interaction between the teacher, the students, and

me as the participant observer when I am involved. In the framework of person analysis defined by Denzin (1989), the study of discrete interactions involves both aggregate analysis of attitudes, beliefs, and actions of individual participants involved in the interaction and interactive analysis to identify how participants interact with each other. Throughout data collection, I aimed to position this study in a manner that views interactional episodes through the multiple lenses and modes of data collection mentioned in Figure 5-2 to provide for data triangulation in analysis as well as depth in understanding participants' attitudes, beliefs, and actions.

Participant observations

My role in the classroom was that of a participant observer, where I would participate in class activities and respond to the teacher's and students' inquiries as any classroom participant would. I conducted data collection through participant observation between the beginning of June 2019 and the end of July 2019 for a period of eight weeks and part of a ninth week (which includes one day of classes). This period of time is within the first semester of the Japanese academic year, particularly when, in a context involving students who are relatively new to the university environment and to their English teacher, misunderstandings and shortcomings in interactions are pronounced when teacher and student are still developing a mutual understanding of norms and expectations within a multicultural space (Lonsmann, 2017). To further highlight this development, English classes for first-year university students were observed during this period. This emphasis on first-year students in this study highlights the potential unfamiliarity new university students have to their new academic context, widening the

possible divides between expert and novice and thus reaffirming the importance of dialogic classroom interaction.

Given the researcher positionality that I established in Chapter 4, I approach this study through a number of emic and etic perspectives (Harris, 1976) that, in aggregate, inform my role as a participant observer. I am an insider to both the practice of English teaching in Japanese university contexts and, to a degree, the specific practices and behaviors that Mr. Nelson employs while teaching, having observed his previous year's classes and having worked with him in professional development contexts in the past. Moreover, Mr. Nelson informed me that the scope of the topic and language knowledge that he was required by the Practical English department to cover had not changed between studies, so I would be familiar with at least some of the content that he would teach in class.

Based on all of this, I entered this study with a set of assumptions about what I might expect to see in the classes I would observe in the dissertation study. By the outset of the dissertation, I had become familiar with a number of elements that I would go on to observe in the dissertation study, such as the teacher's use of warm-up activities to divide students into pseudo-random pairs or groups, the almost-exclusive use of English (with as little use of Japanese as possible) in his instruction, and the practice of using humor to break what I interpreted as awkward silences during teacher-fronted activities. I would undoubtedly observe developments that I would find unfamiliar, especially since the theoretical lens shifted between studies. However, my understanding of unfamiliar

developments observed in classroom participation is nonetheless informed by a working understanding of the teacher's practices as previously studied.

That said, I am ultimately an outsider from the students' perspective. As a researcher with prior teaching experience, I possess a status that is different than that of first-year undergraduate students. More than that, however, is what I perceive to be my perceived status as an L1 English speaker among L2 English learners. Nagatomo (2016) and Holliday (2005) offer descriptive and critical perspectives about the "native speaker" effect that L1 English speakers have on English learners in L2 English-speaking contexts. In particular, Nagatomo provides excerpts of interviews with L1 English-speaking teachers who assert they were treated, however politely, as outsiders to Japanese culture by students to the point of discomfort or anxiety.

While I felt no such anxiety during participant observations, I was cognizant of the effect my presence could have when interacting with students, perhaps owing to my experiences in the pilot study. During interviews with students who struggled to answer my questions in English, for example, I would assure them that answering in Japanese was acceptable if it helped them to provide an answer. While some interviewees did switch to Japanese, others persisted in English, perhaps seeking a feeling of accomplishment if I validated their English usage. After interviews, most student interviewees seemed satisfied, at least to my mind, that they had participated in an extended conversation all in English, coupled with utterances of relief that they had successfully completed the interview.

As I observed in class sessions during the pilot study, this persistence was not in abundance when students talked amongst themselves without the close eye of Mr. Nelson to observe them; initial attempts to use English to discuss something during pair or group activities would turn to Japanese when students seemed to have trouble expressing what they wanted to say in English. Only when the teacher drew near or when the students noticed or focused on me was there a likelihood they would try to switch to English or remain silent entirely. This left me to suppose that my outsider status as an L1 English speaker had some effect on the behavior and decisions of Mr. Nelson's students.

This outsider status provided an initial sense of precarity in terms of gaining access to observe the classroom, but also an opportunity to gain rapport, at the beginning of the study, when I sought informed consent. For each class, field notes were taken and interactions were recorded with an audio recorder for later transcription and analysis.

There were breaks in the observation schedule due to national and personal holidays, as well as time set aside for mid-semester and end-of-semester speaking tests, which fell outside of the scope of this dissertation as minimal teacher-student interaction within the classroom took place. Only one set of class sessions postponed because of a personal holiday was rescheduled to another day, which was then observed, while class sessions that fell on holidays were not made up. Despite those breaks, a total of 37 class sessions were observed, allowing for collection of field notes and recordings of over 51 hours of classroom interaction.

As best as possible, my field notes took the form of jottings as defined by Emerson et al. (2011) and collected in a written notebook. I divided the field notes into

discrete class sessions, marking the events in class, the classroom participants involved in events relevant to the research, and the times in which those events occurred in order to guide what classroom events should be transcribed for later analysis. I then created extended prose based on instances of relevant interest to the research questions and my reflections of such instances and compiled them in a Google Doc for later analysis, reflection, and reporting. The field notes describe what was happening in class, along with who was actively involved and what reactions I observed in response to the classroom instruction or other events. Pictures were taken where board work by the teacher or other materials such as textbooks and worksheets were seen as relevant to the events in question. These pictures, in conjunction with the audio recordings, were used when converting field notes into extended prose or analyzing the episodes observed.

As a participant observer, I was a part of many of the classroom activities and a number of the interactions with the teacher and students. During classes, Mr. Nelson would, either in front of the class or in private, ask me questions about word usage or grammar usage to confirm what he was teaching. The students in class would do the same when they appeared to need help but could not ask their teacher, many times because he was out of earshot or because I was closer to them than he was. All classroom participants appeared to view me as an expert of some kind or another; Mr. Nelson saw me as an expert on teaching and research, while the students saw me as an expert on English and English-speaking culture. In a number of instances in interviews, the teacher would reflect my questions back onto me, asking what I thought I would say in his place. Students had questions of their own when they seemed stuck on a grammar point and I

was near enough to be asked; as our rapport developed, they would ask me questions of a personal nature, relating to life in the United States or as a foreigner in Japan.

During data collection, there were countless instances in which my presence has an effect on students. Most strikingly, as I listened in on a pair of students engaged in a speaking exercise, I found that they lowered their voice to the point where only they could hear each other. At other times, I have been a focus of interactions among students, whether the subject was about English or English-speaking culture, or even about me. For example, toward the end of data collection, one female student asked me what type of woman I liked. Instances such as these highlight the level of rapport established with at least some of the students, illuminating the potential depth of perspectives I can later elicit in participation observations and interviews.

Given the nature of the interactions (and reactions) generated in part by my presence, I acknowledge the potential for the focus of the study to be shifted away from the classroom interactions and toward me. In moments like the one presented above, the classroom interaction became more about me than it was about the exchange between the students and their teacher. Given the etic perspectives I brought to the study, I took advantage of the expert and referent power that I perceived Mr. Nelson's students perceived in me in order to establish a more meaningful rapport with classroom participants. I sought this rapport for the purposes of fostering a greater degree of personal comfort within the classroom but also to broaden the potential for deeper interactions throughout the data collection period. As mentioned above, I sought to be of help to teacher and student alike, answering questions when they sought my guidance or

filling out a group when an extra speaking partner was needed. I tried as best as possible to present myself as a willing and friendly participant in the class that did not judge either the teacher about his instructional practices or the students about their English.

Eventually, I would perceive that a number of students came to see me as a positive element in their language learning experience. Moreover, some would see me as a means for understanding American culture or at least my perception of it. In interviews, students with whom I had greater rapport would turn my questioning around and ask me questions of their own. For example, I asked Daigo, a PE1 student, about why students seated themselves in gendered groups instead of along other lines. After supposing that it was simply "Japanese culture," he turned the question on me about whether it was different in the United States. I replied with an anecdote that a guidance counselor relayed to me during my undergraduate years, that the less motivated students tended to sit in the back or to the sides of the room, but rarely in front.

As an ethnographer, I relied on principles of multicultural understanding in interacting with students. While writing a literature review on teacher discourse for my doctoral program, I spent some time reading about culturally responsive teaching, a pedagogical approach that connects learning experiences to students' knowledge and identities (Gay, 2013). I found discussions of this approach relevant to my approach to ethnography, as it requires a constant dialogue that does not reduce cultures or customs to simplistic or stereotyped concepts. Just as Lowenstein (2009) suggests, it is important that, during the course of data collection, I critically reflect on my discourse with Mr. Nelson's students to ensure that I am exercising responsivity to what they say.

In contrast, I was also careful with my expressions of expert power to avoid essentialisms or stereotypes, hedging statements by saying phrases such as "someone told me…" or "my impression is…" In interactions where students were curious to know more about me, my culture or my life back in the United States, I felt that it was important to proactively share something about what I know to reward their curiosity in exchange for having a deeper rapport within the classroom. These opportunities, similar to the sort of opportunities for dialogic development that the next chapter illustrates, served to build rapport between me and Mr. Nelson's students.

Early in the observation period, when Mr. Nelson prompted a student in a whole class activity to ask me a question, they asked me about my plans during the previous weekend. While staying in a capsule hotel during data collection, I had the weekends to myself and the chance to spend time around the local area. At that time, I told them that I had gone to a *sento*, or a public bath. Use of public baths is a particularly Japanese custom, and the more contemporary baths include a cafeteria and other spaces for rest and relaxation. This answer elicited expressions of interest from the class, perhaps indicating surprise that a "foreigner" took advantage of a public bath.

Building on this interest, I added that I had a "traditional Japanese" dish in the cafeteria at the public bath called "cheese potato *mochi*," or rice cake that includes two decidedly non-Japanese ingredients (at least in the traditional sense). Of course, I meant this as a joke, prompting the students to laugh and insist it was not really Japanese food. At least for the moment, I felt that we were drawn together, not simply because we understood each other, but that we were sharing the same humorous moment together.

During data collection, I managed to duplicate this moment, either in whole class situations or in private with small groups or individual students.

As a result, over the course of two months, I felt that I and Mr. Nelson's students had become more familiar and comfortable with each other. While contact time is most certainly a factor in this familiarity, I can attribute the development of comfort to a number of decisions I have made regarding interaction with students. First, I repeatedly stated to students that I was not there to judge their English, saying in interviews beforehand that "this is not an English test." While they easily understood that I had no legitimate authority to grade their performance, I felt this was necessary to preempt any notion that I would make any value judgments on their character based on their English proficiency. I also periodically changed where I sat in class to have different perspectives about class but also to position myself closer to the students. In the first two weeks, for example, I sat along the wall with my desk turned to see Mr. Nelson to my left and the students to my right. I changed where I sat approximately every two weeks, eventually taking up a position among the students and facing Mr. Nelson. This notion of not being separate from the students seemed to elicit more casual, albeit, brief interactions. In smaller but altogether important ways, students adjacent to me eventually exchanged more casual greetings with me at the beginning of class, occasionally during class offering snacks they had brought to the classroom. By the beginning of July, I perceived that they were somewhat more comfortable with my presence to the extent that they saw me as useful and interesting within the classroom context.

To give one telling indication of this comfort, I noticed (and expected) early in the observation period that I would initiate almost all of the interactions I had with students. This is in contrast to how Mr. Nelson and I interact; because we are friends and colleagues, he tends to initiate a verbal exchange with me almost as often as I would with him. As I and Mr. Nelson's students became more familiar with each other, there were occasions when students would talk with me when I was nearby or, more strikingly, would walk up to me to ask a question or make a comment. Naturally, some students were more apt to engage in interaction than others were for any number of reasons, but toward the end of data collection, I felt nearly as much of a participant in the classroom interaction as I believed Mr. Nelson was.

During the data collection phase, I implemented a preliminary coding cycle to identify themes and patterns that emerged (Saldaña, 2013) for later, post-data collection coding cycles. For this, I took field notes documenting events and utterances of note, as well as approximate times when they occurred so I could refer back to audio recordings. Shortly after observations, I then applied codes to what I noticed during observations. A more comprehensive treatment of coding field notes is presented in the next section; what is important in this section is that identification of patterns led to a preliminary identification of *episodes of interaction*, which serve as the units of analysis for the observations and as points of recall during interviews. I define these episodes as events in which the teacher engages in a shift in instruction, warranting observation and analysis of these episodes in order to address the research questions in this study.

As I developed my field notes, I marked and coded what I thought at the time might serve as such episodes (whether with a star or a special code to identify a potential episode). In between classroom observations, outside of campus, I summarized my jottings and other intuitions in brief reflective memos both to provide a reference for later use and to organize my understanding of classroom observations into written form for the purposes of refining my observational lens, proposing new codes, or confirming the presence of episodes involving instructional shifts. To a certain extent, these reflections during data collection helped to maintain my focus on the goals of the study, thus sensitizing my research toward the desired object of inquiry and limiting time spent pursuing phenomena that might be interesting but ultimately irrelevant to the observation of instructional shifts.

Two examples from the data highlight the recursive nature of observations and reflections informing each other. As Chapter 6 will illustrate, the theme of opportunities in language learning will expand on Engin's (2017) framing of dialogic interaction in terms of challenges either overcome or nonexistent. One of the data excerpts provided in the next chapter illuminates how Mr. Nelson takes advantage of technology to provide relevant schema in the form of music in a way that the textbook or another written passage cannot provide. In this episode, I noted Mr. Nelson's utterance where he had not considered playing music until the moment of the relevant class activity. My reflections in that instance about the presence of opportunities, as well as the full memo about opportunities that I wrote shortly thereafter, both effected a change in my observation lens to not only look for patterns of communication breakdowns or unwelcome silence

but also to look for moments where the teacher seems to exploit a welcome idea. This change is manifest in both an active focus of the teacher changing instructional practices when perceived opportunities arise during classroom observations, as well as the addition of new codes to further identify other episodes.

Conversely, I have reflected on insights about observations that might prove useful for future research but needed to be set aside, at least in terms of the research inquiries of this study. Late in the data collection period, Mr. Nelson took notice that students were gaming the question of the day activity in a manner that allowed them to pair or group together with their friends. In that class, the question of the day involved students asking each other where they will go for summer vacation and lining up in terms of the distance they would travel from campus to go on vacation. The students who wanted to sit next to each other appeared to deliberately make up answers, choosing places much further than the answers of their classmates (who tended to stay closer to home) so they were likely to line up next to each other. Having noticed this, Mr. Nelson changed his questions to challenge his students' answers. For example, where one student answered with "Madrid," the teacher, acting playfully, asked follow-up questions about Spain with the intent (confirmed in an interview later that day) of ensuring they did not know the answer (e.g., asking what foods were popular in Madrid). The challenging questions elicited laughter from the rest of the class, and it seemed clear to all that the students in question were making things up just to be able to sit next to each other.

This interplay between teacher and student might be interesting for future research on classroom management and oral communication activities in language

classrooms. Indeed, from a standpoint observing rapport, there is evidence here that both teacher and student feel comfortable enough to engage in this exchange. Nonetheless, there were few other similar episodes across the body of data that might have provided sufficient evidentiary warrants to necessitate the inclusion of themes such as classroom management into the body of formal propositions generated for this study. As a result, I set aside this and other insights that required further study, eventually landing a preliminary series of themes on which I would focus my observational and analytical lenses for the remainder of the study.

<u>Stimulated recall interviews</u>

Episodes of note were marked in my field notes along with the participants involved, forming the basis of most of the interviews I conducted during the observation period. For these interviews, I implemented principles of stimulated recall (Dempsey, 2010), in which I and the participants discuss an audio recording of a classroom observation as well as its accompanying transcript. I presented these stimuli to foster discussion of notable episodes of classroom interaction involving instructional shifts. Stimulated recall is a part of the interview methods in this study in order to elicit the thoughts and beliefs of research participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the perspectives brought into a particular episode of dialogic interaction as conceptualized by Hall (1993). The recall process also acts as a mechanism for member checking to confirm the accuracy of my transcriptions and to discuss comparisons between my interpretation of events with that of the interview respondents.

These interviews were semi-structured with questions (a non-exhaustive list is presented in Table 5-1) related to the episodes being discussed. Students were asked questions in English, but were also allowed to answer either in English or Japanese, depending on their preference. These interviews are intended to be used to form a sufficient degree of data triangulation (Flick, 2018) with data from classroom participants confirming, challenging, or supplementing my suppositions drawn from my observations as documented in memos.

Initially, I chose stimulated recall questions that related to challenges that I saw as impeding classroom dialogue. Questions that related to how students felt, for example, were asked in reference to moments in episodes where students were silent or exhibited some behavior where their perspectives were more ambiguous to interpret. For example, if a student turned to consult with a classmate about something, was it because they did not know what Mr. Nelson was asking them or was it because they knew what he was asking of them but still did not know the answer? Thus, identifying words or actions or some other element in class episodes that prompt participants to shift their practices became a central goal in interviews with the teacher and his students.

Initial prompts for stimulated recall	● Let's listen to a part of the class from [last Monday]. ● Let's look at the script of the audio from class from [last Monday].
Initial questions to teacher	● In your own words, what were the objectives of this interaction? ● How did you feel about the way you presented this to the students? ● What was your thinking behind presenting in this way? ● Why do you think there were challenges in getting the class to participate? ● What words or grammar were more difficult to teach than you initially thought? ● How did you feel about the changes you made during the interaction? ● Are there things that you would do differently if you did this a second time? ● What do you think went well during the interaction? ● How do you think your students felt after the interaction?

Initial questions to students	● Lexical challenges
	  ○ What English words did you find difficult?
	  ○ What Japanese words did you want to say but couldn't in English?
	  ○ Have you heard of these words before?
	  ○ Have you studied this grammar before?
	● Topical challenges
	  ○ What did you think about the topic of this lesson?
	  ○ Have you learned about the topic before?
	  ○ How interested were you in the topic of the lesson?
	● Classroom silence
	  ○ [What did you think/How did you feel] in this moment (of silence)?
	  ○ In this moment, what did you want to do but couldn't?
	● Academic expectations
	  ○ [What did you think/How did you feel] after the interaction?
	  ○ What do you think your teacher thought after the interaction?
	  ○ What did you learn in this interaction?

Table 5-1 – non-exhaustive list of initial questions for semi-structured interviews with respect to episodes of classroom interaction.

Looking holistically at the interview data, I identified challenges that related both to language and to content, as Engin (2017) asserted. I was able to confirm a presumption that, at times, students were at a loss to answer Mr. Nelson's question because of a particular word usage For example, the question "What was happening?" seemed to create a moment of confusion in one student; Mr. Nelson changing the question to "What was the problem?" overcame this challenge and successfully elicited the desired dialogue. Asking the student in question about this elicited some useful insight about the meaning he drew from both questions. A more comprehensive discussion of this episode is presented in Chapter 6, but this brief discussion of the focus on lexical challenges, however small, highlights how potential breakdowns in mutual understanding (Jacquemet, 2011) influence the larger dialogue and prompt classroom participants to negotiate meaning with each other.

Regardless, I also collected data that pointed to challenges to dialogue that transcend language. Another episode that is addressed in Chapter 6 relates to a guessing game activity where students each choose a popular Japanese song, and groups of students have to identify what it is by asking questions. Because the students in one group were not deeply familiar with a song that one student had chosen, their dialogue had reached an impasse even though they were able to successfully interact in English. Even here, Mr. Nelson had to provide some extra guidance to the students so they could reach a successful conclusion to the activity.

Perspectives of classroom participants about these challenges and instructional shifts were elicited through interviews that allowed Mr. Nelson and his students to reflect

on their experiences in the classroom. Analysis and discussion of this data, as a result, contributes to insights that address RQ2 and the epistemology behind dialogue and instructional shifts within Mr. Nelson's classroom.

Toward the end of the data collection period, I conducted interviews with engaged students with whom I have developed a positive and engaging connection. These interviews are similar in nature to the informant interviews defined by Denzin (1989), conducted with "those persons who ideally trust the investigator; freely give information about their problems and fears and frankly attempt to explain their own motivations" (p. 202). For these interviews, I chose two students from each PE section with whom I judged to have a deep level of rapport and with whom I could communicate on a level deep enough to explore complex topics of classroom interaction. I conducted semi-structured interviews with these informants to get a sense of the classroom in general in order to provide a more global context to the episodes to be analyzed. A similar "exit interview" was conducted with Mr. Nelson at the end of the data collection period to elicit his thoughts about the PE classes observed during the semester.

Finally, I briefly interviewed three students from each PE section during the week of their end-of-semester speaking test to get a sense of what they thought about PE class, their teacher, and their classmates. These interviews were only 3-5 minutes in length and were conducted to illuminate student perspectives about the PE course in general. In particular, the students in these interviews aligned with the notion established in Chapter 4 that the PE course was more casual in nature than English classes they had in high school.

In all, I conducted 31 interviews with the teacher, 14 PE1 students, and 13 PE2 students, all of whom contributed to a total of 15.75 hours of interview audio. I transcribed all interviews as comprehensively as possible, taking into account pauses, thinking utterances (e.g., "Um…" and "Let me see…"), and interjections that may be useful for understanding and later analysis (Adu, 2019). Where any of the interactants use Japanese, I included my best romanization (i.e., conversion of Japanese in a way that can be more easily read by English readers) and translation into English (assisted, at times, by Google Translate) in excerpts presented in this dissertation. I added line numbers and page numbers for future reference and compiled identifying information for interview transcripts in an Excel spreadsheet for data auditing purposes. Figure 5-3 is a screenshot of the data audit sheet for interview data to illuminate how I categorized interview data into the defined episodes. As I transcribed and then analyzed interviews, I identified references to classroom events as involving instructional shifts and marked them with a code and the date and time of the episode (explained in the next subsection) in the data audit sheet for later organization.

ID	Interview audio	Interview transcript	Episode reference	Participant codes	Length	Pages
1	IA_5357_061019\HPSH002.WAV	IT_5357_061019_1	10901	1-TM1, 1-DM1, 1-SM1	0:50:41	13
2	IA_5357_061019\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_061019_2	10902	2-SM2, 2-NF1, 2-KM1	0:34:53	10
3	IA_5357_061419\HPSH008.WAV	IT_5357_061419_1	10901, 10902	T	0:52:57	14
4	IA_5357_061919\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_061919_1	10905	2-AF1	0:53:09	21
5	IA_5357_062119\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_062119_1	10904, 10905	T	0:23:47	8
6	IA_5357_062219\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_062219_1	10904	1-KF1, 1-MF5	0:43:55	16
7	IA_5357_062619\HPSH001.WAV	IT_5357_062619_1		1-TF1	0:32:52	8
8	IA_5357_062619\HPSH002.WAV	IT_5357_062619_2	10907, 10909	2-SM3	0:18:28	6
9	IA_5357_062819\HPSH006.WAV	IT_5357_062819_1	10909	T	0:26:54	11
10	IA_5357_070119\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_070119_1	10906	2-SF2	0:33:43	12
11	IA_5357_070319\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_070319_1	10912	2-RM1	0:27:03	9
12	IA_5357_070319\HPSH004.WAV	IT_5357_070319_2	10912	2-NF2	0:30:45	10
13	IA_5357_070819\HPSH004.WAV	IT_5357_070819_1	10914, 10917	1-MF6	0:34:58	15
14	IA_5357_071019\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_071019_1	10914	1-SM2	0:31:35	8
15	IA_5357_071219\HPSH004.WAV	IT_5357_071219_1	10917	1-AF3	0:42:21	16
16	IA_5357_071519\2019_07_15_12_08_05.MP	IT_5357_071519_1		2-KM1	0:26:26	9
17	IA_5357_071719\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_071719_1	10918	2-KM3	0:26:34	12
18	IA_5357_071719\HPSH007.WAV	IT_5357_071719_2		2-SF3	0:54:33	19
19	IA_5357_071919\HPSH004.WAV	IT_5357_071919_1		1-AF2	0:52:59	21
20	IA_5357_071919\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_071919_2	10919	T	0:06:25	3
21	IA_5357_071919\HPSH006.WAV	IT_5357_071919_3		T	0:26:01	8
22	IA_5357_072419\HPSH002.WAV	IT_5357_072419_1		2-AF1	0:50:26	18
23	IA_5357_072419\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_072419_2	10919	1-DM1	0:36:24	12
24	IA_5357_072419\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_072419_3		1-KF1	0:35:57	13
25	IA_5357_072619\HPSH001.WAV	IT_5357_072619_1		1-HM1	0:03:57	2
26	IA_5357_072619\HPSH002.WAV	IT_5357_072619_2		1-KM1	0:05:46	2
27	IA_5357_072619\HPSH003.WAV	IT_5357_072619_3		1-AF1	0:04:55	2
28	IA_5357_072619\HPSH004.WAV	IT_5357_072619_4		2-TM4	0:02:52	1
29	IA_5357_072619\HPSH005.WAV	IT_5357_072619_5		2-YF1	0:02:58	2
30	IA_5357_072619\HPSH006.WAV	IT_5357_072619_6		2-MF1	0:04:08	2
31	IA_5357_072619\HPSH007.WAV	IT_5357_072619_7		T	1:06:55	21

L	M	N
Total interview time	15:45:17	100.00%
With teacher	3:22:59	6
With students	12:22:18	25
With PE1	6:16:20	12
With PE2	6:05:58	13
Total transcribed	15:45:17	100.00%
With teacher	3:22:59	6
With students	12:22:18	25
With PE1	6:16:20	12
With PE2	6:05:58	13
Left to transcribe	0:00:00	0.00%
T remaining	0:00:00	0
Ss remaining	0:00:00	0
PE1 remaining	0:00:00	0
PE2 remaining	0:00:00	0
Page count		
Teacher	65	
PE1	128	
PE2	131	

Figure 5-3 – data audit sheet for interview data.

The resulting body of data provides for the capacity to understand the classroom environment and teacher-student interactions during times when co-construction of meaning is essential. Capturing data from multiple perspectives allows not only for observing the processes of mediation between teacher and student, but also for observing the extent to which teacher and student understand (and do not understand) each other.

Data analysis

Because Hall's (1993) conceptualization of teacher-student interaction exists within a number of layers of varying degrees of locality, it becomes necessary to examine these interactions through a series of analytical lenses. Discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and an approach to qualitative coding that contains elements of grounded theory will be used to provide a synthesized description of classroom interaction.

<u>Preliminary coding</u>

As suggested at the outset of this chapter with respect to qualitative research that adopts a sensitizing approach, data collection and data analysis work in tandem, as reflections on observations made while in the field sharpen (or at least develop) the researcher's lens in subsequent observations. This study adopts an analytical strategy that adopts principles supporting the grounded theory approach as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967) while also having an initial set of proposed theoretical underpinnings (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to guide early observations until developments can be made. I adopt this approach to avoid what I would consider "blind observations" at the outset that might limit the potential of documenting relevant interactions that can be used to generate meaningful data. Rather, a guiding theoretical framework to coding that also accounts for phenomena that falls outside of existing theory aligns with the principles of hermeneutic phenomenology mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The initial theoretical framework for coding field notes and interviews is a composite of the theories described in Chapter 3, using principles of instructional conversation (Goldenberg, 1992), challenges to dialogic interaction (Engin, 2017), and bases of social power (French & Raven, 1967). Aspects of each theory were summarized into descriptive codes in order to identify patterns in classroom interaction. Personal suppositions about what might transpire during episodes of interaction involving instructional shifts (e.g., a student might make a facial expression of confusion to indicate a challenge in interaction) further inform the coding scheme. Table 5-2 provides the

initial set of codes used in early observations. Abbreviations were provided so that they could be marked in written field notes.

Mediational strategies (M)	● M1 – first mediational strategy (defined by Goldenberg, 1992, or other strategy) ● M2 – second mediational strategy ● M3 – third… ● M?-1 – mediational strategy that employs thematic focus ● M?-2 – mediational strategy that employs activation of background/relevant schemata ● … ● M?-MM – mediational strategy that employs multimodality (e.g., pictures, videos, written instructions) ● M?-GS – mediational strategy that employs gestures ● M?-L1 – mediational strategy that employs L1 usage ● M?-X – mediational strategy that employs some aspect not covered by the above codes
Indications of challenges to dialogic interaction (C)	● CD – student defers to a classmate/asks a classmate for advice about what to do or say ● CF – student makes a facial expression indicating confusion/lack of understanding ● CG – student makes a gesture indicating confusion/lack of understanding ● CN – student is nonresponsive/engages in silence ● CR – student revoices a previous utterance to indicate confusion/lack of understanding
Possible reasons impeding dialogic interaction (R) (based on Engin, 2017)	● RE – disparity in understanding of academic roles/expectations ● RL – disparity in linguistic resources ● RT – disparity in topical knowledge

Development of dialogue after instructional shift (D)	● DS – student contributes substantively to dialogue ● DUG – student indicates understanding through gestures ● DUF – student indicates understanding through facial expressions ● DUV – student indicates understanding through verbal expression ● DT – teacher gives feedback indicating productive development in dialogue
Possible indications of social power exercised (P) (French & Raven, 1959)	● PR – reward power ● PC – coercive power ● PP – referent power ● PL – legitimate power ● PE – expert power

Table 5-2 – initial set of codes for field notes relating to episodes involving classroom interaction and challenges to dialogic interaction.

The raw field notes in the written notebook were the first pieces of information to be coded as the data collection process began, particularly with notes about instructional shifts and various mediational strategies undertaken by the teacher. As data collection progressed, I produced other codes to classify aspects of classroom interaction that my interpretation of the above theories did not address. As stated in the discussion about data collection, these additions arise from reflections about classroom observations that ultimately refine the observational and analytical lenses for future class sessions.

For example, use of body language that transcended hand gestures was a noticeable feature in a number of instructional shifts, requiring a new code to be generated. Additionally, many instructional shifts involved the teacher's use of the blackboard and supplemental materials such as worksheets or online resources, suggesting that the M?-MM code be broken down into further codes with more specific

descriptors. In addition to new codes, I also generated new categories that more closely aligned with my understanding of the interactions taking place in the classroom. The initial codes in Table 5-2, for example, did not adequately address classroom participants' attitudes as elicited in interviews. As a result, I created two new categories describing the attitudes expressed by the teacher and by the students.

In turn, I needed to further develop the theoretical lens I was applying to the data in order to accommodate these new developments. In addition to theories on dialogic interaction and power dynamics that I identified at the outset of this study, I incorporated additional theoretical frameworks into the coding scheme during and after data collection. These theories were relevant to identifying rapport-building behaviors (Gremler & Gwinner, 2008; Webb & Barrett, 2014) and expressions of agency (Mercer, 2011), particularly as the creation of analytical memos and other reflections compelled me to look at how rapport and agency were fostered and negotiated within the classroom. These additional perspectives contributed to the overall findings in that they provide detail as to what instructional shifts contribute to classroom dynamics, complementing existing discussion as to what instructional shifts appear to be.

Throughout the data collection period, the coding scheme had grown to 140 different codes. Saldaña (2013) notes that, while there is no consensus in the field with respect to a reasonable number of codes for a particular study, the application of such a large number of codes seems to be unwieldy in the views of several scholars on the subject of qualitative data analysis. Nonetheless, as the overall requirement for coding in Saldaña's view is coherent analysis, Saldaña asserts that there is no "magic number" for

coding. Indeed, provided that there is a sufficient degree of organization of the codes into coherent categories usable for data analysis, the coding scheme can be as exhaustive as necessary in order to address the research questions guiding the study. Faced with the task of dividing large numbers of codes into preliminary but meaningful categories, I decided on a numerical system to replace abbreviations of codes with numbers.

Appendix A outlines the full list of codes and their identifying numbers generated during the part of the data analysis phase that ran concurrently with the data collection period, while Table 5-3 below is an abbreviated list of the most significant major categories and their respective number spaces allocated for subcategories and individual codes. In brief, most codes were given a four-digit number, with the first and second digits indicating the category and subcategory, respectively and where applicable, to which the code belongs. As participant observations highlighted novel aspects of classroom interaction, the last two digits allowed for expansiveness in the coding scheme when new codes needed to be generated. The space defined between the numbers 1000-1999, for example, provides space in the coding scheme to identify instructional moves; codes with the numbers 1100-1199 are set aside for moves defined by Goldenberg's (1992) instructional framework, while codes above 1200 describe other aspects of the teacher's moves. A final category had five-digit codes and started at "10000" in order to identify interesting quotes and events, as well as mark episodes that warranted more extensive analysis.

Number space	Preliminary category / subcategory	Number space	Preliminary category / subcategory
1000-1999	*Mediational strategies*	*4000-4999*	*Challenges*
1100-1110	Elements of instructional conversation	4100-4199	Engin (2017)
1200-1299	Mode of communication	4200-4299	Shape of challenge
1300-1399	Teacher strategies eliciting student output	4300-4399	Source of anxiety
2000-2999	*Dialogic development*	*5000-5999*	*Opportunities*
2100-2199	Student behavior	*6000-6999*	*Instructional shifts*
2200-2299	Teacher builds dialogue	*7000-7999*	*Teacher perceptions*
2300-2399	Comprehension check	*9000-9999*	*Student perceptions*
3000-3999	*Bases of social power*	*10000*	*Miscellaneous*

Table 5-3 – list of preliminary categories generated during data collection.

The revised coding scheme preserves the theoretical lens established in the original coding scheme by allowing codes for noticing elements of instructional conversation, challenges in dialogic interaction, and bases of social power. In addition, the use of number spaces afforded the creation of new codes as observations and analysis permitted. As excerpts in Chapter 6 will illustrate, Mr. Nelson, at times, exaggerates an utterance by a student to indicate some sort of change is necessary, or polls the students

by asking them to give a thumbs up or thumbs down gesture, depending on the answer they want to give. These practices were given codes 1305 and 1307, respectively.

It is through these expansions of the coding scheme where the research could suppose and then propose expansions of theory. The latter chapters of this dissertation will advance the assertion that dialogue is not merely or even primarily conducted via the spoken word, but rather also through various interactional resources that contribute to the co-construction of meaning and alignment. The use of all the codes in the 1300 number space, which include the new codes mentioned above, contribute to supporting this assertion that dialogic alignment transcends strictly verbal utterances.

As new codes were added to the coding scheme, the revised methodology also allowed for preliminary groupings of codes intended to aid in more formalized categorizations once the first iteration of coding was complete and reflections of the generated data could be made. For example, field notes of events marked with codes in the 4000 and 6000 number spaces indicated that an instructional shift was made in response to a challenge encountered in the classroom, warranting the possibility that the event could be considered an episode relevant to the study and useful in data analysis. Other patterns were also derived to provide for defining further episodes involving instructional shifts, such as instructional moves employing multiple elements of instructional conversation or multiple modes of communication. Some of the more fundamental patterns generated from and used for data analysis are presented in Table 5-4. These patterns provided a means for recognizing episodes in which instructional shifts might be taking place. In addressing RQ1, the combinations of codes provide a

pathway to discussing what is observed by the teacher that might prompt such shifts, as well as what results from those shifts (e.g., a development in dialogue, further challenges in dialogic interaction).

Combinations of categories	Intended meanings
4000 → 1000 4000 → 6000	Possible instructional shift in response to some challenge
1000 → 2000 6000 → 2000	Possible instructional shift that evoked a response in interaction
5000 → 1000 5000 → 6000	Possible instructional shift in response to a perceived opportunity
6000 → 2100	Instructional shifts that elicit a development in dialogue
6000 → 5200	Instructional shifts that address rapport between teacher and student
4000 → 6000 → 4000	Instructional shifts in response to some challenge that still remain unresolved

Table 5-4 – non-exhaustive list of combinations of categories and their intended meanings used for data analysis.

To triangulate interview data with the data drawn from classroom observations, codes in the 7000 and 9000 number spaces provide insight as to the attitudes of classroom participants during classroom interaction, discussion of which is useful for addressing RQ2. Moreover, the codes in the 3000 number spaces in reference to those episodes provide useful discussion with respect to dynamics of social power within classroom interaction. Keeping this in mind, I combined my awareness of the perspectives of classroom participants with the coded field data to provide dimension and complexity to describing the particular instructional shifts that I observed.

It is hoped, then, that identifying patterns in this manner provides definition to the instructional shift in a way that promotes "the development toward systematization that the scientific concept must have" (Denzin, 1989, p. 38). Using these patterns upon initial organization of the data, I was able to identify at least 20 relevant episodes by the end of the data collection period with insights across observations and interviews that now needed to be grouped together in a coherent way that allowed for further data analysis.

<u>Data organization and second cycle coding</u>

One preliminary round of partially coding the field notes with the original coding scheme and a full first coding cycle of the field notes and the interview data identifies a sufficient number of episodes necessary for providing dimension to more formal categories and themes as well as organization of data into episodes for further analysis. In the post-data collection phase of data analysis, I used QDA Miner Lite, a qualitative data analysis program, to filter and organize the breadth of data into episodes. One of QDA Miner Lite's main functions is to group various forms of data into discrete "cases" to allow for distinct organization and analysis of similar data across cases. To provide as much as depth to a particular episode as possible, I defined a case as having at least some of the components listed in Table 5-5.

Data from participant observation	• Scan of the raw field notes describing the episode • Extended prose of rendered field notes describing the episode • Observation transcript of the episode • Photograph of board work, student work, or other aspect relevant to the episode
Data from interviews	• Interview transcript with the teacher regarding the episode • Interview transcript with a student or students regarding the episode
Data from personal reflections	• Prose of reflections of class sessions • Prose of analytical reflections during data analysis

Table 5-5 – data sources used to analyze episodes involving instructional shifts.

The grouping of data in this fashion aligns with the research inquiry's aspect of examining episodes of dialogic interaction involving perceived instructional shifts. As Flick (2018) notes, triangulation (in this case, that of data sources) provides observation of a particular phenomenon and its varying characteristics from multiple perspectives. To achieve this triangulation, I organized episodes in a manner that allows for easy retrieval of relevant data and analysis that can explore both the ontology and epistemology of all classroom participants during those episodes.

Undoubtedly, I set aside some of the collected data at this phase of the analytical process when they were not found to be relevant to any of the identified episodes. In particular, reflective memos written during and after data collection help to filter out segments of data, however interesting they may be, if I find that they cannot address the research inquiries in this study. In fact, as shown in Figure 5-2, not all of the interviews were coded with an episode reference, indicating that they did not provide substantive insight, directly or otherwise, to any of the episodes identified during the data collection

process. However, the second coding cycle employed in this iteration of data analysis is aimed at noticing patterns or similarities across episodes in order to generate formal categories that will inform the preliminary and formalized assertions to be made in this dissertation. In doing so, I was able to identify further episodes that echoed the categories and preliminary themes generated through this phase of the analytical process.

I generated the themes relevant to addressing the research questions through examining triangulated data within discrete episodes and across episodes. Using Adu's (2019) approach for generating categories and themes, I combined codes created and applied in the first coding cycle to identify overarching similarities across codes. Depending on the patterns identified this requires consolidation or division of preliminary categories as defined in Table 5-3. For example, the 5200 subcategory labeled "rapport" can be incorporated with codes 1109 (challenging but nonthreatening atmosphere), 2109 (student laughs), and 2208 (teacher tells a joke), even though those codes initially belonged to different preliminary categories. I interpreted instances where I found this this new combination in the data as evidence that the teacher appeared to be successful in connecting with his students through telling a joke, as evidenced by the laughter that he elicited.

One caveat for identifying episodes after the data collection period is that it is less feasible to pursue data triangulation through member checking and stimulated recall with classroom participants. As the teacher is a close contact of mine with whom I keep touch over social media and email, I am able to conduct informal member checks and ask questions I may have about insights that arise about his classes during data analysis.

125

However, the ability to recall details invariably diminishes as time passes, and what strikes me as important and relevant may have been disregarded by classroom participants, which also confounds their recall. Given this challenge, the episodes identified in and after the second coding cycle are primarily used to provide further evidence of patterns in discourse practices already identified earlier in the analytical process. I address this challenge by seeking out parallels and similarities across episodes, thus providing case triangulation that explains phenomena in one situation by examining themes generated in others (Flick, 2004).

One example of such parallels involves numerous instances where Mr. Nelson seeks out more explicit and detailed information during class. The dictogloss activity highlighted in Chapter 1 highlights Mr. Nelson's need to make clear that the students heard the word "the" by having them spell it out before validating their answer. This is apparent across a number of episodes, particularly in reading activities that have a multiple-choice response task. In such tasks, Mr. Nelson is observed as requiring students to read out the answer and not the corresponding letter of the answer (e.g., saying the answer represented by the letter choice "B," not just saying "B"). This focus on detail illuminates the implicit language policies he has established for this class, which informs the interactional resources that he encourages and discourages.

However, because these episodes were identified as such in the second coding cycle, the efficacy of stimulated recall after a prolonged period after data collection was bound to be limited. When I asked about this through direct messages online, Mr. Nelson was able to confirm my presumptions (i.e., he knew what his students meant, but wanted

to elicit a more specific answer to encourage more detailed expressions), but only in a general sense as he was less confident about his ability to recall the specific classes to which I was referring.

Incorporation of those episodes into the body of organized data, nonetheless, contributes to the emerging themes aimed at addressing the research questions, generating new codes and categories and thus requiring further coding cycles. This entails application of new codes drawn these developments onto previously identified episodes as well as further identification of new episodes reflecting the more developed understanding of instructional shifts. Formally, I noted two full iterations of the post-data collection coding process, though the incorporation of new episodes into the body of organized data was a continuous process throughout data analysis. At the point of theoretical saturation, which Bowen (2008) identifies as the point in which no new thematic developments emerge from data analysis, I identified a total of 26 episodes involving instructional shifts relating to classroom interaction.

Ultimately, the coding and organizing processes contribute to the generation of empirical indicators that connect preliminary presumptions to systematic understanding of theoretical concepts. The analytical methods described thus far, however, can be complemented by a deeper dive into the discourse moves of classroom interactants, methods for which I discuss in the next two subsections.

<u>Discourse analysis</u>

Broadly defined, discourse analysis is an exploration of discourse practices as means "not just to say things, but to do things" (Gee, 2010, p. ix). Johnstone (2002)

claims that discourse analysts are "trying to uncover the multiple reasons why the texts they study are the way they are and no other way" (p. 33). In the context of language learning, analysis of classroom interaction is useful in exploring the perceived effectiveness (or lack thereof) of the teacher's choices to say and do certain things as well as not to say or do other things. Given the assertion by Worgan and Moore (2010) emphasizing that speech is an act attempting to manipulate others (well-intentioned and otherwise), a scrutinizing examination of the teacher's discourse practices can be useful in understanding how the teacher facilitates language learning in the classroom.

Both Gee and Johnstone, while advancing in their own treatises particular methods and principles for understanding discourse, acknowledge a lack of consensus in the social sciences as to what constitutes methodology for discourse analysis. As Johnstone suggests, analysis of discourse practices can potentially serve many purposes and, thus, require perhaps as many ways to deconstruct texts and interpret meaning and actions. Gee's treatment of discourse analysis, however, advances a number of analytical "tools" relevant to a study about discourse practices and instructional shifts within a dynamic classroom environment. I identified such tools listed in Table 5-6 as useful for supporting and developing the themes generated in the coding process. I also provide brief summaries of Gee's explanation of his proposed tools in the following table.

Tool name	Summarized task
#2: The Fill In Tool	Identify unstated knowledge and assumptions carried in speech that listeners must be aware of in order to clearly understand the meaning
#3: The Making Strange Tool	Assume the role of an outsider listener and identify what aspects of speech might appear strange or unfamiliar
#7: The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool	Identify the intended action or objective the speaker aims to achieve through speech
#9: The Why This Way and Not That Way Tool	Examine why the speaker chose a particular way to make a certain speech act and why other possible ways were not undertaken
#15: The Activities Building Tool	Identify what activities the speaker aims to build or enact through speech acts
#16: The Identities Building Tool	Identify what identity the speaker aims to construct through speech acts
#23: The Situated Meaning Tool	Identify the specific meanings of speech acts are conveyed and/or understood specific to the context
#27: The Big "D" Discourse Tool	Examine how speech acts establish the social recognizability of the speaker

Table 5-6 – list of discourse analysis tools recommended by Gee (2011) and seen as relevant to this study.

These tasks form the foundational methodology for discourse analysis conducted for this study. While other questions may be posed of discourse moves presented in the transcriptions of classroom interaction and stimulated recall interviews, I build the interpretations generated through discourse analysis on the same foundational principles employed for illuminating the discourse practices undertaken and why such practices

change over the course of classroom interaction. I incorporate these interpretations into

the body of organized data as reflections through analytical memos supplementing those

reflection memos I have made during data collection and recorded in field notes.

To illustrate my methodology regarding discourse analysis, what follows is an

excerpt of one of the interviews I had with Mr. Nelson about one of the episodes

addressed in Chapter 6, as well as a brief analysis of the interview excerpt using some of

the tools described in Table 5-5. This part of the interview (emphasis added) relates to a

class activity in which Mr. Nelson monitors each of the groups, listening in and waiting

for times when students may benefit from his guidance.

> Teacher interview #01 - 06/14/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, I'm trying to pay attention to, um, you know, if I
> 2   hear a student who really wants to ask a certain question and can't
> 3   seem to get it into the right words, I'll jump in and help there.
> 4   Roehl: Right.
> 5   Mr. Nelson: Um, and I do it to make sure that they're on task and not
> 6   just chatting away in Japanese, too. There's that element as well. Um,
> 7   and if I pass a group where they're really like, **"[*ee, wakaranai, nan*
> 8   *darou?* – um, I don't know, what is it?],"** that's coming out…
> 9   Roehl: Sure.
> 10   Mr. Nelson: …um, I jump in on the group like that.
> 11   Roehl: What would you do in that case? You don't know the music,
> 12   so…
> 13   Mr. Nelson: Well, I'll ask for, okay, give me the two lines, like I did
> 14   with the, your first example, give me the lines, okay. Um, I might ask,
> 15   "What questions have you asked already?" Like, "What clues has he
> 16   given you?" And then there seems to be a glaring thing that might be a
> 17   good thing to ask, I'll ask. That's my strategy.

A surface reading of Mr. Nelson's narrative of when he provides help when

monitoring students offers some insight as to what he is looking for in determining when

students need his help (i.e., when a student appears to struggle with asking a certain

question in English). Through preliminary coding, I have coded such excerpts and

130

incorporated them into the appropriate episodic data. However, in examining Mr.

Nelson's remark in which he emulates what he perceives to be a typical Japanese student

(emphasized in bold), Gee's "Why This Way and Not That Way Tool" is useful for more

deeply unpacking his identity as a teacher familiar with the Japanese EFL context. Using

this tool, I am required to ask why the teacher decides to use some spoken Japanese to

illustrate when a student struggles with participating in the group activity rather than

simply state when students show that they do not know how to continue in the

interaction. The use of Japanese in this instance indicates that he is familiar, at least to a

useful extent, with utterances that indicate that his L1 Japanese students need help. Had

he used a more general utterance as an example, particular an example in English, I

would be less likely to interpret such an alternative discursive choice as evidence of a

teacher who is familiar in negotiating a classroom of Japanese learners of English.

Instead, I note a particular sensitivity that is developed through experience interacting

with Japanese learners of English that gives Mr. Nelson some extent of ability to navigate

a Japanese EFL classroom.

Using these insights drawn from discourse analysis, I incorporate new codes or

revise existing ones in order to locate similar instances that might contribute to

identification of new episodes for data analysis. This example led to the further

development of codes in the 1200 space, which dealt with modes of communication that

either the teacher or his students employed during classroom interaction. In particular,

revisions in the coding scheme led to a greater focus on instances of verbal L1 (i.e.,

instances where students used Japanese) that would indicate a lack of understanding that, in turn, might prompt Mr. Nelson to shift instructional practices.

<u>Critical discourse analysis</u>

Because language can be seen as an attempted act of, in Worgan and Moore's (2010) terms, "manipulation," critical discourse analysis (CDA) is useful to identify power relations that can facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of instructional shifts enacted through discourse. In conjunction with an analytical lens that examines bases of social power (French & Raven, 1959), I employ CDA to explore how classroom participants, and the teacher in particular, use language as a tool for establishing social power, whether through projection of their own power or perhaps empowerment in others. My employment of CDA then goes further to examine the effects of those projections of power in determining what aspects of the shared interactional space are expanded or closed off as a result.

Particularly within language education, critiques largely focus on L1 English speakers who benefit in terms of power and status afforded by institutions that privilege English-speaking ability in contexts where English is not the first or main language (Holliday, 2005). This circumstance raises questions as to how speakers of different languages and cultures can generate a meaningful and equitable dialogue in situations of asymmetric power dynamics. Specific to the Japanese EFL context, research has noted that the very nature of student-teacher interaction differs depending on whether the teacher is an L1 English or an L1 Japanese speaker (Harumi, 2011). This allows for the assertion that dialogic interaction is not simply a function of interactants sharing a

quantifiably sufficient amount of knowledge to have a productive dialogue, but also involves power relations that substantively affect such interactions. A discussion of the power relations involved in classroom interaction, and how such relations are represented, utilized, or even challenged to foster a more productive dialogue, is thus required.

Just as with conventional discourse analysis, there is no prescribed methodology for CDA (Lee & Otsuji, 2009). However, as with discourse analysis, there is at least a consensus as to fundamental principles for CDA, such as the assumption of inequality and social injustice in any discourse practice (van Dijk, 1993) as well as the use of language as an exercise of power. Taking such assumptions as axiomatic, this study looks at the body of data drawn from classroom interaction and stimulated recall interviews to examine the dimensions of the power inequities between teacher and student, the extent to which this study perceives those inequities, and how future researchers and practitioners can negotiate them. The goal in undertaking this task is to identify beliefs and perceptions, whether stated or implied in speech and action, that are consequential in affecting how meaning is co-constructed and negotiated in dialogue.

My approach to CDA follows Fairclough's (2012) objectives in that CDA "does not simply describe existing realities but also evaluates them, assesses the extent to which they match up to various values" (p. 9). Furthermore, I recognize through the use of CDA that the boundaries of what constitute socially acceptable practice are socially constructed and, through asymmetric power, primarily dictated by those of greater status and power. Taking the English-only policy set by the Practical English program (described in

Chapter 4) as an example, examining the teacher's discourse practices in enacting or deferring that policy can allow for a discussion into how that affects the students' contributions to the classroom interaction. In doing so, it becomes possible to define the extent of effectiveness of instructional shifts that promote dialogue if the teacher deems the sort of interaction that is within the students' capability within practices he finds acceptable.

It is important to note here that DA and CDA, at least when this study incorporates theories from Gee (2011) and Fairclough (2012), both overlap with and have important distinctions from each other. While both scholars on discourse share the same sociocultural and critical traditions, I perceive different intentions behind DA and CDA. Gee's Toolkit has a great deal to do with understanding the assumptions and identities interactants weave into their utterances, while CDA, at least with respect to discussion of the dialectical-relational approach, focuses on how analysis of discourse can correct social injustices or inequities. Even in a more poststructural interpretation, O'Regan and Betzel (2016) define CDA as a means to identify social phenomena that could be changed in order to mitigate or overcome challenges. In this respect, where one form of analysis examines *what is happening* and *what do speakers intend*, the analysis detailed in this subsection questions *what can be changed*, *why change is necessary* and *how it can be changed*.

The codes set aside for the bases of social power supplement CDA, providing preliminary indicators as to where analysis and critique of power relations can be most productive. Focusing on excerpts of classroom observations and of stimulated recall

interviews, I apply a series of critical questions to empirical indicators of attitudes and beliefs that convey or imply perceptions of classroom and program policies (i.e., rules, acceptable practices, commonly perceived customs). These questions, some of which I present in Table 5-7, differ depending on whether the interview respondent is the teacher or a student.

Questions regarding the teacher's attitudes and beliefs	- What rules or policies are suggested or implied in this speech act? - What methods are being employed to empower students or give students a voice? - What are the bounds of acceptable practice that the teacher wants to communicate to the student? - What elements of the teacher's discourse are aimed at equalizing power relations?
Questions regarding the student's attitudes and beliefs	- What rules or policies does the student perceive when expressing their beliefs about the class or the teacher? - What is the reason for silence in response to the teacher's speech act? - How does the student feel about (the teacher/the class/English) when expressing this belief? - Does the student's attitude or belief change after interacting with the teacher?

Table 5-7 – non-exhaustive list of questions used to conduct critical discourse analysis.

One of the questions about "equalizing power relations" is problematic without some degree of qualification, given the notion that no discourse, and thus no interactant, is innocent or value-neutral (Kumaravadivelu, 1999). Particularly given the power of the L1 English speaker in the language classroom, it is problematic to expect that the teacher has the capability to easily surrender privilege in favor of a truly equitable dialogue, if

such relinquishment is possible at all. What I am looking for in this question, however, is more along the lines of Denzin's (1989) *fiction of equality*, which he says should be sought by researchers interviewing respondents that may, because of asymmetric power relations, tend toward social desirability or may even become less open to contributing to dialogue. Given the communicative nature of this particular teacher's classroom, my approach to critical discourse analysis seeks out ways in which the teacher aims to close the power distance with students while also establishing the bounds of acceptable practices in classroom interaction. Just as with conventional discourse analysis, I append interpretations in CDA to the reflections of the relevant episodes in the body of organized data so that assertions can be further strengthened.

In the following excerpt (emphasis added), Mr. Nelson divides the PE1 class into pairs for a warm-up activity to talk about what they did during the previous weekend. In interaction in front of the whole class, Mr. Nelson asks students to report on their partner's weekend, particularly if it is interesting. The teacher asks for volunteers, which leads Toru to raise his hand and talk about what his partner did. After a brief summary, Mr. Nelson then delegates the task of choosing the next student to Toru.

PE1 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Okay, um, Toru, **you volunteered, so, whose, whose**
2   **weekend do you want to hear about?**
3   Toru: Um, girl?
4   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, anyone, anyone. Of course, a girl! **Don't be afraid**
5   **of girls!**
6   Students: [laughs]
7   Mr. Nelson: Scared. Maybe a little scared. Anyone.
8   Toru: Hiroko.

In this excerpt, I note two discursive moves here that can be critically unpacked for what dispositions Mr. Nelson expects of his students. In delegating the choice of the next student to a student, Mr. Nelson intends to reward the act of volunteering with the power to direct the classroom, albeit in a small way, thus commodifying initiative as a valued act within his classroom. The teacher's second discursive move, where he emphasizes that Toru should not "be afraid of girls," is more a joke than a real admonishment, as evidenced by the students who are laughing. In terms of policies and expectations within the classroom, I can interpret this in a number of ways. I can view this as an attempt to equalize power across gender by delegating the responsibility of contributing to discourse to both male and female students. However, this is also an exercise of coercive power in a very small and seemingly innocuous manner that Mr. Nelson uses to poke fun at Toru's hesitation or second-guessing.

Using both discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis, I was able to generate analytical memos containing such insights. This documentation allows for the addition, consolidation, and revision of codes as necessary to facilitate further coding cycles. As a result, both forms of discourse analysis contribute to the data analysis process an understanding of social power within the classroom, which I use to narrow the focus to expert and referent power. While the above exemplar illustrates some form of coercive power (i.e., an admonishment that is intended to be mild but also intended to project expectations in a forceful manner), it is also meant to establish rapport with the rest of the class, who laugh as a result of the exchange. Through examples such as these, I

interpret and notice Mr. Nelson's generation and exercise of referent power in the opportunities that he perceives in navigating classroom interaction.

This development of rapport, in conjunction with the mediation of interaction to mutually develop language knowledge with students, is a central theme among others discussed in the next two chapters. In terms of the material contributions to analysis, the use of CDA in this instance influenced the search for theories relevant to rapport-building (i.e., Webb & Barrett, 2014), and their subsequent inclusion in the coding scheme (i.e., the addition of codes in the 8100 space).

Generation of propositions

Based on Adu's (2019) methodology for second cycle coding, a consolidation of codes based on an abundance of patterns of data facilitates further coding cycles that, in turn, lead to further analysis and consolidation in perpetuity until theoretical saturation is satisfactorily perceived. At that point, I attempted to draft an assertions map that provided me with a brief summary of the potential propositions that I can advance based on the data. A reproduction of this assertions map is provided in Table 5-8 below. In the table below, I base the propositions that I will present in the next chapter in the evidentiary warrants that I locate in the various forms of data that I collected.

RQ1: What are the instructional shifts that an L1 English teacher in a Japanese university EFL program employs during interaction with and in relation to contributions by L1 Japanese learners in order to create spaces for dialogic interaction?

- Assertion: Shifts are dialogic between the teacher and students but involve non-verbal affordances as well as spoken dialogue
    - Language codes (1201-1212) + Dialogic development codes (2100)
    - Non-verbal codes (1221-1232) + Dialogic development codes (2100)

- Assertion: Shifts arise when teacher perceives a challenge or an opportunity in relation to classroom goals
    - Challenges
        - Challenges codes (4000) + Mediational strategies codes (1000)
        - Challenges codes (4000) + Shifts codes (6000)
    - Opportunities
        - Opportunities codes (5000) + Mediational strategies codes (1000)
        - Opportunities codes (5000) + Shifts codes (6000)

RQ2: What elements of dialogic classroom interaction inform those instructional shifts?

- Assertion: Teacher's act of inductive understanding of students' behavior and comprehension prompts shifts
    - Teacher perception codes (7100) + Mediational strategies codes (1000)
    - Teacher perception codes (7100) + Opportunities codes (5000)
    - Teacher perception codes (7100) + Shifts codes (6000)

- Assertion: Teacher engages in shifts to establish rapport with students
    - Some challenges codes (e.g., 4201, 4210) + Mediational strategies codes (1000) + Rapport codes (5200)
    - Some challenges codes (e.g., 4201, 4210) + Shifts codes (6000) + Rapport codes (5200)

- Assertion: Students' perception of teacher's status as teacher and English expert influences nature of interaction
    - Episode code (10900) involving a change in mediational strategy (1000) or shift (6000) + some student perceptions codes (e.g., 9101, 9102, 9105)
    - Episode code (10900) involving perception of teacher's expert power (3400) and mediational strategy (1000) or shift (6000) + some student perceptions codes (e.g., 9101, 9102, 9105)

Table 5-8 – assertions map combining codes into categories and themes.

I base the grouping of codes into meaningful assertions primarily on certain codes being in proximity of each other in field notes or in associated interview transcripts, providing for data and method triangulation at times in analysis when I decide to modify the coding scheme by addition of new codes. These patterns, once noticed to be frequent enough in keeping with Tracy's (2010) criterion for abundance, form the evidentiary warrants behind the assertions that I generate from analysis. I then group these assertions into meaningful themes relating to the phenomenon of the instructional shift, which I begin to explore in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS

In fostering a classroom environment that is conducive to and encouraging of engaged contribution to interaction from students, the teacher engages in a variety of instructional shifts that I will analyze and present in this chapter. Specifically, the instructional shifts I present here illustrate that the teacher (1) employs a variety of interactional resources, (2) takes advantage of opportunities manifest in students' interactional shifts, and (3) utilizes students' knowledge and sociocultural identities to navigate power dynamics and build on dialogue. Table 5-8 in the previous chapter details the varying evidentiary warrants that led to the groupings that formed the three themes that I will describe in each of the major sections in this chapter. Chapter 6 then closes with a presentation of preliminary propositions about the features of these shifts.

The research's interconnected and contributing themes holistically reflect and inform theory on Vygotskyan approaches to teaching and learning, as a case-driven presentation will aim to show in Chapter 7. That said, while a case-based analysis will allow for exploration of how the themes relate to each other, a thematically-driven approach to presenting findings can also be useful to explore how the themes relate to the research questions (Adu, 2019). Therefore, I find it necessary to first outline the main themes that I see apparent in the analysis across the episodes I have identified in this research. This chapter will focus on each of the three themes, provide examples apparent in episodes involving instructional shifts, and detail the significance of these themes to classroom language learning and discussions of dynamic pedagogies. Treatment of these

themes will allow the proposal of a series of preliminary propositions in the next chapter

so that further analysis can identify demonstrate the interconnectivity of the themes in

this chapter, thus highlighting the dimensions of the instructional shifts I have observed

for this research.

Figure 6-1 outlines the findings of the research and provides the layout for the

next two chapters. I have grouped codes into larger themes, which form the bulk of the

discussion in Chapter 6. A more synthesized treatment of the research will connect the

themes to more holistic theories of rapport and mediated agency, which will be discussed

in Chapter 7.
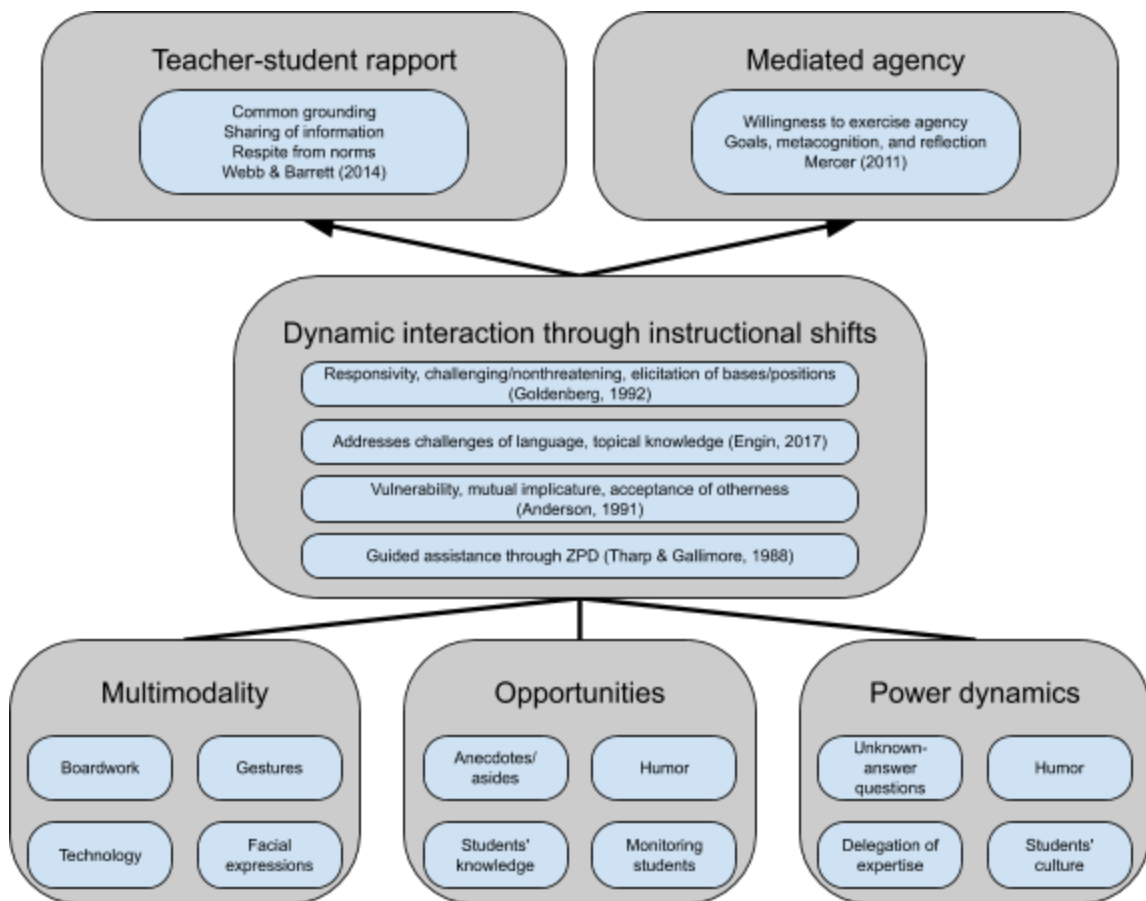
Figure 6-1 – visualization of the study's findings.

This visualization demonstrates how Mr. Nelson's discursive practices as demonstrated through instructional shifts contributes to dynamic classroom interaction, which in turn contributes to positive learning outcomes as realized through rapport and mediated agency. Before the farthest-reaching propositions that this study will advance can be explored, however, it is important to detail some of the instructional shifts from which those propositions originate.

Shifts through interactional resources

The classroom has a blackboard and an audio/video cabinet, while the students themselves bring electronic dictionaries (or have smartphones with bilingual dictionaries) and other resources to help them with their language learning. These elements provide *interaction affordances* that, as demonstrated in the following data excerpts in this subsection, help to facilitate communication between teacher and student, and at times between students themselves. As the first presented episode will show, the blackboard allows the teacher to draw illustrations that foster a mutual understanding about a particular concept, thus indicating that an environment with multiple affordances allowing for various interactional resources facilitates the ability of the teacher to shift instructional practices. Further examples in this section highlight how the teacher employs (and sometimes restricts) various resources in order to facilitate the sort of classroom interaction he is seeking.

Analysis of the data presented in this section contributes to a useful visualization provided in Figure 6-2 for how affordances and policies create the perceived, shared interactional space within which productive dialogue is likely to occur. As the collected

data indicates, the range of communication that interactants mutually consider appropriate or acceptable within the classroom is limited by what interactants perceive is within their abilities, while interactants further restrict modes of communication to align with the language ideologies they hold. In particular, there are a number of data excerpts where Mr. Nelson and even the students restrict L1 usage within the classroom, even if interactants mutually acknowledge L1 usage as a shared interactional resource. That said, what results from these filters is a space perceived by the teacher as defined by the interaction resources he shares with his students and by the rules and guidelines he sets within his classroom. Within this space, productive dialogue through dynamic interaction is more likely; outside of it, lack of alignment presents challenges to mutual understanding.
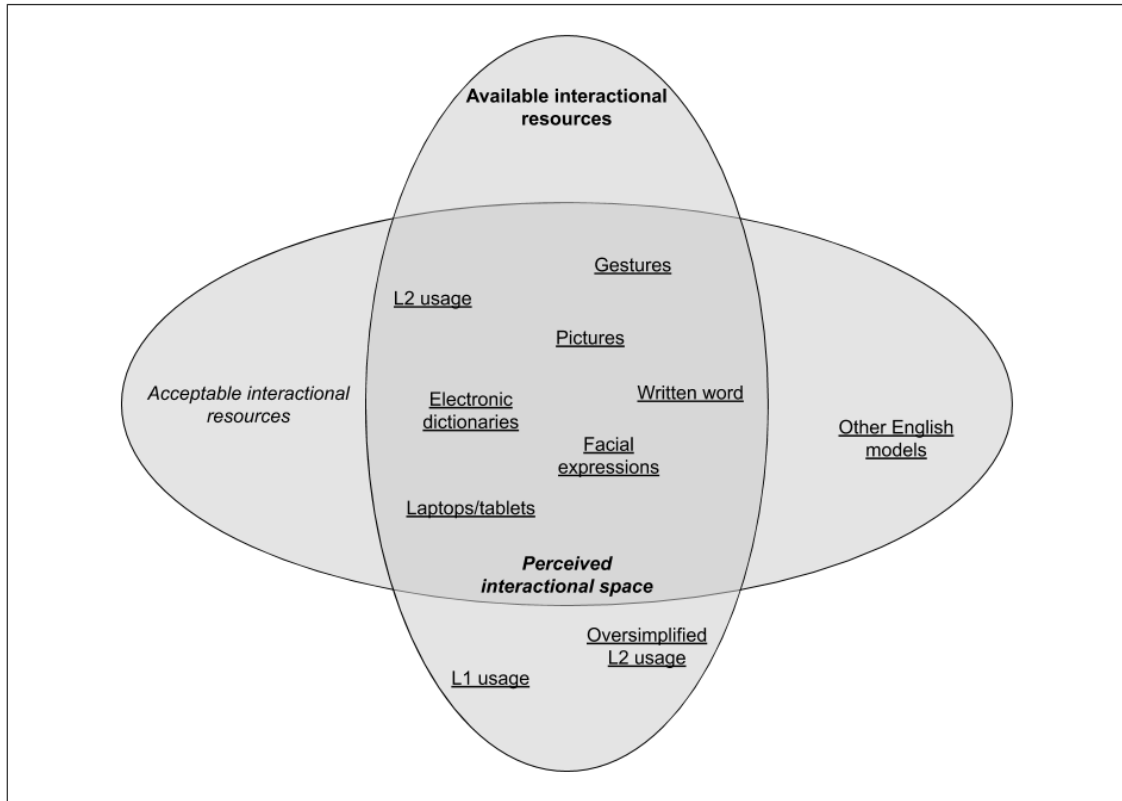
Figure 6-2 – proposed visualization for interactional space as perceived by the teacher observed in this study.

To a certain extent, both Mr. Nelson and his students share many aspects of this

visualization as discussion of interview excerpts presented in this chapter will point out.

Conversely, there are also differences between the perceptions of teacher and student,

which will present both challenges and opportunities for mediating meaning in classroom

interaction. Both alignment and divergence of perspectives will also naturally pose

implications for power dynamics between classroom interactants, complicating the

relationship between teacher and student. For now, what's asserted here is that the "size"

or range of the interactional space has an effect on the nature of the interaction in the

classroom, and the ability of the teacher to shift instructional and interactional practices

when necessary. Where challenges in interaction arise, interactants can move from one

set of interactional resources to another in order to approach the co-construction of meaning from different directions. Likewise, interaction may fail when interactants fail to employ or even perceive other resources that can facilitate understanding.

Table 6-1 provides the relevant analysis of the coded field notes to indicate the breadth of interactional resources within Mr. Nelson's instructional practices and shifts in such practices. Throughout the observation period, a total of 51 notable occurrences indicate Mr. Nelson's use of multiple interactional resources or expanded use of a particular interaction resource (e.g., the teacher rewords his question or says it again more slowly). I identify these instances through relevant codes when I perceive them in close proximity to each other (i.e., combinations of codes occur within the same interaction or episode). Of those occurrences, I classify 34 occurrences with codes indicating challenges or opportunities, the latter of which is discussed in more detail in the next subsection, as involving instructional shifts, as the teacher appears to recognize some development in classroom interaction and responds accordingly.

Description of occurrence	Representation by code spaces	Number of recognized occurrences in field notes
Change in interactional resources after challenges to dialogue are recognized	4000 + 1000	12
Expanded use of interactional resources after challenges to dialogue are recognized	4000 + (6101, 6111, 6112, or 6121)	12
Change in interactional resources to take advantage of opportunities for dialogue	5100 + 1000	4
Expanded use of interactional resources to take advantage of opportunities for dialogue	5100 + (6101, 6111, 6112, or 6121)	6
Other occurrences where the teacher employs multiple interactional resources	1000 or 6000 + most 2100 codes	17

Table 6-1 – number of episodes identified involving instructional shifts with respect to interactional resources.

This table appears to indicate that Mr. Nelson frequently employs various interactional resources while engaging students during class sessions and that such resources allow for a number of instructional shifts during times when the teacher employs multimodality. As a result, while Mr. Nelson employs multimodality in his instructional practices for various reasons, he often does so in order to shift instructional plans from what appears to be his originally intended direction for the class. There is the possibility that data collection or coding missed smaller or unseen developments in interaction where instructional shifts take place, but the takeaway from this table is the

notion of multimodality playing an important element of Mr. Nelson's instructional

practices. Because of this, Table 6-1 is more of a representation of my perception of a

pattern in Mr. Nelson's teaching than it is an objective data point. However, what this

representation should reflect is a notion that multimodality is a common occurrence in

interaction within Mr. Nelson's classroom. Furthermore, as developments arise that the

teacher judges to require shifts in interaction, here I argue that the accessibility of various

interactional resources makes it more conducive for Mr. Nelson to shift practices to more

effectively facilitate classroom dialogue and objectives.

Throughout the observation period, Mr. Nelson engages in various forms of

interaction, using verbal communication as a central mode of interaction while also

relying on written text, gestures, and body language to facilitate understanding among

students. Empirical research has noted the importance of non-verbal modes of

communication as both a means of supplementing spoken communication (e.g., Bao Ha

& Wanphet, 2016; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013) and a tool for co-construction of meaning

in itself (Arnold, 2012). To that end, I present a brief discussion of data excerpts relevant

to this point within this subsection to depict when the teacher perceives a need for

facilitation and provides non-verbal affordances accordingly.

<u>Board work and visuals</u>

It may be intuitive to assume that any teacher relies on their board work as much

as their discourse practices to conduct a class. Thus, the use of visuals on the blackboard

is the easiest entry point to understand how the range of interaction resources that

contribute to the teacher's capacity for instructional shifts transcends verbal

communication. For example, in the June 21st PE1 class, Mr. Nelson guides students on

the usage of a specific grammar structure used to talk about future plans (i.e., the English

grammar structure used in sentences such as "I will have done…" to express future

plans). Daigo, one of the PE1 students, has some challenges in expressing what he wants

to say in English. As a result, Mr. Nelson has to rely on the blackboard in order to build

on the classroom interaction.

PE1 observation #07 - 06/21/2019

1 Mr. Nelson: Um, Daigo?
2 Daigo: Uh, I will have eaten delicious meat.
3 Mr. Nelson: Delicious meats. For example? What do you most want
4 to eat?
5 Daigo: [inaudible]
6 Students: [laughs]
7 Mr. Nelson: Pardon?
8 Daigo: [inaudible]…[*eigo…* – English...]
9 Mr. Nelson: I don't know. [laughs]
10 Daigo: Expensive meat.
11 Mr. Nelson: Expensive meat. And why is it expensive? Like, what is
12 special about it? Why expensive?
13 Daigo: Um…rare. Rare.
14 Mr. Nelson: Rare.
15 Daigo: It has delicious…[*abura*]
16 Mr. Nelson: Ah, [*abura*], okay, yeah, fat.
17 Daigo: Fat.
18 Mr. Nelson: Yeah. We have, so, like…the, so, [*abura*], delicious…fat,
19 where you often describe, like, especially, like, Japanese beef
20 is…[writes on board] marbled. Marbled, meaning that the, kind of
21 hard to, you have a steak, and it's…[writes on board] marbled with
22 lots of…
23 Students: [*ee* – utterance for surprise]
24 Mr. Nelson: That's marbling. Like, an American steak is often, like,
25 just red with a little bit of fat. So, like, marbled means…so, rare and
26 marbled meat. When you say rare meat, do you mean, like, rare,
27 you're going to eat koala and panda and…?
28 Students: [laughs]
29 Mr. Nelson: "I will have eaten, uh, exotic meats, I will have gone to
30 Nagano and eaten kinako."
31 Students: [laughs]

There are two challenges identified in this brief excerpt from the observation data. First, and more obviously, Daigo appears to struggle with building on his initial answer, as indicated in line 8. At first, Mr. Nelson helps Daigo build on the dialogue through spoken means. In lines 3-4 and lines 11-12, he not only encourages the student to contribute more details, but frames his questioning in a way that provides Daigo with some guidance on what to say next. Specifically, Mr. Nelson asks a particular question (i.e., "And why is it expensive?") in different ways (i.e., "Like, what is special about it? Why expensive?") until Daigo is able to provide an answer, confirming to the teacher that he not only understands but also can develop the dialogue further.

Outside of the classroom and in an interaction between L1 English speakers, I might perceive such questioning (e.g., "For example? What do you most want to eat?") as out of place. Thinking about Gee's (2011) "The Why This Way and Not That Way Tool," I see that Mr. Nelson poses his follow-up questions in a way that gives students ample opportunity to continue to contribute to the classroom dialogue. Otherwise, the questions would be more pointed owing to assumptions that the student knows exactly what the teacher is asking of him. However, Mr. Nelson broadens the range of interactional resources for the students' benefit until they indicate they can ably contribute to the interaction.

The variety of resources within interaction is just as important as, if not more than, the depth of those resources. Daigo utters the Japanese word *abura* (or oil) in Japanese, which, by line 18, prompts Mr. Nelson to draw a picture (shown in Figure 6-3) on the board to clarify the presented meaning.
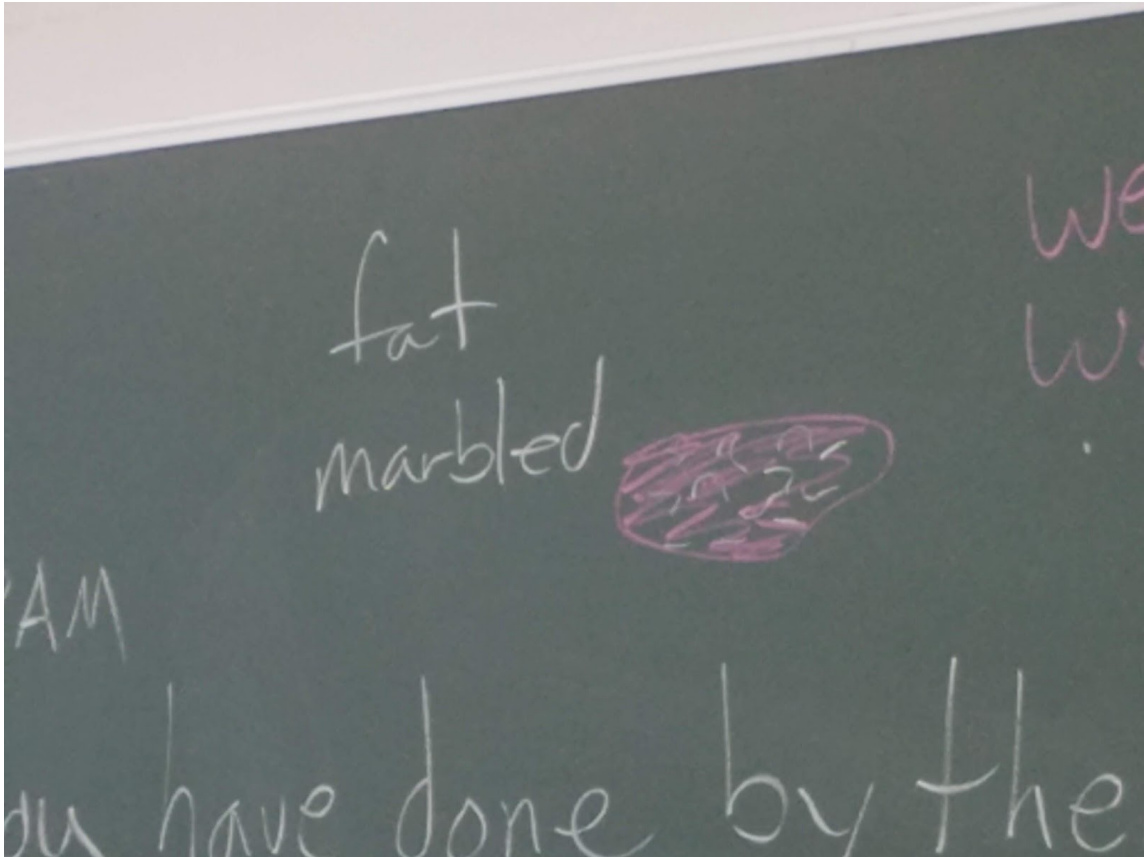
Figure 6-3 – Mr. Nelson's drawing of beef.

Responding to Daigo's contributions to the classroom interaction, Mr. Nelson

writes "fat" and "marbled" on the board as they are, from his perspective, key vocabulary

in this particular exchange. Next to the word "marbled" is a drawing of the inside of a

steak that still has a red and fatty center (hence the marbling).

Right away, the drawing of the picture elicits utterances of interest (or, at least,

understanding) from the students as Mr. Nelson provides unfamiliar language. His brief

explanation in conjunction with his board work, however, also solves another challenge.

When Daigo says the thing he will eat during the week is expensive because it is rare

(lines 10 and 13), it is apparent that Mr. Nelson is unsure precisely of what Daigo means

in using the word, which could be used to mean it is uncommon or, in the context of beef,

could be used to mean it is cooked just enough without losing its red color at the center. Given this uncertainty, Mr. Nelson uses the board to draw a picture of the marbling of fat to explain the word to the rest of the class but also to highlight (through the use of the red chalk) that rare in the given context could mean beef's red color, which could be achieved regardless of whether beef is expensive or not. As a result, Mr. Nelson gives Daigo a possible alternative word, "exotic," to describe a food that is uncommon or hard to find, such as the sort of expensive beef that is marbled with fat and is, thus, a relative rarity. This shift to provide guidance in the face of a challenge relating to language appears to draw interest and utterances of understanding from the students (lines 23, 28, and 31).

The action that Mr. Nelson takes to draw on the blackboard reflects an assumption echoed by Worgan and Moore (2010) that speech, specifically oral communication, is just one mode of communication from which listeners draw meaning. The written work on the blackboard possesses different temporal qualities than that which is spoken by the teacher as it remains on the board for everyone's reference while the meaning represented in the spoken word may be lost if it is not documented or heard (Johnstone, 2002). As Bao Ha and Wanphet (2016) assert, the aggregate of qualities when employing both modes of communication is aimed at facilitating successful learner outcomes from this small example of direct teaching.

Relevant to the discussion of affordances in the context of dialogic interaction is the need for mutual awareness of the employment of interaction resources, both on the part of the interactant who uses them and the interactant who is expected to perceive them. Strictly within one mode of communication, for example, Hulstijn et al.'s (1996)

research of vocabulary glosses in reading passages emphasized the importance of language learners being aware of the mediation of meaning as a prerequisite to the effectiveness of that mediation. In that study, the authors asserted that, in terms of scaffolding language learners' understanding, explicit help with language (i.e., vocabulary glosses at the margins of texts) proved more effective than guidance imbedded in the text by way of noun phrases next to lexis.

This provides the implication that mediational strategies that the intended recipient overlooks end up not providing any mediation to begin with. As highlighted in this subsection, the variety of mediational resources that teacher and student both employ can contribute to the likelihood of mutual understanding. However, this is only true to the extent that there is mutual awareness and acknowledgment among interactants of the potential of such resources to facilitate co-construction of meaning.

Thus, it is important to establish the dimensions of the interactional resources that both Mr. Nelson and his students mutually acknowledge. In interviews with a number of his students, I asked what Mr. Nelson does if they do not understand something about the class or what he says. Tomoko, a PE1 student who, in my judgment, is more reserved than many of her other classmates, seems to be well-aware of at least some of the mediational strategies that Mr. Nelson employs during challenging moments in the classroom.

Student interview #05 - 06/26/2019
1   Roehl: Now you said he is a kind teacher. Why do you know that?
2   Why do you think so?
3   Tomoko: He, he, he ask, ask, um, he asks us many thing, if we can't
4   speak well, so, I think he is kind.
5   Roehl: [*dekireba* – if you can], can you give me an example?

153

6   Tomoko: Uh, if, if I, if we can't, we can't answer correct, correct
7   answer, but, um, he, he give hints.
8   Roehl: Really? Um, [*dekireba*], what kind of hints?
9   Tomoko: In reading textbook, uh, [laughs] reading textbook, I,
10   vocabulary test…we, if we mistake the answer, but he, he tells, he
11   told us the image of word in blackboard, so, I can understand, uh…
12   Roehl: I see, I see. That's good. Now, you said he draws a picture on
13   the board? Um, what other kinds of hints, what other things does he
14   do? So, he draws, what else?
15   Tomoko: Draws and [laughs] he, uh, uh, he, he gave us many, a lot of
16   information about, about, uh, English word.
17   Roehl: Okay. Mm-hmm. So, maybe he'll explain it.
18   Tomoko: Yes.

Tomoko calls the help that Mr. Nelson gives in this respect "hints," which also includes giving abundant information about new or unfamiliar words. The use of the blackboard is, at times, an important component of his instructional practices, particularly when there is awareness of a linguistic challenge as Tomoko mentioned above. However, it is an important mediational resource only because the students are aware of and accustomed to its usage.

The general notion of hints or, in a language teacher's terminology, scaffolding to provide guided assistance that allows students to engage with the language learning process provided me with the idea that board work belongs to a larger category of shifts through various interactional resources. Multimodality has a large contributing role as I initially predicted through the original coding scheme I provided in Table 5-2. However, I felt it was necessary to detail the specific interactional resources Mr. Nelson employs while in dialogue with students. Using the understanding established in interviews with students that Mr. Nelson is helpful, I looked at how students describes Mr. Nelson's instructional practices. PE2 student Sakiko provides an insight that expands on the

teacher's use of interactional resources in a manner that addresses but also transcends multimodality.

> Student interview #15 - 07/17/2019
> 1   Sakiko: Yes, he's very help, helpful. And very interesting.
> 2   Roehl: Mm-hmm. Why do you say interesting?
> 3   Sakiko: Body language. He does body language many time. And, uh,
> 4   uh, he kidding [*kana* - essentially I suppose]. Joke.

While the original coding scheme addresses the teacher's use of gestures in instructional shifts, my interviews with Sakiko and other students remind me to expand on the greater array of physicality that an interactant may employ to engage in communication. Six students mention Mr. Nelson's use of gestures, while four students mention his use of facial expressions to complement what Sakiko identifies as his use of body language. As predicted at the outset, I found numerous instances of the teacher's use of pragmatic resources in his instructional practices. As such, the next subsection discusses the most significant of these pragmatic resources.

That said, I can attribute the teacher's (and, indeed, any interactant's) contributions to dialogue not only to the breadth of interactional resources but the depth of such. Just as Sakiko did, five other students identify the teacher as being funny or telling jokes during class. The contemporary literature has associated humor with mitigating face-threatening acts (Peng et al., 2014) and motivating students during classroom activity (Petraki & Nguyen, 2016), but it has not been strongly connected, if connected at all, with building dialogic interaction. However, if it is part of the teacher's verbal discourse as students have identified, then I felt that I should include it in my observational and analytical lenses. As a result, it became important to have a more sensitized understanding of

155

interactional resources that seeks out not just multimodality but also the various means afforded by the classroom environments for interactants to contribute to dialogue.

As a result, Figure 6-2 illustrates those particular resources the teacher perceives are useful to eliciting students' contributions to classroom interaction. I identify these different resources through the creation of codes in the 1200 and 1300 spaces outlined in Appendix A. With respect to the student interviews mentioned above, I distinguish pragmatic resources in the expanded coding scheme through code 1221 (gestures), code 1231 (facial expressions), and code 1232 ([other] body language). In examining these student interviews and observational data, I found a number of modes of communication obvious and thus predicted Mr. Nelson's use of such resources, which included code 1211 (written L2) and code 1241 (pictures). Again, I began to see other interactional resources that were themselves not its own mode of communication in the strictest sense, but contributing to interactional shifts nonetheless. I expanded the coding scheme with, among other codes, code 1304 (hints), code 1311 (uses humor), and code 1261 (me as affordance), as I noticed them in abundance within shifts and in the classroom dialogue overall.

Furthermore, codes in the 2100 space identify those resources that students employ and that the teacher allows, either explicitly or otherwise, in classroom dialogue. Many of these codes parallel codes that I used for the teacher's practices, such as code 2110 (student make a gesture), except that they refer to how a student may negotiate dialogue through their own interactional shifts, thus prompting the teacher to engage in an instructional shift. Code 2102 (student checks w/ classmate) and code 2103 (student

156

checks phone/dictionary) highlight the interactional strategies and resources that the classroom environment affords to students, indicating the greater array of interactional resources available to interactants in a physical classroom space.

As with that of board work as detailed in this subsection, I outline the most prominent employment of these interactional resources in the next subsections.

<u>Pragmatic resources</u>

In many of these episodes, it is important to note that, when Mr. Nelson is not eliciting output from students, he seldom determines in an overt way the extent to which he and his students are in alignment on the meaning that is co-constructed in class, at least not through eliciting students' verbalization of their declarative knowledge. Put another way, Mr. Nelson, with few exceptions, seldom talks students through a task in extensive fashion and asks them to verbally report what they know about the task in metacognitive terms. However, if interaction consists of more than simply verbal utterances, then I also take into account the nonverbal resources mutually understood between classroom interactants which, in tandem with spoken dialogue, contribute to classroom interaction. Another nonverbal resource commonly acknowledged by both teacher and student to facilitate interaction and understanding within the classroom is the use of facial expressions, as I discuss with Mr. Nelson in one of our interviews.

> Teacher interview #06 - 07/26/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: [W]hen I say I go into groups to see if they've really got
> 2   it, or I'll just quietly ask, um, "How's it going? Do you need any help?
> 3   What's going on?" And…I was going to say most common reaction is
> 4   usually they pause, which is good, that means they're actually
> 5   thinking about it. They pause, and I'll get an, "Oh, no, we're okay," or
> 6   a shake of the head. Or, I'll get a question.
> 7   Roehl: Yes.

8　Mr. Nelson: And, um, and, again, if I see something weird on the
9　paper, I'll be, like, "Oh, wait a second, this is not exactly what it is.
10　And here, we do this." And I'll write on their paper. And I tend, I
11　probably ask…um, I ask the group generally, but I'm usually looking
12　at, usually looking at the student that I think might have not
13　understood the initial explanation.
14　Roehl: Sure.
15　Mr. Nelson: Um, in face, he would be like, a confident nod or face,
16　"Okay, I got it," or, like, because their partner fills them in, or
17　whatever. Or maybe they had it from the beginning, and I just misread
18　them at the outset. Then I take them at their word.
19　Roehl: Well, by that, you say a confident nod.
20　Mr. Nelson: Yeah.
21　Roehl: Just a nod.
22　Mr. Nelson: Yeah, the, uh, the, and they'll usually say, "Okay." Nod,
23　and "okay." It's the most common verbal response to, um, uh, if I ask
24　them, "Is everything alright? Do you need any extra help?"

In this interview excerpt, Mr. Nelson in lines 15 through 17 represents the act of

reading students' body language as a source of useful contextual cues, at least in his

perception, to determine the extent to which his students follow along with the intended

direction of the class. To the teacher, a nod or a look of confidence (referenced in lines

19-20) is, at times, enough to ensure the extent to which a student about whom he might

be concerned is on task and following along without significant problems. At other times,

the act of students laughing at Mr. Nelson's jokes is also a good indicator, at least to Mr.

Nelson, that they understand what he says.

Both respects are true in the interaction between the teacher and Daigo; as Mr.

Nelson teaches the word "exotic," I can see Daigo nod to suggest understanding, while

the teacher's extensions into jokes elicit laughter from the entire class. From my

perspective, the instances of students' laughter in PE1 observation #07 signal the

likelihood that the students are able to follow Mr. Nelson's utterances. Whether they truly

understand or are merely familiar with their teacher's instructional practices to the extent

that they know when to laugh or otherwise react positively, what Mr. Nelson says during

my July 26 interview indicates that he actively listens to and focuses on his students'

responses and makes decisions about his discourse accordingly.

The extent to which Mr. Nelson takes or should take the meaning expressed in his

students' body language at face value is a question that requires further exploration, as

Denzin (1989) notes in his treatment of interview research that attitudinal responses are

illuminating but in and of themselves insufficient to a full understanding of one's

knowledge. Wortham et al.'s (2011) research also aligns with this need for critically

unpacking discrete utterances or actions, considering how interactants may shift in and

out of alignment with each other when responding to interactional moves. In fact, I will

present a more thorough treatment of power relations with respect to its influence on

interaction later in this chapter. For now, what is important here is that Mr. Nelson makes

judgments regarding the effectiveness of his instructional practices by, among other

things, reading his students and inductively interpreting what their body language is

intended to convey about their disposition in class.

The practice of using gestures is another use of resources similar to that for facial

expressions. The observation excerpt provided below contextualizes an episode in which

students are working on PowerPoint presentations they are scheduled to give to students

in another Practical English class. Earlier in the week, Mr. Nelson's sections shared class

time with sections belonging to another English teacher. Mr. Nelson's students had played

the role of the audience for the other teacher's students as they gave presentations about

sightseeing in Japan. In turn, Mr. Nelson's students were scheduled to give a presentation about Japanese music to those students in a future class. The interaction in which the shift in the next excerpt takes place relates to reflections on the presentations they had seen. In this excerpt, Mr. Nelson attempts to elicit a potential critique of presentations given by groups of students, in which one student controls what PowerPoint slide is shown while another student speaks.

> PE1 observation #11 - 06/28/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: One of the most important parts that students often don't
> 2   do enough of is the practice. Like, if, if, uh, for example, um, did you
> 3   notice in, there was often one type of problem in [other teacher's]
> 4   class, the PowerPoint? Do you notice?
> 5   [silence; Koki makes gesture: tapping desk with finger]
> 6   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, what was, what was happening?
> 7   Koki: [*e?* – indication of surprise]
> 8   Mr. Nelson: What was the problem?
> 9   Koki: Timing?
> 10 Mr. Nelson: Timing. Yeah, timing was a problem. The person
> 11 changing the slide, they were always mismatching. That's something
> 12 you want to practice so it doesn't happen, so, you know what slide
> 13 you should be on. I'm glad I wasn't the only one who noticed.

When Mr. Nelson raises the class' awareness of a concern he noticed in the other students' presentations, Koki gestures by tapping his desk with the finger as if to press a key on a keyboard (line 5). Mr. Nelson notices this, believing that Koki understands his question and has an answer. Here, the teacher demonstrates a responsivity to his students' actions as well as utterances. When Mr. Nelson allows the interaction to be built on Koki's tapping gesture, he signals to the rest of the class that verbal utterances can be complemented, if not replaced altogether, with pragmatic and other resources in order to contribute to interaction. While Chapter 4 establishes a degree of prescriptiveness Mr.

Nelson has about the use of English in the classroom, the responsivity he shows in this interaction communicates to Koki and to the rest of the class that non-verbal means of communication are useful for dialogue, at least in this case.

He asks Koki in line 6, "What was happening?" This elicits a bit of surprise from Koki – the "e?" is an interjection that a Japanese speaker makes when they are surprised or confused. Aware of the possibility that Koki was confused, Mr. Nelson quickly changes the question to "What was the problem?" This rewording proves more effective, and Koki answers about "timing," referring to the need for the slide changes to be in sync with the relevant parts of the speech.

Mr. Nelson's change of question from "What was happening?" to "What was the problem?" indicates an assumption the teacher holds at the outset of the interaction and is broken by the end of the interaction. I was able to ask Koki about the exchange shortly after that.

PE1 observation #11 - 06/28/2019
1   Roehl: I have a question for you. So, they were talking about timing
2   of the PowerPoint, so the first thing he asks you, "What is
3   happening?" Then, the second time, he says, "What is the problem?"
4   So, [*ano toki* – in that time], your image was the, is the meaning
5   different?
6   Koki: Yeah. Uh, same.
7   Roehl: The same? Mm-hmm.
8   Koki: It's difficult to tell.
9   Roehl: Ah, I see. Well, the first question was "What is happening?"
10 What's your image of…?
11 Koki: [*chotto* – a little], a little different.
12 Roehl: A little different? Uh, [*dou chigaimasu ka* – how is it
13 different]?
14 Koki: "Happening" is…moments?
15 Roehl: Uh-huh.
16 Koki: [*isshun* – for a moment]
17 Roehl: Okay. Oh, okay. At one time.
18 Koki: One time. "Problem" is…

161

19 Roehl: It's, like, over…
20 Koki: Over time.

In this case, Mr. Nelson's assumption was that the two words, "happening" and "problem," are interchangeable. However, the word "happening" is a loanword in Japanese and, to Koki, means something different in substance from the meaning as understood by Koki for the word "problem." This highlights the dimensions of the linguistic challenge that is overcome when Mr. Nelson rewords the question in a way that Koki then understands.

Other challenges arising from differences in knowledge about language take the form of explaining nuances or detailed actions. In one class session, Mr. Nelson plan is to teach the students about the English words for flavors and textures of particular foods. At the outset, the more familiar words (e.g., "spicy" and "sweet") come easy to the students, but as the teacher tries to build interaction around arguably less commonly used concepts, the students become more silent and unresponsive. As the teacher tries to build an exchange around the word "umami," used in English and borrowed from Japanese, he seems to have difficulty encouraging the students to build on a topic that he feels would have been interesting to his students, and ends up lecturing more than having a more engaged exchange with the students.

PE2 observation #08 - 06/24/2019

1 Mr. Nelson: Got the major ones. Ah, no, there's one. So, there's
2 actually a Japanese word to describe flavor that has become used all
3 around the world in cooking. In America, you can use this word with
4 the chefs. In France, you can use this word with the chefs. Japanese
5 word to describe food. Kanako?
6 Kanako: [silence] Umami.
7 Mr. Nelson: Yeah, umami. Umami is a Japanese word that is known
8 outside of Japan now. Umami to describe food. Um, the first time, the
9 first time I've heard this word, I was actually in America. Not the first

162

10   time I heard this word. First time I heard this word outside of Japan, I
11   was back in America in a deli, and the, the shopkeeper was describing
12   cheese. I was looking at these different cheeses, and he started talking
13   about the umami of the cheeses. And I was saying, "Why do you
14   know that word?" And, "Oh, it's, everyone uses umami. It's a
15   Japanese word that means…" The closest thing, um, I think…[writes
16   on board] it's, in English, it's savory. And, um…[writes on board] the
17   flavor has a kind of deepness, like, full, deep, or we'd say depth of
18   flavor. Okay.

There is a pronounced silence after Mr. Nelson counts on Kanako to help him with the answer he is looking for. As the students remain unresponsive, he builds an extended monologue, searching for the right words that might elicit some nodding of heads or utterances indicating interest, but the added input yields little success. Absent his perception of confirmation that students are following him as he provides more information, he seems compelled to move on to other concepts with which he might find greater alignment with his students.

This highlights the importance of the shared space where there are multiple and varied, but also mutually understood and accepted interaction affordances. Perhaps the use of other modes of communication such as pictures or L1 usage would prompt a greater alignment and engagement between the teacher and his students. In this case, however, Mr. Nelson perceives that the best way to facilitate understanding and interest is by sharing an anecdote about the use of the word "umami" in the United States. This compels him to speak at length while waiting for some indication that students are interested or that students, at minimum, understand what he is saying. In the end, students remain silent and visual cues that indicate any response from the students remain few, prompting the teacher to move on.

In the face of this challenge, Mr. Nelson resorts to using facial expressions to explain differences in the target vocabulary. In one instance, when exploring the difference between "sour" and "tart," he makes two distinct facial expressions to compare the intensity of lemons, which are particularly sour and might make one pucker their lips uncomfortably, to that of a food that is tart, which he represents as less intense and more pleasant through the facial reaction he makes. As he gives more contextual cues, more students nod their heads and make verbal utterances indicating their understanding, at least to a greater extent than they did during Mr. Nelson's prolonged speech, which employed fewer interactional resources from which students could draw meaning.

When the lesson shifts to English words that describe texture, Mr. Nelson combines the use of facial expressions to describe "chewy" with his board work to explain the texture of kon'nyaku, an edible plant-based food common in Japanese culture. In addition, Mr. Nelson provides two distinct analogies to describe kon'nyaku in a way that appears easy for the students to understand, judging from their responses.

PE2 observation #08 - 06/24/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: The other food is the opposite. It's not [*neba neba –*
2   sticky], it's definitely more, more firm. Not hard, but firm.
3   Students: [silence]
4   Mr. Nelson: It's…about the…the color of Takeru's shirt. Hm?
5   Keisuke: [*kon'nyaku*]?
6   Mr. Nelson: Kon'nyaku! Yes! Ooh, no, thank you, I don't like
7   kon'nyaku because…can you think of a word for the texture of
8   kon'nyaku?
9   Keisuke: [*zeri –* jelly]?
10   Mr. Nelson: Ah, jelly. Um…[writes on board] "gelatinous."
11   Gelatinous, you know the...[nom nom sound], kind of…but,
12   gelatinous is a little bit softer, I think. kon'nyaku is a little more firm.
13   And you have to [facial expression: chewing]…what is this action
14   called? You must…your food.
15   Takeru: Bite?

16   Mr. Nelson: Bite after, you bite it, and then you, so, biting is…[facial
17   expression: biting], that. And then you [facial expression: chewing]…
18   Risako: Chew? Chew?
19   Mr. Nelson: Chew! Yeah, like…[facial expression: chewing] and you
20   can take the word "chew" and add what? Add a "y" and it becomes
21   "chewy," you have chewy food. I think…and for me, I take it a step
22   further. I think…[writes on board] kon'nyaku is rubbery. Rubbery.
22   I'm, it's like I'm eating a bicycle tire. [facial expression: biting] [nom
23   nom sound]
24   Students: [laughs]
25   Mr. Nelson: No, thank you, I don't want to eat bicycle tire.

First, Mr. Nelson presents the food he tries to elicit as the opposite of another

Japanese food, natto, which is sticky and is not as firm as kon'nyaku (lines 1-2). Here, the

teacher assumes that posing the two pieces of food as opposites, as well as using two

Japanese foods as examples, will allow him to elicit the correct answer from his students.

However, he appears to interpret the lack of a response from students in line 3 as

indication that they do not understand what he is asking them to say, prompting a shift to

other cues that might provide a more positive result. He provides a hint in line 4 by

pointing to Takeru's t-shirt, which happens to be gray, the same color as kon'nyaku. To

the teacher, this is more successful, as Keisuke responds with the food he is trying to

elicit.

The use of facial expressions (e.g., lines 13 and 17) in this part of the class is

apparently helpful, as evidenced by the responses that Mr. Nelson elicits from Takeru and

Risako (lines 15 and 18, respectively). Moreover, Mr. Nelson perceives other means to

explain kon'nyaku in a useful manner. If the demonstration of the word "chewy" through

facial expressions is insufficient, likening the texture of kon'nyaku to that of a bicycle tire

(line 23) may prove more effective, judging from the students' laughter that Mr. Nelson

elicits from making the comparison.

Tomoko, in her interview, said that the teacher provides a lot of information to

explain lexicon, and that is apparent in Mr. Nelson's use of analogies in the above

excerpt. In a number of other interviews, students mention Mr. Nelson's use of non-verbal

resources to scaffold meaning. When talking about how Mr. Nelson teaches, Sena

particularly mentions teaching of the word "tart," talking about facial expressions in

conjunction with other means of understanding such as examples and explanations.

Student interview #06 - 06/26/2019

1   Roehl: So, you said you understand "tart" because of [Mr. Nelson],
2   and it's only because of his explanation.
3   Sena: Yes.
4   Roehl: Did he do anything in class to make it easy to understand
5   besides using words?
6   Sena: He explained this word by…giving example.
7   Roehl: Mm.
8   Sena: For example, cranberry, [*aserora* – acerola cherry].
9   Roehl: Okay.
10 Sena: And his facial expression is very easy understand.
11 Roehl: I see. I see. Um, why is it easy to understand?
12 Sena: [laughs] His facial expression is very, um, too, too much.

As indicated in line 10, Sena draws meaning from Mr. Nelson's facial expressions.

However, other cues such as examples like in line 8 (i.e., cranberries and acerola cherries

as examples of tart fruits) further cement Sena's understanding of the word. Just as Bao

Ha and Wanphet (2016) emphasize in their treatment of written instructions, multiple

modes of communication work in tandem to reinforce meaning to an extent that one

mode alone (e.g., either spoken language or facial expressions exclusively) may not.

Where Aronin and Singleton (2012) assert that multilingualism is a natural state, the

above excerpt and similar stated perspectives by students reify that multimodality is similarly a welcome disposition in interaction with others.

L1 usage

In those interviews, however, the students make little mention of Japanese usage on Mr. Nelson's part. In fact, in a number of interviews, students express an implied understanding within the class that the teacher discourages Japanese usage over English usage. There are some exceptions to this unstated policy – students make small talk in Japanese before class and in between class activities, for example. In one class session, Mr. Nelson also presented one information gap activity that required students to explain differences in Japanese phrases in English; in explaining the activity, the teacher presents himself as begrudgingly allowing the use of Japanese when necessary. Otherwise, Mr. Nelson almost never employs the use of Japanese in his own teaching practices. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the teacher makes it clear in one of our interviews that he discourages the use of Japanese as a resource on which his students can rely on during classroom discourse.

Returning to the visualization provided in Figure 6-2, Mr. Nelson's perception of what interactional resources to employ is informed by different rationales. First, determining what resources can be used stems from the environment in which students might use "Practical English." Lines 4-5 establish the perceived target situation that students would use English in a place such as New Zealand or South Africa. It is understood through this context that the teacher perceives that the students are capable of speaking in Japanese but the person they are speaking to are not, meaning that there is no

mutual availability of Japanese as an interactional resource. Students may then resort to using electronic dictionaries (lines 8-12), but such use in a real-time interaction is, in Mr. Nelson's view, "annoying." In this case, students may have dictionaries available to them, but the teacher represents the notion that there is a lack of mutual acceptance about their usage in at least some situations (lines 11-12).

From the outset, Mr. Nelson provides the bounds for an approach to task-based language teaching that discourages certain available resources within classroom activities in favor of other affordances or strategies that help to mediate meaning (e.g., description of objects by shape or function, as expressed in lines 19-20). Despite the contemporary literature moving toward the use of students' L1 to supplement the classroom's meaning-making processes and provide agency to language learners (Choi & Leung, 2017; Darmi et al., 2018), Mr. Nelson asserts that other mediational strategies will prove useful in situations where some resources may be unacceptable. In doing so, Mr. Nelson expresses a desire to create a classroom environment where students can rely on whatever interactional resources are available to them, provided that students employ those resources before those resources he considers less acceptable in the world that use "practical English."

Building on this, the classroom not only has policies that restrict L1 usage, but also L2 usage in the perceived sense that interaction may be too simplified. Chapter 5 mentions Mr. Nelson's "question of the day" activity, where he writes a question on the board and students have to ask the question to their classmates and line up at the front of the room according to a particular order. This allows the teacher to divide students into

pairs or groups in a somewhat random manner. In the July 19th PE1 class, close to the end of the semester, Mr. Nelson's question of the day is "Where will you go for summer vacation?" In this activity, he asks students to line up in terms of how far away from the university campus they are going for the summer. Before he lets the students speak with each other and line up in front of the room, he has some instructions about what language to use.

PE1 observation #20 - 07/19/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: So, close to [university], far away from [university]. And
2   if you're not sure, you're thinking, "Eh, Gunma and Hamamatsu,
3   which is…?" If you're not sure, about, about is okay. Like, Nagano
4   versus Tochigi, which is farther…? You're not sure, about. Alright?
5   Last one, so, don't be lazy and use Japanese or don't be lazy and just
6   be, like, "Hi, I'm Nagano, Nagano, Nagano here." Don't do that.
7   Stand up, go.

Lines 5-7 stand out for the teacher's "don't be lazy" remarks, in which laziness is characterized as using Japanese or using simple English that students might use to get through the activity as quickly as possible without any deeper interaction. The implication here is that the students in class should participate in the speaking activity by using full sentences in English, or at least a degree of English that resembles small talk that has some extent of accuracy and completeness. The students acknowledge and validate this belief, as evidenced in a number of interviews with students, particular one with two PE2 students early in the observation period. Their perspectives about how they should use English in class reflects Mr. Nelson's sentiment about oversimplified English.

Student interview #02 - 06/10/2019

1   Keisuke: I think I should speak more accurate, accurately.
2   Roehl: Ah. If Mr. Nelson is here, be more accurate?
3   Keisuke and Nanako: [laughs]

4   Nanako: If I ask Mr. Nelson someone, something, I speak more
5   accurately. But in, in between friends, I speak more casual.

Both students agree with each other that there is a requirement for students, when using English, to communicate in a manner that is not too casual or too simplified. These perspectives highlight what interactional resources are available but not acceptable by the teacher. In one particular episode involving an instructional shift, Mr. Nelson seems to reinforce this belief when checking answers from a reading exercise with his PE2 students. The teacher typically sets aside Wednesday PE classes for reading activities, which involve the use of a textbook with a reading passage and a number of associated tasks, including a exercise asking students to match vocabulary words with their English definitions. In the next excerpt of the July 7th PE2 class, Mr. Nelson asks Kenta to match the first lexis with the correct meaning. Here, the teacher responds to Kenta's answer, guiding him to what should be the "appropriate" way to answer.

PE2 observation #11 - 07/03/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Okay. Let's go over…okay, number one. Um, so, the first
2   vocabulary word is "domesticated." Um, Kenta, what does
3   "domesticated" mean? "Sugar cane was…"
4   Kenta: Two.
5   Mr. Nelson: Sugar cane was...two. I don't understand. Sugar cane
6   was…two. [silence] Sugar cane was two? Two?
7   Kenta: Ah. "…cultivated in order to eat it."
8   Mr. Nelson: Ah, I see! Okay! I didn't understand you. "…cultivated
9   in order to eat it." Uh, yeah, "domesticated" is, um, basically,
10   modified or brought about to, uh, be grown or made or used by
11   others. So, taking something that's wild by making it, uh, usable or,
12   um, something, not created, but grown by humans.

In the textbook, each vocabulary word has a blank next to it, requiring students to fill in the number of the correct English definition. Thus, when Mr. Nelson asks Kenta in lines 1-3 for the definition of "domesticated," Kenta responds by saying "two," which is

the number for the correct answer. However, this is not acceptable with Mr. Nelson's insistence that students avoid oversimplified English. Rather than saying so directly, Mr. Nelson takes the opportunity to make it an amusing moment by playing with Kenta's answer in lines 5-6. There is an awkward and rather lengthy silence from the students as Mr. Nelson waits for Kenta to understand what the teacher requires. Ultimately, Kenta realizes what he needed to say in the first place, and reads the definition from the textbook in line 7.

Here, the teacher shifts his interactional practices to elicit a shift from the students that is intended to align the class to his policies on interactional resources, further highlighting how the teacher employs interactional shifts along the lines of what resources are mutually acceptable as well as understood. Rather than explicitly saying so, however, Mr. Nelson attempts to convey his beliefs in something intended to be humorous, or to at least give the indication that the initial utterance is peculiar. Put another way, he is trying to express to his students that they should recast their utterances in a more "acceptable" fashion, perhaps in a "native-like" fashion that is reflected in the next subsection.

L2 models

The multimodality of interactional resources also speaks to the need for resourcefulness in order for a teacher to shift instructional practices. The excerpt below illustrates that, during the time that I am a presence in the classroom, Mr. Nelson perceives a creative opportunity to facilitate understanding within the classroom. After one discussion activity, Mr. Nelson asks students to report their answers to prompts about

customs and traditions that currently exist or have disappeared in Japan. Mr. Nelson

wants to model the sort of spoken output he is looking for, but is at a loss of words in

identifying something in American culture that has disappeared. As a result, he asks me

while I am seated among the students.

PE1 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Roehl, I don't know, in America, what's disappeared
2   that's culturally relevant?
3   Roehl: Um…people wearing hats, I think they don't wear hats. They
4   wear, you know, I think people wear baseball caps but, you know,
5   they used to have these top hats that, you know, back in, 40 years ago,
6   50 years ago…
7   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, if you look at old pictures, men wore hats and
8   women wore hats. Now, no one wears hats. Hat wearing is…
9   Roehl: Fashion has changed in 50 years.
10 Mr. Nelson: You still wear a hat sometimes.
11 Roehl: Yeah, yeah, I was, like, I was in a men's store, and there was
12 this, you know, I got to get that, okay.
13 Mr. Nelson: I have one in my office.
14 Roehl: I think I've seen it.

In this example, Mr. Nelson asks me to respond to a textbook discussion prompt

in order to extend the interaction in a way that might provoke some more detailed

dialogue or engagement from students. In doing so, he asks me to model the sort of

interaction he is seeking with his students in the whole class dialogue. My answer about

hats prompts some nodding among students, indicating their understanding.

I use this excerpt here to highlight a principle in the teacher's instructional

practices relating to the use of affordances as they become available to his classroom and

as challenges arise. The challenge in this case is not lexical or grammatical but topical in

nature, and in trying to identify some topical answer that might draw responses of interest

or relevance from the students, he relies on me as a resource to foster a more positive

learning outcome. I am not a permanent presence in his classroom and, thus, not a resource that he can always rely on. However, what is important here is the demonstration of a pedagogical approach that seeks out affordances as necessary to negotiate challenges or opportunities that arise within the classroom.

There is a caveat to the use of interactional resources in this way, as it validates L1 English norms, specifically a way of speaking or acting that the teacher recommends, whether implicitly or otherwise, that his students emulate. This sort of modeling, which the teacher may see as useful in having students align with his goals for target language use, arguably has a potential effect on the power dynamics between teacher and student. In particular, my presence in the classroom, as well as Mr. Nelson's use of my presence to demonstrate English interaction for his students' benefit, may end up validating interactional resources that his students may not have.

The effects of this is discussed in a later subsection. For now, what I have posited here is that the flexibility of the teacher to shift instructional practices is a function of the range of interactional resources that the teacher perceives to be available by way of his students' understanding and effective for classroom interaction, provided such resources are in keeping with Mr. Nelson's beliefs regarding what is acceptable language usage. Moreover, the use of various interaction resources and employment of instructional shifts, as observed through this research, extends beyond the negotiation of classroom challenges and into perceived opportunities for language learning, as explored in the next subsection.

Perception of opportunities

When Engin (2017) addresses dialogic interaction, she does so to problematize a lack of classroom dialogue arising from challenges in classroom interaction. Thus far, I have argued that a teacher can employ instructional shifts in order to negotiate those challenges in attempts to make classroom interaction more robust and comprehensive. However, the data analysis suggests that the teacher shifts practices for other purposes besides negotiating problems that arise in interaction. Indeed, various episodes explored here show Mr. Nelson tendency to shift practices in order to take advantage of perceived opportunities.

As Table 6-1 shows, instructional shifts arise from perception of opportunities as well as that of challenges. That said, the initial coding scheme, relying primarily on Engin's (2017) problematization of challenges in dialogic interaction, did not adequately account for positive developments where no significant challenge exists or can be identified. To account for this absence of theoretical coherence, I began to identify episodes of instructional shifts pursuing perceived opportunities based on whether the teacher has overtly noted an opportunity during classroom interaction. For example, when previewing the theme of the students' reading in one particular class (i.e., excessive use of sugar in food), Mr. Nelson says "I just thought of this now" before reminding students of a previous anecdote he had told about Japanese sweets.

Based on this, I set aside the 5000 space in the coding scheme for identifying where Mr. Nelson perceives such opportunities. The codes in this space initially reflected Engin's understanding of challenges based on topic knowledge, content knowledge, and

174

academic expectations. In some instances, especially in the example provided above, Mr.

Nelson employs humor or engages in behaviors that seek out a connection with his

students. As these occur during moments where I perceive Mr. Nelson to be taking

advantage of an opportunity to build engagement within the classroom, I set aside the

5200 space to code for opportunities to build rapport. As neither Engin nor Goldenberg

(1992) directly address rapport within the context of dialogic interaction, this

development of the coding scheme required a new addition to the theoretical lens. I

perceived Goldenberg's criterion for fostering a "challenging, but nonthreatening,

atmosphere" within the classroom as a starting point for identifying where opportunities

lie in establishing a stronger connection with students.

In pursuing this narrative, I added code 5202 (references something about

student), code 5203 (personal anecdote), code 5204 (validates student output), and code

5205 (talking freely) to account for Mr. Nelson's actions that I feel he employs to foster

rapport within the classroom. In conjunction with shifts that take advantage of

opportunities through various interactional resources, these actions provide evidence of

the teacher's awareness of opportunities to build dialogue and form the basis of the

discussion in this subsection. A more expansive discussion of how Mr. Nelson engages in

instructional shifts to build rapport is also explored in the subsection regarding dialogue

across power dynamics.

<u>Use of familiar knowledge</u>

One of Mr. Nelson's class sessions focuses on another reading activity about

music around the world, specifically using the bagpipes and the steel drums. The

175

textbook the students use provide contextual through photographs depict each instrument are clear enough to give them a sense of the topic they are about to read. One page shows a picture of a man playing bagpipes in front of a Scottish castle, while the next page has a picture of steel drums. This display satisfies (at least, in part) Goldenberg's (1992) criterion for providing students with resources that may be familiar to students. At minimum, the students do not indicate any confusion about the topic about which they are to read. Indeed, the textbook that is used in class typically provides some degree of topical knowledge and cues about a given topic before students engage in the textbook's reading or listening activities. Put simply, there appears to be no great challenge relating to language or topical knowledge that might impede the flow of interaction.

That said, Mr. Nelson seems to recognize that more context is better than less. Asking for a show of hands from students who have heard the bagpipes before, the teacher finds that few express even a casual familiarity with bagpipe music. Even after previewing the topic by showing the pictures, the teacher senses that providing more context might be useful to engaging his students' interest. As such, having a smartphone at his disposal, he makes use of the audio equipment in the classroom to play YouTube videos of each instrument to give students an idea of what it sounds like, something that would not be possible simply from looking at pictures in a textbook. The playback of a video featuring music played on bagpipes generates some utterances of interest from the students, as if the sort of music is largely unfamiliar to them, while the music with the steel drums is pleasant and has some students nodding their heads to the rhythm.

When I asked him about it during class, he said that he had not planned to play

any videos at the time, but had a feeling in the moment that it would be useful.

PE1 observation #12 - 07/01/2019

1   Roehl: So, what brought up the idea?
2   Mr. Nelson: Uh, well, mostly because I…I had no idea when I asked
3   the students if they'd ever heard bagpipes before or not. I had no idea
4   how many students would raise their hand [about knowing about the
5   two instruments] and so few raised their hand. [...] [A]nd I wasn't
6   even, I wasn't even planning to play music originally. Although this
7   was, I should have because it makes sense. Like, when you, I mean,
8   for the same reason I make them play music examples for their
9   presentation. [...] I mean, here, it's a section in the textbook about
10   music, so it makes sense to play some.

Since it is apparent that the students are not familiar with either the bagpipes or

the steel drum, the teacher appears in that moment to have determined that

comprehension or interest would be less likely without playing the appropriate music in

class. However, Mr. Nelson said in a later interview that he believes the playback of

music in a reading activity about music presented a good opportunity to expose students

to useful context about the topic. In outlining his thinking in the next interview excerpt,

he provides some dimension for a rationale behind changing his instructional practices.

Teacher interview #05 - 07/19/2019

1   Roehl: Um, was it something that you noticed in, among the students
2   or…?
3   Mr. Nelson: Um, I noticed it because I asked in that, I actually made a
4   point of asking who's heard the bagpipes, who's heard the steel
5   drums? And when one person raised their hand, I'm like, "Oh, no, you
6   can't read about a musical instrument and have any idea what it
7   sounds like. Here, I got to play this."
8   Roehl: I see, I see.
9   Mr. Nelson: That's because I surveyed them. Like…
10   Roehl: Okay. So, it sounds like you try to figure out different ways of
11   trying to gauge where they are, how much they understand.
12   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, um, a lot of things I do in class, I've done before,
13   so, I have some idea of their effectiveness.

14   Roehl: Yeah.
15   Mr. Nelson: And sometimes, I'll have an inspiration to try something
16   new, and it may or may not work. Sometimes, it works great and it
17   becomes a standard.

The first of two takeaways to be drawn from Mr. Nelson's last remark in the above interview excerpt indicates that "inspiration" (line 15) prompts him to try new things and assess their effectiveness, while not being able to fully predict the outcome before he adopts and employs new or different practices. This belief largely aligns with Arnett's (1992) treatment of Anderson's (1991) framework for dialogue as applied to educational contexts. Among other qualities, the teacher's instructional shift here demonstrates a willingness to consider unanticipated consequences, an acknowledgment of one's own vulnerability, and reflections on mutual implication (i.e., the evolving understanding among interactants of how they encounter dialogue as it takes place).

In this case, Mr. Nelson is in dialogue with his students when they indicate through a show of hands that few in the class have ever heard bagpipes or steel drums. In the face of this unanticipated result, the teacher shifts his plans for the class, connecting his mobile phone to the speakers and playing the music for the students, predicting that the class might be interested while not knowing for sure how students would respond. This sense of vulnerability is present in shifts employed because of what Mr. Nelson considers "inspiration" to try new things without knowing the outcome until it is fully realized (hence mutual implication when the teacher reflects on what transpires after executing a new and unfamiliar practice).

Second, and more importantly, Mr. Nelson contextualizes the act of changing instructional practices in the presence of inspiration (lines 16-17), which suggests that

178

instructional practices do not change just because of problematic situations but also because of opportunities to improve learning outcomes and pedagogy. Here, I differentiate opportunity from challenge in that, in situations where the former is present, there is no perception that the classroom interaction is broken or missing an essential aspect of knowledge, without which learning is less likely to take place. At times when Mr. Nelson or his students do not encounter significant challenges such as those defined by Engin (2017), the class can still move forward with the teacher's objectives, but as the teacher becomes aware of possible ways to build more productive and more effective classroom interaction, the class can also benefit from instructional shifts.

Opportunities for student contributions

Suggested here is that, in shifts built on opportunities, an interesting remark or a positive development, rather than a mistake, can prompt Mr. Nelson to adjust his practices. In another reading lesson about the cowboy lifestyle in the Americas, the teacher has the students discuss their answers with each other before he gives the correct answers in a whole class dialogue. In one of the reading activities, students have to decide whether each of a series of statements is true or false, at least according to the assigned reading passage. One such statement relates to whether the cowboys in the reading passage eat a healthy diet. The text itself reads that the cowboys in question live on potatoes, pancakes, and hamburgers. The textbook's answer key, according to Mr. Nelson, reads that the statement is false. However, as he listens to students check their answers with each other, he hears something interesting and thinks it is a good opportunity to share it with the class.

1   Mr. Nelson: Um, "Tyrell and his brother ate a healthy diet," true or
2   false? Okay, so, Toru brought up a really interesting point to
3   challenge this question. So, please tell everyone what you told me.
4   Toru: Yeah, this question, we answered, uh, how we think Tyrell's diet
5   is healthy. So, you know, um, for our, for us, uh, his diet is not
6   healthy, but for American, his diet is maybe healthy because there is
7   no sugar, so, what should we answer?
8   Mr. Nelson: So, yeah, it's a little subjective. Do we interpret this as
9   healthy or unhealthy? Well, what do they eat? What was the diet? Do
10   you remember?
11   Student 1: Pancakes, potatoes, hamburgers…
12   Mr. Nelson: So, ham--pancakes and…?
13   Student 1: Potatoes.
14   Mr. Nelson: Potatoes and…?
15   Student 1: Hamburgers.
16   Mr. Nelson: Hamburgers. Yeah, hamburgers, potatoes, pancakes.

In Chapter 4, I established how Mr. Nelson wants his students to question what is

presented in the textbook if it raises concerns for them. When recalling to the rest of the

class what Toru said while checking his answers with his partner, he validates what he

sees is a key disposition (i.e., being able to support one's answer through reasoning or

evidence) that he is looking for in his students. In this case, Toru believes the answer

might be true if the reading is taken in the context of what he perceives is an American

lifestyle that he considers as involving more consumption of food than he would consider

from his own perspective. Moreover, the cowboy lifestyle of having hamburgers and

potatoes does not appear to also involve sweets. From Toru's perspective, he has reason to

question whether the diet described in the text is really unhealthy.

Overhearing this while monitoring pair discussions and now eliciting the same in

front of the whole class, Mr. Nelson uses this opportunity to take time away from the

simple checking of answers to unpack why the textbook's answer of false might be

correct as well as why Toru might also be justified in exploring why the statement might

be true (lines 2-7). Using his exchange with Toru, he then asks the class what evidence is

in the reading passage to indicate that the cowboy diet is unhealthy, to which one student

calls out the three foods mentioned in the text (line 11). In the next passage, the teacher

then explores why eating hamburgers, potatoes, and pancakes is not a healthy lifestyle

choice by asking what is not stated to be in the cowboy diet.

PE1 observation #10 - 06/24/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: So, what I think, Toru, you're right, it's possible you
2   could say that this, you know, how much they were eating and…we
3   don't know, but what's missing? If you eat potatoes, pancakes, and
4   hamburgers, what's missing?
5   Student 2: Vegetables.
6   Mr. Nelson: Vegetables and…?
7   Student 3: Fish.
8   Mr. Nelson: Uh, fish, or…? Vegetables…what's similar to vegetables?
9   Student 4: Fruits.
10 Mr. Nelson: Yeah, fruits, okay. Sweet. Yeah, so, fruits,
11 vegetables…so, yeah, so, like…
12 Toru: Hamburger has…
13 Students: [laughs]
14 Mr. Nelson: [laughs] Yeah, maybe there is onion and piman in the
15 hamburger, but, yeah, the lack of vegetables and fruits and any kind
16 of balance to the diet, that's probably, I think the book is expecting
17 you to say false. Like, it's not a very healthy diet to eat the same stuff
18 everyday. I think that's, it's generally unhealthy to eat the same thing
19 again and again, day after day, especially if you're not getting
20 vitamins, nutrients from vegetables and fruits. But it's a good point,
21 maybe, I don't know, maybe, it's, some people might interpret that to
22 be healthy. Hamburgers which is protein and you got pancakes which
23 is, which is, uh, carbohydrates, and, and fills you up, and potatoes is,
24 uh, starch and, and there are vitamins in potatoes, too. So, yeah,
25 maybe, maybe.

The initial exchange between Mr. Nelson, Toru, and another student provides the

opportunity, facilitated by the teacher, to involve other students into the interaction about

what does and does not constitute a healthy diet, both from the perspectives of those in

the reading passage and of those in the classroom. Mr. Nelson's question in lines 3 and 4 about what food is "missing" when one eats hamburgers allows other students to call out possible ideas.

If Mr. Nelson does not overhear Toru's discussion with his partner, it is less likely that the teacher would have engaged in this relatively detailed unpacking of the textbook answer and the rationale behind it. At a surface understanding of the reading, eliciting the foods that the cowboys in the passage eat carries an unstated assumption that eating hamburgers is unhealthy, and therefore the statement that it is a healthy diet is false. Yet, taking advantage of the opportunity does raise the chance to explain why it might be more unhealthy than otherwise. One reason, among others, is one that Mr. Nelson elicits from students, in that the cowboy diet lacks fruits and vegetables. This exploration of the assumptions made in the text allows for some interaction to take place, followed by some direct teaching, all of which is built on something that Mr. Nelson notices and utilizes for a more dynamic teaching practice.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I define the instructional shift as the teacher having an impression about something while in dialogue with the class and making an informed, if not perfectly informed, response. In the case of instructional shifts stemming from linguistic challenges, the event that may prompt a mediational response from the teacher may be a mistake that a student makes with grammar or vocabulary, prompting the teacher to engage in repair strategies. In a number of cases such as in the episode presented above, however, Mr. Nelson takes advantage of a development in classroom interaction that needs no repair but could be useful if it is pointed out.

Building on the previous strand where the teacher relies on me as an interaction affordance, Mr. Nelson devotes one class session to the appropriate use of English articles (i.e., "a," "an," and "the"), a potentially challenging subject for L1 Japanese learners of English as there is no exact equivalent in Japanese. Mr. Nelson's board work, depicted in Figure 6-4, consists of example sentences, each using a particular article with a distinct rationale for its usage (at least from Mr. Nelson's perception). The first pair of sentences about a dog is straightforward relative to the next sentence about watching "the" movie. The stated reason for using the word "the" in this context is that the interactants involved in the example exchange know the movie that is the focus of the conversation. Establishing to the students that the sentence belongs within the context of a dialogue is important. With me in the room, Mr. Nelson perceives an opportunity to provide the necessary contextual cues to the students.
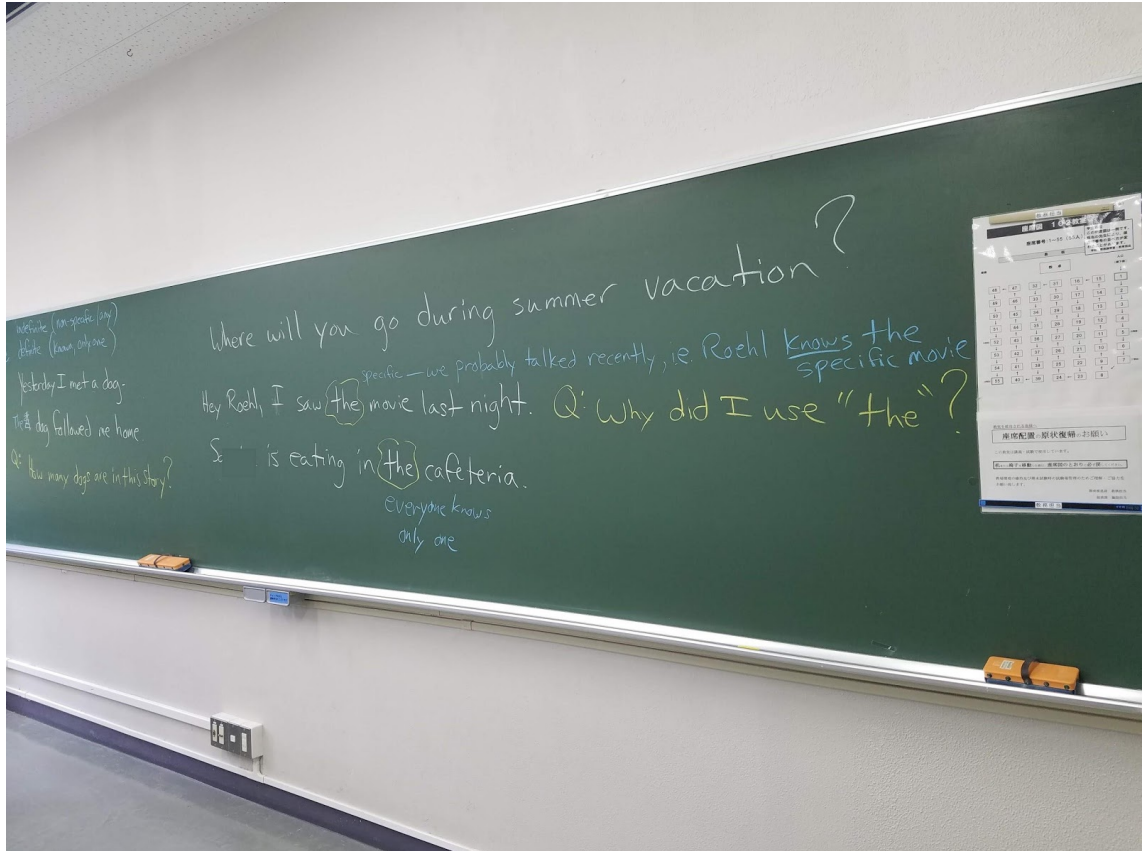
Figure 6-4 – Mr. Nelson's board work for the class session on English articles.

As a result, Mr. Nelson uses this opportunity to "talk" with me in front of the

entire class in order to provide the necessary context.

> PE2 observation #17 - 07/19/2019
>
> 1 Mr. Nelson: Okay, I have three, uh, sentences, sentences here and two
> 2 questions. The first set is over here, the story, "Yesterday, I met a dog.
> 3 A dog followed me home." Question, how many dogs are in this
> 4 story? Next one. "Hey, Roehl, I saw the movie last night."
> 5 Roehl: Oh, really? That's great!
> 6 Mr. Nelson: Yay!
> 7 Roehl: Wonderful!
> 8 Mr. Nelson: Question…
> 9 Students: [laughs]
> 10 Mr. Nelson: …why did I use "the" here?

In this example, Mr. Nelson seems to attempt to take advantage of an opportunity

provided by my being in the classroom. After presenting all the question to the class for

pair discussion and posing some additional questions, the teacher is able to elicit a

student's answer that is sufficient enough to detail why each of the example sentences use

a definite or indefinite article.

> PE2 observation #17 - 07/19/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Um, "Hey, Roehl, I saw the movie last night." Why use
> 2   "the"? It's not, it's first mention, right? It's not, uh, I didn't say, "I saw,
> 3   I went to a movie last night. I saw the movie, blah blah blah." It's first
> 4   mention, so, why would I use "the"? The group of three, you have
> 5   three brains, so maybe you have a good answer. Why did I use "the"?
> 6   Student: I think Roehl and Mr. Nelson thought same.
> 7   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, thought about the same movie, right? So, maybe,
> 8   maybe we talked, uh, maybe we talked about a movie yesterday or
> 9   maybe we've been talking a lot, "Yeah, I really want to go see this
> 10 movie." So, "the" movie means…[writes on board] that it's a known
> 11 movie, it's implied that, if I say that Roehl's going to know what
> 12 movie I'm talking about. Good.

The student's contribution to the classroom interaction is fairly minimal compared

to the Mr. Nelson's direct teaching, but the student's utterance appears to be enough for

the teacher to make a judgment that at least some of the students in the class perceive the

purpose of the article "the" in the example sentence given, thanks in part to the context

that there are two speakers in the example.

<u>Connection with students</u>

The episodes presented thus far primarily frame instructional shifts as a means for

fostering mutual understanding with students. However, returning to the June 21st whole

class activity discussing weekend plans using the "will have done" grammar, the purpose

of the instructional shift observed in the next exchange indicates that the search for

rapport is also a goal of shifting instructional practices.

> PE1 observation #11 - 06/21/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Um, Tomoko, what will you have done by Monday?

2   Tomoko: I will make, I will eat chestnuts. Chestnuts.
3   Mr. Nelson: Chestnuts. [laughs] So, I will, I will…I will…I will…
4   Tomoko: Have eaten.
5   Mr. Nelson: Yes, have eaten. Thank you. I will have eaten, thank you.
6   I will have eaten chestnuts. Okay, you know what chestnuts are?
7   Student: Chestnuts?
8   Mr. Nelson: Typically, in Japan, uh, you, you find chestnuts in, you
9   use the French word in Japan. Which is…? The chestnut in Japan,
10   what word do you use? What is chestnut in Japanese?
11   Student: [*kuri*]
12   Mr. Nelson: [*kuri*]? Ah. [*kuri*], I was thinking of [*maron*].
13   Students: [*aa*]
14   Mr. Nelson: But I got…are [*maron*] and [*kuri*] different or the same?
15   Students: Same.
16   Mr. Nelson: Same, okay. Yeah, like, the [*monburan*] is like [*maron*]
17   or, like, [*maron sweets*]. Uh, the chestnut in English. Why? Why do
18   you like chestnuts so much?
19   Tomoko: I like [inaudible] very much.
20   Mr. Nelson: Do you eat chestnut sweets too?
21   Tomoko: [*aa, monburan*]
22   Mr. Nelson: [*monburan*], secret. Do you know, do you know the
23   second ground behind [name of lecture hall]? The sports field? Okay.
24   If you go behind [name of lecture hall], there's a path to the forest,
25   and then there's a path down to this big area of mansions. It's like
26   [name of place], very creepy place. Very, very strange place. But, in
27   that mansion area, there is a famous [*monburan*] sweets shop.
28   Students: [*ee*]
29   Mr. Nelson: So, very, it's very good. It's very good. You can, so, you
30   just walk behind [name of lecture hall]. It's a little bit far, maybe
31   fifteen, fifteen minute walk. About fifteen minute walk, but…
32   Students: [*ee*]
33   Mr. Nelson: Secret [*monburan*] restaurant behind [name of lecture
34   hall].

The first part of this episode highlights a simple repair move to have Tomoko use

the target language that the class has been practicing in this session. After repeating the

words "I will…" a number of times (line 3), Mr. Nelson elicits Tomoko's answer with the

desired form. Using chestnuts as a topic, the teacher then follows up with Tomoko about

why she likes chestnuts. Though this interaction can already be deemed a success, Mr.

Nelson sees an opportunity to build on the dialogue beyond a simple question-and-answer exchange.

He then shares an anecdote with the class about a particular shop near campus whose specialty is sweets that include chestnuts. He calls it "secret" (line 22), and it is apparent that students are unfamiliar with the shop, judging from the audible utterances of interest. The brief detour from the use of the target grammar does not come with an assessment of the students' understanding of his anecdote; it is apparent in this episode that Mr. Nelson includes this piece of connected discourse to achieve an end that has no direct effect on the language learning within the classroom. Using Gee's (2011) "Identities Building Tool," Mr. Nelson appears to share this information as a way to add dimension to his identity that transcends that of an English teacher or an L1 English speaker. In taking the opportunity to mention the shop near the campus, he is establishing that he is of the larger university culture, just as his students are, rather than a separate entity devoted strictly to English teaching. In other words, this particular sort of speech act has the effect of closing any potential cultural distance between him and his students by establishing a common identity.

More immediately, the "aside," as Mr. Nelson calls it in a later interview, is a means to establish a connection with his students. His tendency to tell jokes in class allows him to judge the extent to which he and his students have rapport with each other. Asides or anecdotes, then, are additional tools such as telling jokes to establish a nonthreatening classroom environment that is comfortable not only to the students but to the teacher as well.

Teacher interview #06 - 07/19/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: [T]o put a stupid measurement on it, [the students in the
2   PE1 class] laugh at my [*oyaji gags* – similar to "dad jokes"] more.
3   Roehl: […] You say the students laugh, those particular students
4   laugh at your jokes more?
5   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, I think that the give-and-take is more common
6   between me and them in that class than in the other class. The other
7   class seems to all really get along well with each other. […] I haven't
8   figured out a formula to make it happen all, every year, perfectly.
9   Individual personalities are always going to play in it somehow.
10 Roehl: So, there's more give-and-take with one particular set of
11 students, what does that mean for your teaching?
12 Mr. Nelson: I'm looser.
13 Roehl: Okay.
14 Mr. Nelson: Um, I, I feel more comfortable doing asides if I think
15 something is relevant, but, uh, but not the immediate focus and what
16 that means is, like, if I do an aside with one class, I'll feel more likely
17 to, to pay attention and be into that aside, whereas the other class will
18 be kind of, like, "Okay, I guess they're losing their attention."
19 Roehl: Sure. Um, that seems to me more of a rapport-building
20 exercise.
21 Mr. Nelson: Yeah.

The concept of classroom rapport has long been an intuitively accepted and

essential element to pedagogy, as least as long as Verner and Dickinson (1967) first

critiqued lecture teaching as impersonal and incompatible with the growing diversity of

learners in formal education. However, recent literature on the subject has also associated

pedagogical practices that aim to build rapport with positive learning outcomes (Arghode

et al., 2017; Estepp & Roberts, 2015). In looking for opportunities to build rapport with

his students, Mr. Nelson seeks to foster an environment that allows him to be "looser"

and allows students to feel comfortable with the practice of English in his classroom.

As Mr. Nelson suggests, the idea of being "looser" is tied to the idea of an overt

"give-and-take" (line 5) where the students return his building of dialogue with their own

contributions. Reflecting discussion in the last section, such contribution need not be

verbal in nature, as he appears in several data excerpts presented thus far to show responsivity to students when they laugh or exhibit interest to his interactional moves. In contrast, he appears to associate silence, at least as a rule of thumb, as an indication of a challenge to the creation of his ideal classroom environment. PE1 observation #12, for example, provides evidence where Mr. Nelson appears to perceive silence as problematic. As he speaks while the students do not exhibit interest in response, he resorts to a more monologic instructional practice, providing more cues until his thought has run his course. Where this section is concerned, at least opportunities for dialogic development arise when Mr. Nelson feels he can read his students when they show interest such that further development would yield more positive learning outcomes or a stronger degree of rapport.

Opportunities for rapport can take on many forms, and as previously established, Mr. Nelson often takes advantage of chances to make jokes and to make students laugh. Humor has only recently been examined in the contemporary research as a means for facilitating language learning (e.g., Peng et al., 2014; Petraki & Nguyen, 2016), necessitating discussion as to the dimensions of the teacher's humor and the possible benefits and considerations of its use. I present a brief treatment of humor here to assert its effect on validating students' contributions to classroom interaction, but also, more relevant to this dissertation, the unpredictable nature of opportunities that allow for humor to be effective in this manner.

In the June 5th PE1 class, Mr. Nelson has the students draw posters for presentations about important Japanese customs for tourists and visitors to Japan to learn.

Figure 6-5 is a photograph of one of the students' posters that are shown to the rest of the class during their presentations. This particular poster describes the customs of eating sushi at a *kaitenzushi* (or conveyor belt sushi) restaurant, such as keeping the fish attached to the rice and not returning finished plates of sushi back onto the conveyor belt. After time devoted to drawing posters and practicing short speeches, the students come to the front of the class to share their work with their classmates.
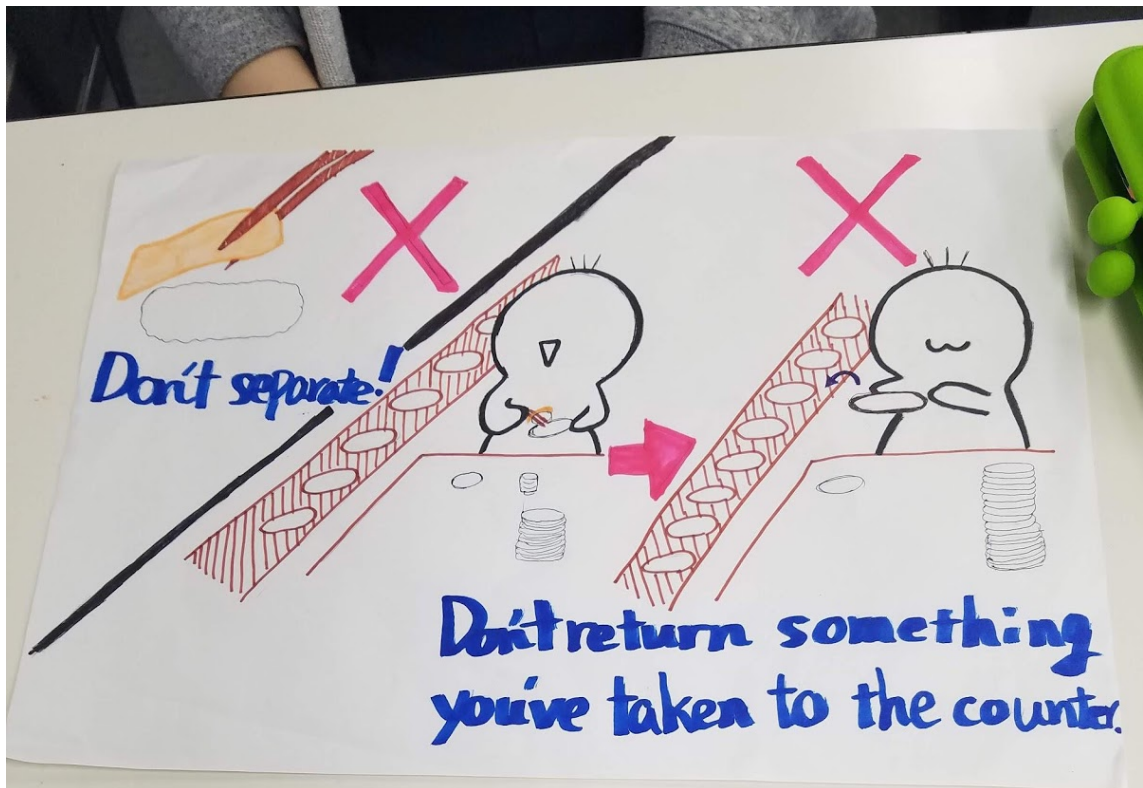
Figure 6-5 – photograph of student's poster for in-class presentations.

At the end of some of the speeches, Mr. Nelson takes the opportunity to make some comments about each poster. For the most part, his comments are not about language use, but are still connected to his students' contributions.

PE1 observation #01 - 06/05/2019

1   Student: My poster is this. When, when you eat sushi, don't separate,
2   uh, fish and rice. When you go to [*kaitenzushi*], please don't return
3   something you take.
4   Students: [applause]
5   Mr. Nelson: If I return, it's much cheaper.
6   Students: [laughs]
7   Mr. Nelson: Thank you.

In line 5, Mr. Nelson attends to the student's advice that, in Japanese culture, it is impolite to return a sushi plate to the conveyor belt (lines 3-4). Many *kaitenzushi* restaurants determine the bill by counting the plates on the table or counter at the end of the meal. Because of this, Mr. Nelson finds a way to make a joke that it would be cheaper to flaunt this custom. The students laugh in line 6, knowing he is only joking. More importantly, the teacher and his students build a whole, if brief, dialogue around the student's poster and presentation. This dialogue illustrates that the project is more than just an expression of English but also an opportunity to center the class around students' ideas.

These brief remarks are a minor part of the teacher's discourse, but such unplanned discourse carries a number of assumptions, namely that the teacher understands what the student has produced and, absent any significant gaps in understanding, the student's English is comprehensible enough to allow for the teacher and other English speakers to respond substantively. Having these assumptions in mind validates the student's contributions to the classroom discourse, and at least for some students, this is a meaningful validation of the students' work in terms of raising their motivation and confidence in using English. Getting it "right" in class, and being

validated by the teacher for being correct, seems to be able to generate positive feelings,

as indicated in this interview excerpt with PE1 student Manami.

Student interview #10 - 07/08/2019
1   Roehl: Yeah? How did [getting the correct answer] feel?
2   Manami: I'm so glad. [laughs]
3   Roehl: [laughs] Of course, of course. So, in that moment, um, what
4   do you think…what do you think your teacher thinks about your
5   English?
6   Manami: [*ee*]? [laughs] I don't know.
7   Roehl: You don't know? I mean, you gave an answer, you were
8   correct, what do you think?
9   Manami: I think he was, he was glad too.

As Manami indicates, she is "glad" to be correct, but interestingly, she

acknowledges that being correct also pleases the teacher. The presence of a good working

rapport between teacher and student, through expressed beliefs such as these, seems to be

manifest in not only having positive feelings about oneself and their environment, but

also a desire to have others in their environment experience those same positive feelings.

Naturally, this raises the issue of how best to foster this quality in a classroom context

where teacher and student are perceived to have different statuses and privileges. While

the instructional shifts presented to this point have provided the outline of certain

strategies intended for this purpose, a more thorough treatment of power dynamics

observed in this study is still necessary.

Dialogue across power dynamics

Power dynamics undoubtedly play a role in classroom interaction, particularly

when power distances arising from differences in language and culture are potentially

vast. The contemporary literature has framed problematic situations in language

classroom interaction primarily as a function of either foreign language anxiety (Horwitz

et al., 1986) or willingness to communicate (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). There are

differences between the two theories, but within the context of the language classroom,

the literature has responded to both concepts as if formulaic, almost value-neutral

approaches to pedagogy are key to overcoming such challenges to classroom interaction.

Shea (2017), for example, promotes classroom activities that compel, and almost coerce,

students to speak in the target language in the face of anxiety generated from peer

pressure. Other literature (e.g., Talandis & Stout, 2015) problematizes traditional

language classroom pedagogies and the perceived lack of oral communication

opportunities in those environments, critiquing epistemologies about language learning

considered less active or engaging.

Largely undervalued in the discussion of foreign language education to date is the

influence of power distance between an L1 English teacher and their L2 English students.

While "native-speakerism" (Holliday, 2005), at least as perceived in the mainstream, has

a cultural appeal and a benefit to classroom language learning, it may ultimately

confound dialogic interaction in the classroom in terms of differences in academic

expectations (Engin, 2017) or preferences for classroom learning (Effiong, 2016). How

the teacher negotiates that challenge can help to explain how instructional practices shift

during the course of classroom interaction.

Problematization of power dynamics

While the main problematization of this dissertation relates to the development of

classroom dialogue through interactional and instructional shifts, an application of CDA

to the collected data can shed light on the underlying challenges that arise in the first

place. Using the methodology for CDA outlined in Chapter 5, the excerpts provided in this chapter thus far require a focus on Mr. Nelson's practices with respect to student contributions to classroom dialogue and monolingualism. Although seemingly well-intentioned (at minimum, there is no overt ill will, but rather a perpetuation of native-speaker norms), such practices project a classroom atmosphere that may discourage students from engaging in classroom interaction. In other words, the teacher's attempts at fostering dialogue, while productive in some aspects, can result in impeding said dialogue in other aspects.

Overall, in addressing the questions in Table 5-7 regarding what attitudes and beliefs the teacher holds, which manifest to the students as projected expectations while in the classroom, instances of whole class interaction between Mr. Nelson and his students suggest a commodification of student contributions the teacher deems accurate. In examining the episode where Mr. Nelson teaches words for tastes and textures of food (PE2 observation #08), for example, the teacher implicitly places a value on contributions by each student, which I can arguably interpret in degrees of accuracy. When Keisuke and Risako produce the answers Mr. Nelson is looking for (lines 5 and 17, respectively), he becomes performatively excited (e.g., "Kon'nyaku! Yes!") and rewards the classroom with his own development of dialogue (e.g., "Ooh, no, thank you, I don't like kon'nyaku"). Conversely, even when Takeru is arguably close to producing Mr. Nelson's intended answer (line 14), the teacher is less ambient while shifting to provide further scaffolding (lines 15-16). Even Keisuke's second answer (line 8), *zeri* or "jelly," which differs from Mr. Nelson's intended answer, "chewy," elicits a less excited response.

As a result, the PE2 students might come upon an interpretation that the teacher expects and will only validate what appears to be the "perfect" answer in the target language. This sense of accuracy is not only lexical but also semantic in nature. The excerpt from PE1 observation #20 highlights how Mr. Nelson projects to his students the importance of accuracy in detail through a complete use of the target grammar, as well as by characterizing less perfect or incomplete English as "lazy." PE2 observation #11 further substantiates this notion, in that Mr. Nelson expects students to use the English in their textbook when verbally answering him. Saying the letter or number associated with the correct answer in a list of answers, instead of the correct answer itself, is insufficient. In fact, doing as much is so out of the teacher's expectations that it elicits his sarcastic response, further impeding the development of classroom dialogue. In conjunction with Mr. Nelson's belief about "flexible English" in which he discourages L1 usage during classroom activities requiring L2 interaction, the overall classroom atmosphere may give its participants the impression that the primary means for contributing to dialogue is the sort of English that the teacher deems accurate.

Particularly in the Japanese EFL context, where concerns about confidence regarding accuracy in the target language represent a potential obstacle to classroom interaction (Harumi, 2011), and as illustrated in the excerpts in this subsection, I interpret this approach to language instruction as problematic. Peng et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of mitigating affect by minimizing the possibility of the students losing face or status in front of the teacher or their peers. The instances of silence or minimal interactions presented in the excerpts thus far, particularly in PE2 observation #08, while

not necessarily a negative element themselves, are potential indicators of the students taking charge of mitigating face-threatening situations by choosing to opt out of the classroom interaction. Taken altogether, the discursive practices summed up thus far place the balance of power within the classroom mainly on Mr. Nelson's expertise and status as a teacher and as an English speaker. The rules and expectations are such because the teacher as a perceived expert authority sets them.

If the overall dynamic of the teacher's instructional practices perpetuates norms of native-speakerism and linguistic accuracy, then it is likely that the teacher's instructional shifts do so as well. On that note, the next set of findings related to instructional shifts that address power dynamics aims necessitates a discussion about pedagogies that are more culturally sensitive and empowering of students in order to promote dialogic interaction within the classroom. Goldenberg (1992) lists a nonthreatening yet challenging classroom atmosphere as a key element for fostering the instructional conversation. This suggests that the classroom should be a safe space for students to experiment with unfamiliar knowledge without fear of what Peng et al. (2014) call face-threatening acts, or those moves in discourse which may prompt interactants to experience negative feelings or attitudes about classroom learning. After first problematizing power distances as observed in this study, it then becomes important to outline what Mr. Nelson does to close that distance separating him from his students to establish that safe space that encourages more engaged interaction. In turn, the discussion of the findings in this subsection asserts that rapport between teacher and student is a key element for fostering a more productive classroom atmosphere.

Asserting as much requires presenting some of the unstated (and understated) assumptions that appear to be part of the classroom environment, the first of which is the need for students to use English within the classroom. In one PE1 class session, Mr. Nelson instructs students to think of a Japanese song that their classmates might know, choose two lines of lyrics from their chosen song, and translate them into English. The teacher then divides students into groups of three, who have to share their English lyrics to their classmates. They then have to guess the name of the song or ask follow-up questions in English in order to guess the song. Mr. Nelson walks around the classroom to monitor each of the groups and hovers around one group of three students, Toru, Daigo, and Shoji. They are stuck in a prolonged bout of silence, as if Shoji and Daigo are stumped at identifying the song Toru has chosen.

Mr. Nelson tries to offer help by asking some questions and making suggestions to move the conversation along. In doing so, he perceives that he can help the group overcome any challenges affecting the interaction amongst them. In his presence, the nature of the conversation does change, facilitating progress on the task but also raising questions as to the effect that Mr. Nelson's assistance has on their group work. I add emphasis in the following observation excerpt to distinguish the parts of the episode before and after Mr. Nelson tries to intervene.

> PE1 observation #02 - 06/07/2019
> 1   Toru: […*Exile wa sore wa shika nai…* – that's only Exile [name of
> 2   J-Pop group]…] [sings]
> 3   Daigo: [*aa, kiita koto ga aru* – ah, I've heard this]
> 4   Shoji: [*ore, kiita tabun…* – yeah, I probably heard it…]
> 5   Daigo: [*kiita koto aru kedo, wakannai…* – I've heard this but I don't
> 6   know…]
> 7   Shoji: Ah, I don't know, I don't know. I completely don't…
> 8   Daigo: [inaudible]

9   Toru: [*aa, sonna taitoru…* – ah, that kind of title…]
10 Shoji: I don't know. I don't know. Sorry.
11 Toru: Ah…"sometimes you may hurt without knowing."
12 Daigo: [*ee, nibun dessho?* – uh, two lines?]
13 **Mr. Nelson: Yeah, two, first two lines.**
14 Toru: "Sometimes you may hurt without knowing." Ah, [*gomen* –
15 sorry], "Sometimes you may hurt somebody without knowing."
16 Daigo: Recent?
17 Toru: Very recently.
18 Shoji: "Hakujitsu."
19 Toru: [clapping]
20 Daigo: What? What?
21 Toru: "Hakujitsu." "Hakujitsu."
22 Mr. Nelson: So, the key hint was "you may hurt somebody without
23 knowing." Did that help?
24 Shoji: Ah, yes, yes.
25 Mr. Nelson: Okay.
26 Toru: [sings]
27 Shoji: [*sou, sou* – yeah, yeah]
28 Mr. Nelson: [*dare ka*], somebody.
29 Daigo: I don't know. I don't know.
30 Mr. Nelson: You don't know the song?
31 Daigo: Yes.
32 Mr. Nelson: Actually, I don't know the song either.
33 Toru: Very famous.
34 Mr. Nelson: Is it in a drama or a movie? Commercial or something?
35 Toru: I don't know, but I recent in YouTube.
36 Mr. Nelson: Ah, one more time, the title?
37 Toru: "Hakujitsu."

In this episode, Mr. Nelson becomes aware of Daigo's potential confusion about the task, specifically whether one student gives the rest of the group one or two lines of lyrics as hints. Sensing this, the teacher steps in (line 13) and confirms the instructions of the task with them (i.e., "Yeah, two, first two lines"). The second line, translated by Toru as, "Sometimes you may hurt somebody without knowing" (lines 14-15) ends up providing enough of a hint as to the song. At face value, this move is successful because

the group has completed the task with the teacher's help, allowing them to move on to guessing the song that the next student in the group has chosen.

However, in comparing the dialogue before (lines 1-12) and after Mr. Nelson's intervention (lines 14-37), the group conversation changes from one that is mostly in Japanese to one that is mostly in English and led mainly by the teacher. Once Mr. Nelson draws near, a conversation among friends (or, at minimum, friendly classmates) changes to a teacher-student interaction with more distinctly stratified roles. The students' perceptions of appropriate interaction upon Mr. Nelson's entry certainly change when the teacher becomes a part of the discussion. Shoji and Daigo elaborate on this in an interview with both of them.

Student interview #01 - 06/10/2019

1   Roehl: Um, let's see. Just imagine, um, how would you feel if, you
2   know, if you did the same activity, but with Mr. Nelson in the same
3   group? So, on Friday, it was the three you, but if I add Mr. Nelson in
4   here, would you do this activity differently? [*imi wakarimashita ka* –
5   do you understand the meaning]?
6   Shoji: [*Nelson ga iru koto de, nani ka kawarun* – Nelson is here,
7   something changes]
8   Roehl: [*sou desu ne, yarikata ga chigaimasu ka, kanji ga chigaimasu*
9   *ka* – that's right, does the way of doing [the activity] change, does the
10   feeling change]?
11   Daigo: [*aa* – utterance for understanding]
12   Shoji: [*ki wo tsukau* – we take care]
13   Daigo: Yeah, yeah. [*kawaru yo ne* – it changes, doesn't it]
14   Shoji: Yes.
15   Roehl: You say yes?
16   Daigo: We become serious. [laughs]
17   Roehl: Serious?
18   Daigo: We have to talk correctly.
19   Roehl: Um, why? Why do you say so?
20   Shoji: Toru is our friend, but teacher, uh, I think I have to, have to,
21   [*nan to iu* – what do I say], take care.
22   Roehl: Mm. I see. Yeah. Do you agree?

23   Daigo: Yes. I…[laughs] I want to show the attitudes that I listen, I
24   listened carefully.

The differences in Shoji and Daigo's perspectives about interaction with each

other and with Mr. Nelson seem to highlight the sort of power that the teacher holds over

students. Part of this can be attributed to Mr. Nelson being an L1 English speaker,

although that can be mitigated since I am present in the conversation during the entire

episode and before Mr. Nelson's intervention. During their interview, they demonstrate a

level of comfort with me (e.g., even though I am an L1 English speaker, they are

comfortable using both English and Japanese with me as we talk) that is not apparent

when Mr. Nelson is in their presence, suggesting that the "native speaker" effect is less of

a factor here. Conversely, in their teacher, Shoji and Daigo in lines 16-24 see an authority

figure whose presence brings expectations of acceptable practices that, in their

perception, did not align with how they were interacting before Mr. Nelson stepped in.

Once that happened, the expectation was they must speak English and in a "serious" way,

much unlike the very casual tone present in the first half of the exchange presented

above.

Much has been made in the contemporary literature (e.g., Kiramba, 2018;

Kiramba & Harris, 2019) regarding lack of student engagement in language learning

contexts attributed to policies that overtly restrict L1 resources of communication.

Certainly, the L2-only policies that Mr. Nelson sets have an effect on students such as

Shoji and Daigo when the teacher is in their midst. However, in presenting an analysis of

how Mr. Nelson commodifies students' contributions to classroom interaction, I argue

that implicit policies regarding the value of the sort of interaction that Mr. Nelson prefers

with students also discourage engagement, particularly when those desired contributions reflect native-speaker norms.

Moreover, Mr. Nelson acknowledges the implications of this phenomenon, if not the phenomenon itself, in general terms when describing an encounter he had with a PE student outside of class.

Teacher interview #05 - 07/19/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: I do know for a fact that this student, when, when they're
2   with their friends…
3   Roehl: Yeah.
4   Mr. Nelson: …uh, they're actually quite talkative, because I saw them
5   at a bench a couple of weeks ago, just, "Blah blah blah," talking to
6   people they know. So, I would say that I would actually say it's not a
7   shy person but a person who is reticent to speak in class or use
8   English perhaps. Um, what the difference is between them? I don't
9   know.
10   Roehl: Why would they behave one way in class and a different way
11   in the speaking test? So, it sounds like part of it is a, uh…
12   Mr. Nelson: Speaking in front of the group is something they don't
13   want to do.
14   Roehl: Well, I think you said embarrassed?
15   Mr. Nelson: I think I used reticent, the word I used.

To Mr. Nelson, the situation described in lines 4-9 is evidence of the assertion in lines 12-13 that language learners he has taught are "reticent" (line 15) to engage in interaction with the teacher (particularly in English) in the presence of peers. Through searching for code 4201 (silence) in the field notes, many of the instances in which silence from students seems prolonged are parts of situations where the teacher outwardly expects some student contribution to classroom discourse. Conversely, the classroom during pair and group work activities is mostly lively with abundant interaction among students; the nature of interaction is clearly different from that during teacher-fronted activities.

Another episode highlights this difference (and as well as the challenge in shifting instructional practices), particularly as students behave in one way amongst themselves and in another way in front of the teacher. As PE1 students work on their group presentations about Japanese music, Mr. Nelson again checks in with each group to monitor their brainstorming. With one group of three female students, he notices that they might be having trouble in deciding on what Japanese music to present, and goes over to the group to see if he can provide them with any help.

PE1 observation #14 - 07/05/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Are you stuck?
2   Students: [laughs]
3   Mr. Nelson: You all look like you're kind of…
4   Students: [laughs] [*ee*]
5   Mr. Nelson: Do you need help?
6   Students: [*un…* – well...]
7   Ai: [*ikeru da* – we can go (essentially "we can do it")]
8   Meiko: [*ikeru*]
9   Mr. Nelson: [*ikeru*], meaning you're okay?
10 Meiko: Okay.
11 Mr. Nelson: Really? Really?
12 Students: [laughs]
13 Mr. Nelson: Okay, I'll come back if you need me.

As Mr. Nelson encourages the group to tell him if there is a problem and if he can help, the students laugh amongst themselves (lines 1-4), displaying what the teacher previously referred to as reticence to speak up. Eventually, Ai indicates that they can persist without his help, and partner Meiko repeats the same utterance in agreement (lines 7-8). After hearing enough confirmation that they are alright without him (lines 9 and 11), he politely relents and excuses himself from the exchange. Still, he suspects that there is some language or topical challenge that keeps the group from progressing in their

202

brainstorming as the other groups seem to, and indicates as much when I chat with him

briefly afterward.

PE1 observation #14 - 07/05/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: It seemed pretty clear they were hung up on something.
2   Like, what to talk about or how they were going to talk about
3   something.
4   Roehl: Yeah. I'm trying to think, can you identify something that
5   makes them hesitant, or am I framing it the wrong way?
6   Mr. Nelson: No, maybe it's a matter of…because they're stuck on it,
7   they're trying to figure out how to explain, which means they
8   wouldn't be able to explain to me what the problem is. I mean,
9   sometimes, sometimes in cases like that, I might ask them to, "Okay,
10 just explain to me in Japanese, and I might be able to get it and be
11 able to help you." But I haven't really done that with any of these
12 first-year classes this year, that kind of Japanese use is pretty much
13 out of the class.
14 Roehl: By choice?
15 Mr. Nelson: By choice? I mean, we're supposed to, but in, sometimes
16 in freeform projects like this, I'll break the rules if Japanese is the
17 only way to get past the impasse, so if they hadn't said [*ikeru*], if they
18 still appeared to be like, eh, I'm going to go back and check again. I
19 will, if they still appear to be stuck, then I'll be like, "Alright, in
20 Japanese, what's the problem?"
21 Roehl: But you're assuming there is something they're hung up on?
22 Mr. Nelson: Sure seemed like it. Yes, I'm assuming. Do I know? No,
23 but I'm assuming, because they really seem stuck somehow.
24 Roehl: And just to clarify, they're not saying anything because you're
25 assuming they don't know how to say it or express it in English?
26 Mr. Nelson: I don't know, there could be other reasons, like, they
27 don't think it's a big enough issue to ask for help on. It could be
28 that…they're reaching a decision and then, whatever they're talking
29 about before I got there, maybe they felt they wouldn't need me to
30 help out. It's not something that I could help out, maybe. So, the first
31 thing I said to you was my first instinct, but that may not be correct.

Mr. Nelson guesses that they are "stuck" on something that he is unable to

identify even after asking them directly, but unless absolutely necessary, he indicates that

he would rather not ask them in Japanese to help them express the problem (lines 9-20).

As a result, he limits himself from shifting instructional practices by limiting the use of

Japanese to gain an understanding of the nature of the challenge the group is negotiating. In lines 26-31, Mr. Nelson makes some predictions as to why the interaction is unsuccessful, but without some deeper level of engagement with the group, he is unable to really determine how best to provide help.

The two episodes presented above highlight the potential distance that the teacher needs to negotiate. An accounting of the codes regarding bases of social power (French & Raven, 1959) as I have applied to the field notes indicate that there are very few instances where reward power or coercive power are overtly present in Mr. Nelson's interactions with the students. Put another way, he does not scold (or at least intend to scold) students or directly connect positive learning outcomes to grades (with the main exceptions of attending classes or completing e-learning requirements that are prerequisite to completing the Practical English course). Alternatively, many interactions such as the ones presented thus far in this chapter appear to rely more on expert or referent power than on power bases that are more transactional in nature.

For example, in lines 6-8, Mr. Nelson surmises that his students are hesitant to speak up because, even if they know what the problem is, they do not know how to express the problem in English. Both Engin (2017) and Harumi (2011) point to a perceived lack of resources related to language as perceived by students as an impediment to building classroom dialogue. As a result, Ai and Meiko remain silent despite Mr. Nelson's encouragement.

This influence is apparent across a number of other episodes where students work around the teacher in the face of classroom challenges. PE2 student Sachiko uses the

word "ashamed" in line 9 of the next interview excerpt to indicate moments when she

might not know something about English while interacting with Mr. Nelson.

Student interview #07 - 07/01/2019

1   Roehl: [T]here might be times where you don't understand something,
2   right? Mr. Nelson says…
3   Sachiko: Uh…I ask about this thing to my friends.
4   Roehl: Ah.
5   Sachiko: "What did he say?" [laughs]
6   Roehl: Okay. So, and that's what I want to know. Okay? So, you will
7   ask your classmate or your friend. But you won't ask Mr. Nelson.
8   Right? Why do you think so?
9   Sachiko: [silence] Maybe…I feel…be ashamed?
10   Roehl: Really? Oh, okay.
11   Sachiko: In the 22 students. But, uh, all student understand that thing
12   except for me.
13   Roehl: Ah. Okay. Um…you said you might feel ashamed. So, is it
14   maybe, will the teacher get angry, or…
15   Sachiko: [laughs]
16   Roehl: …maybe, or, maybe the students, your classmates, um, will, I
17   don't know…
18   Sachiko: [laughs]
19   Roehl: Yeah. What do you think?
20   Sachiko: I think, if I ask to teacher in PE class, the teacher don't
21   angry, and students don't say anything.

There are two takeaways of interest in this exchange. In a number of episodes in

which I observe classroom silence or Mr. Nelson views it as a potential indication of a

lack of comprehension about the task or the topic at hand, all but a handful of students in

each section (and only in a limited number of situations) refrain from volunteering their

answers without personally being asked first. When the teacher asks if there are any

questions or if the students are "okay" in terms of understanding his instructions or

explanations, Mr. Nelson is often met with silence. While this is likely not novel to the

Japanese EFL context, it does indicate that, even as the teacher encourages interaction,

students remain disinclined to contribute to dialogue. Moreover, even if students like

Sachiko acknowledge there is no exercise of coercive power by the teacher (lines 20-21), the prospect of not succeeding in interaction presents negative attitudes (line 9) that may prevent students from speaking up. The teacher's presence alone, absent any overt exercise of power, may be consequential enough to inhibit the development of classroom dialogue.

In a number of other student interviews, I have coded for the presence of negative feelings about the need to contribute to classroom dialogue. By examining codes regarding student perceptions, students have used words or phrases such as "nervous," "anxious," "ashamed," "don't have courage" in interviews to reflect on classroom interaction. Seven different students actually used the word "nervous" to describe how they would feel when interacting with the teacher. While individual differences may certainly lead to different degrees or confidence (or lack thereof), there are clear indications that Mr. Nelson's presence can change the nature of any particular classroom interaction.

The other notable belief that is expressed here by Sachiko and indicated in a number of other student interviews is that, even though students acknowledge the power dynamic that the teacher's presence has on their tendency to speak or ask for help in class, they do not indicate that there are material or affective consequences for silence or mistakes. In other words, the students are confident that the teacher will not punish them and their classmates would not make fun of them or laugh at them in a disparaging way. Indeed, there was only sporadic use of codes in the 3200 space (coercive power) and of codes in the 3300 space (legitimate power) to indicate that the teacher exerts power in an

authoritarian manner. Yet any power that the teacher has, reflecting Harumi's (2011) assertion that the classroom environment informs the tendency for students' silence, remains a present force that affects dialogue between the teacher and the student.

Despite this force, students do acknowledge the importance of speaking up (while speaking in English) in class. When asked why they liked their English class (with one exception, the students who were interviewed said that they liked PE class or were otherwise interested in studying English), many of them said it was because the class offered them the opportunity to practice English. So, while there is a feeling among students about the need to be strategic in speech depending on academic expectations, there is also a feeling that, because of the opportunity to practice English, it is almost necessary for students to contribute to the classroom dialogue, as is represented by PE1 students Keiko and Mika in their interview.

> Student interview #04 - 06/22/2019
> 1   Keiko: Um, I try to describe these flavor or texture, but I don't know
> 2   what, what I, what I have to say.
> 3   Roehl: Mm.
> 4   Keiko: I don't know the word describe kon'nyaku's flavor or texture,
> 5   so, uh, [laughs]...
> 6   Mika: Keep silence.
> 7   Keiko: [un] Keep silent. [laughs]
> 8   Roehl: One more time?
> 9   Mika: Keep silence? I can't describe. [laughs]
> 10   Roehl: Um, you can't describe the answer or describe the words. Um,
> 11   how does that feel, you have to keep silent?
> 12   Mika: [*aa, kotaenakya* – ah, I must answer] [laughs]. [inaudible
> 13   Japanese]
> 14   Roehl: Um, this is good. So, if you don't say anything in class, right,
> 15   you have to keep silent, what does the teacher think? How does the
> 16   teacher feel about that?
> 17   Mika: Sad. [laughs]
> 18   Keiko: [*ee* – interjection]
> 19   Roehl: Really? Yeah? Why?

20   Mika: [*teacher ga kanashimu koto deshou, kanashimu kamo de, dou*
21   *kanjiru ka deshou* – the teacher is sad, probably sad, how is the
22   feeling]...teacher want to, uh, answer, answer the question for me and
23   the classmate, so, if, if we don't answer, maybe he, he feels sad.
24   [laughs] I think.
25   Roehl: And do you feel bad about that?
26   Mika: Yeah.

Unpacking this interview excerpt yields two related takeaways. First, as indicated in lines 12-13, at least some of the students in Mr. Nelson's class perceive a need to speak and volunteer answers in class, as not doing so might, in their perception, make Mr. Nelson feel "sad" (lines 20-24). More importantly, this consequence would also generate negative feelings for Mika, who would feel bad if that were to happen (lines 25-26).

On one hand, the presence of a good rapport between Mr. Nelson and his students is manifest in students like Manami wanting to be correct and make the teacher "glad" as a result. On the other hand, shortcomings are similarly perceived as generating negative feelings in the teacher, which in turn make students feel bad, as Mika expressed. So, while rapport can act as a means to foster the sort of nonthreatening classroom in Goldenberg's (1992) framework, it can also generate negative attitudes when learning outcomes turn out to be less than ideal or when classroom interaction is not effective or successful.

Up to this point, it is apparent that interaction with the teacher or even the presence of the teacher, while having potential benefits to language learning, illustrates how power relations can complicate classroom interaction in a way that can limit positive learning outcomes if dialogue is a necessary component of classroom learning. Moreover, while the teacher can project expert and referent power to make it clear that students can

rely on interaction with the teacher for needed support, rapport generated in this manner also brings its own potential to confound dialogue.

<u>Elicitation of student engagement</u>

Now having defined the challenges brought by the assumptions made by classroom interactants regarding power dynamics and status, the next issue is concerned with how instructional shifts might be able to close the gap between teacher and student. To do so requires, among other things, challenging assumptions as to where expert power and referent power reside.

Unlike in traditional models of teaching and learning where knowledge transfer almost exclusively passes from expert to novice (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011), the need to facilitate understanding in dialogic interaction is bidirectional, meaning that there will also be moments when the teacher needs to understand something a student says for dialogue to develop. There is an implied assumption in Goldenberg's (1992) instructional conversation framework that a decentering of "known-answer" questions invites the class to take classroom discourse in directions that the teacher may not readily anticipate. When Mr. Nelson asks his PE2 students about who in their family is funny (a discussion prompt employed in advance of a reading unit about laughter being good for health), he asks follow-up questions that yield answers that he may not likely find familiar. More importantly, he is inviting the students into an open-ended dialogue that requires their knowledge for a successful interaction. This raises the possibility that students will produce answers whose meaning he will need to negotiate with the class, as is the case in the following PE1 class excerpt.

1 Mr. Nelson: Who thinks you are the most funny person in your
2 family? You think so? Who thinks your father is the most…?
3 Mother's the most funny? Quite a few more. Uh, Risako, why is your
4 mother funny?
5 Risako: Because…[silence] she has…[silence] [some Japanese word]
6 Risako/Nanako: [laughs]
7 Mr. Nelson: Nanako's typing it in her dictionary. She'll help you with
8 the word.
9 [silence]
10 Mr. Nelson: What does it say?
11 Nanako: [laughs]
12 Mr. Nelson: This is one of those words that I've known before, but
13 I've forgotten what it means.
14 Risako: "Dopiness?"
15 Nanako: "Natural dopiness." Dopiness…?
16 Students: [laughs]
17 Mr. Nelson: Let me take a look.
18 [silence]
19 Mr. Nelson: Ah. Ah! [laughs]
20 Nanako: [laughs]
21 Students: [laughs]
22 Mr. Nelson: I like that, yes. [writes on board] "Natural dopiness." And
23 "dopey," you might know that word from "Snow White and the Seven
24 Dwarves," Dopey. It's kind of that, naturally kind of goofy or strange.
25 So, if you're dopey, I'm definitely dopey, I have a definitely stupid
26 dopiness. So, your mother has a natural dopiness? That's my sister.
27 She's the dopey one.

At first, Risako knows what she wants to say but does not know the English

translation in order to answer the teacher. She utters what appears to be the Japanese

word (line 5), but Mr. Nelson is at a loss for what it means. Risako's partner, Nanako, has

an electronic dictionary, which Mr. Nelson encourages both students to use, for their

benefit as well as his, to the extent where he has to see the dictionary entry along with

them.

That he does not know the English translation at first presents a need to be

flexible with the classroom discourse and check what Nanako and Risako have in their

dictionary. In doing so, he reinforces the idea that it is definitely acceptable for them to use their dictionary. Even though he expressed in a previous interview that stopping an interaction to take the time to check a dictionary is "annoying," Mr. Nelson does not indicate in this situation that they are holding up the class or doing anything that would not constitute good practice. Instead, he walks up to the students' desks and checks their dictionary along with them, in view of rest of the class. By line 19, when he recognizes the word, he positively responds by building on Risako's answer with an explanation about the word for their benefit and the benefit of the rest of the class. In this case, Mr. Nelson demonstrates a genuine interest in the idea Nanako wants to express, decentering his own expert authority about lending value to his students' contributions to discourse.

Observing this validation of student engagement requires two of Gee's (2011) tools, particularly the "Making Strange Tool" and the "Doing and Not Just Saying Tool." To an outsider, whose view is required by the former tool, the use of the word "dopiness" seems out of place or archaic. Outside of the classroom, an L1 English speaker might be more dismissive of Risako's and Nanako's answer than is Mr. Nelson. Moreover, that they are uncertain about the "right" English they should use pushes this interaction further out of alignment with L1 English norms, perceived or otherwise. In this case, Risako and Nanako would be justified to think an L1 English-speaking teacher might judge them negatively, hence their reticence to answer without help from an electronic dictionary.

That said, Mr. Nelson chooses a different path, stopping the dialogue for a moment to check their dictionary entry. Rather than mock or judge their response negatively, his utterance in lines 22-27 validates what they contribute to the interaction.

When he says, "I like that, yes," and writes their answer on the board to teach the rest of the class the vocabulary, he is allowing their contribution to stand as a valuable teaching moment and a positive development in the dialogue.

Much of the data presented thus far lacks the sort of directly negative feedback that a more authoritarian teacher might be more apt to give. Clearly, Mr. Nelson is still an authority figure, standing over students and having, oftentimes, an overt influence over the classroom interaction. However, what transpires in Mr. Nelson's class is part direct authority and part encouragement of students' contributions. At times, the teacher may be prescriptive in the sort of interaction he is trying to elicit in terms of accuracy and detail, as I have witnessed and as the students have so far expressed. At other times, though, he takes advantage of opportunities to validate his students' participation in classroom interaction.

Commodification of student expertise

Of course, Mr. Nelson's instructional practices validate not only his students' engagement in dialogue but also the ideas that accompany those developments. Moments where Mr. Nelson adapts his discourse to what students understand largely relate either to Japanese language or, in the next case, Japanese culture. Just as with the previous episode, when the teacher projects that he is receptive to his students' utterances, he tries to show an interest in their ideas with little judgment. Perhaps this is a fiction along the lines of Denzin's (1989) fiction of equality meant to elicit development of dialogue, but this practice deemphasizes any assumptions that the teacher knows all and is constantly judging his students' language use.

While students are working on presentations in their assigned groups during one

class session, Mr. Nelson monitors the groups to ensure they are progressing quickly

enough in time for the day of the presentation. As students work on their slides, he asks

Daigo what he is putting into his presentation as he walks by his desk.

PE1 observation #14 - 07/05/2019
1   Daigo: [*haniwa*]
2   Mr. Nelson: Hannibal?
3   Daigo: [*haniwa*]
4   Mr. Nelson: Haniwa?
5   Daigo: [*nan darou* – what is it]?
6   Mr. Nelson: Is that…not [*joumon*]?
7   Daigo: Ah…yes. It's like…
8   Mr. Nelson: Where? Where is this? Japan?
9   Daigo: Ah, yes, Japan.
10   Soichi: Reclaimed figure.
11   Daigo: [*nan to ieba* – what do I say]?
12   Mr. Nelson: So, is this, is this, I'm not really strong on Japanese eras.
13   Joumon is…how old? After this? Before this?
14   Soichi: Before.
15   Mr. Nelson: Before. Ah. So joumon is older.
16   Soichi: Joumon is older.
17   Daigo: Japan…the most oldest era.
18   Mr. Nelson: So, this is after joumon. He was born in joumon.
19   Soichi/Daigo: [laughs]

In asking unknown-answer questions (e.g., line 8 and lines 12-13), at least those

questions with answers that are not immediately known to the teacher, Mr. Nelson

challenges the assumption that a correct answer is required because he, in fact, does not

know the correct answer in a situation where he appears interested in learning something

new. On a deeper level, the brief exchange in English about Japanese history is an

example of interaction in third spaces (Bhabha, 1994), where elements of knowledge that

both teacher and student contribute to dialogue undergo "rearticulation, or translation"

into "*something else besides*" (p. 41). This affirms the notion that meaning can be

co-constructed across polytopic differences while still validating and commodifying learners' identities and knowledge, even as they are revoiced in English.

Benson (2010) views the third space as a means of examining student resistance or reclamation of expertise against the traditional asymmetric power dynamic that favors teachers. In the episode above, however, I interpret Mr. Nelson's discursive moves as a means for inviting students' expertise. This sort of move relocates power sharing out of the realm of contentious resistance and more into the domain of dialogic interaction, reflecting Kent and Taylor's (2002) characterization of interactants in dialogue developing a common purpose.

In many similar instances, I see Mr. Nelson as taking opportunities to decenter his expertise while in interaction with students, often by asking students about topical knowledge with which they might be more familiar than he is, and then validating their contributions to classroom interaction as they share such knowledge in English. In so doing, the teacher shifts focus away from any language and cultural expertise he has and validates the ideas that his students can express. This is not to say that Mr. Nelson shifts the class away from learning the target language; PE class is, after all, seen as the time to practice English. Rather, while the practice of English is a main objective of the class, the teacher still seeks to shape his instructional practices around what his students can contribute. In the July 19th PE class, Mr. Nelson's goal is to highlight the ways in which English articles are used. Compared to the just completed music presentation project, this unpacking of grammar is relatively uninteresting, and it seems that Mr. Nelson senses this lack of natural interest from the students. While checking answers on a particular

grammar exercise with students, he seeks out an opportunity to engage the students and

make them laugh.

PE1 observation #20 - 07/19/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Number three, the reason, or a reason for being late, like,
2   is it going to be specific or non-specific? "A" or "the" here? What do
3   you think, uh…Takuya?
4   Takuya: "A"?
5   Mr. Nelson: "A"? Yes, a good reason, you have some reason, you
6   have a good reason. Any reason.

The known-answer questions in lines 1-3, naturally, yield only the minimal,

required response from Takuya; in deciding which article belongs before "good reason for

being late," the only choices are "a" or "the." Takuya's answer, "a," is correct because, as

suggested in lines 5-6, the "reason" is non-specific.

At this point, Mr. Nelson's expert power controls a dominating share of the

interaction. The students are merely repeating the answers they wrote on their worksheets

while they wait for the teacher to confirm the right answer and explain why. Mr. Nelson

then takes a break from this somewhat mechanical exercise to encourage a little more

creativity from his students. In the next excerpt, Mr. Nelson highlights the use of the

indefinite article "an" to elicit students for interesting reasons why they would be late for

class. It is important to highlight that he is simply playing with the idea and projecting

that he is not angry with students, but by explaining the use of the indefinite article over

the definite article "the," he indicates that he will accept *any* reason that justifies being

late, so long as it is interesting. When prompted, Keiko believes she has one.

PE1 observation #20 - 07/19/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: It's like when I ask you, if you're late to PE class, don't
2   tell me it's because you overslept. I want more interesting reasons.
3   So, Keiko, why were you late to PE class?
4   Keiko: [laughs]

215

5   Mr. Nelson: Please give me "an" interesting reason.
6   Keiko: Hm…[silence] uh, in the morning, I had a hula show. So, I
7   was late.
8   Mr. Nelson: You had a…?
9   Keiko: Hula show.
10   Students: [laughs]
11   Mr. Nelson: Oh, okay, hula show. Did you perform well?
12   Keiko: Yes.
13   Students: [laughs] [applause]
14   Mr. Nelson: Because obviously, hula is definitely more important
15   than PE class.
16   Students: [laughs]
17   Mr. Nelson: Performance would be more important. Uh, do you have
18   any hula performances?
19   Keiko: Yeah, uh, next Friday.
20   Mr. Nelson: Oh. Where?
21   Keiko: Where? [name of performance venue]
22   Mr. Nelson: Oh, so, all of you, you should go and see Keiko this
23   Friday.
24   Students: [laughs]
25   Mr. Nelson: Okay, thank you very much.

Lines 1-3 set up the opportunity for humor within the classroom as Mr. Nelson

elicits Keiko, who belongs to a hula dance circle within the university, to come up with a

"reason" for being late to class (she arrived roughly a few minutes late that day). After

some encouragement in line 5 and a silent moment to think in line 6, Keiko comes up

with a reason in lines 6-7 that aligns with Mr. Nelson's tendency to make his students

laugh. This contribution prompts a number of developments in the interactions. The

students laugh and applaud Keiko, and Mr. Nelson builds on the joke in lines 14-15 (i.e.,

that hula dance is more important than going to class) to elicit a few more laughs from

students.

Mr. Nelson and Keiko continue the exchange for a few more questions and

answers, which allows Keiko to provide further detail about her personal interest in hula

dancing. By allowing her to build on the dialogue with these details, Mr. Nelson is placing a value on Keiko's answer that, within the context of giving "an interesting reason," is greater than the fictionalized slight of being late. The responsivity Mr. Nelson demonstrates through follow-up questions, coupled with the students' reactions through laughing and applause, validates Keiko's answers and participation. On the basis of this interaction, she has successfully completed the task by contributing her sociocultural identities to the classroom dialogue.

Mr. Nelson's utterances in lines 14-15, lines 17-18, lines 22-23, and line 25 are arguably all instances of reward power, however small, in that they are validations of the students' practice of English and engagement in the interaction. In other words, by centering the exchange around Keiko's answers and asking follow-up questions for more ideas in front of the class, the teacher is rewarding the student for playing along in the exchange. This practice of validation aligns with several of Goldenberg's (1992) criteria for the instructional conversation, particularly the expression of responsivity to students' engagement within class. While many of Mr. Nelson's attempts throughout the observation period to engage the class are met with a lack of the kind of engagement that the teacher looks for (i.e., the teacher still encounters delayed responses or silence altogether when seeking to build interaction with students), it is apparent that the teacher aligns his interactional moves in a way that seeks to prestige those moments when students do respond in a way that he perceives is productive to their language learning.

At the same time, Mr. Nelson pursues these interactions in a manner that seems to draw him and his students closer together. While there may be silent pauses and awkward

217

moments from time to time, there are far more instances of friendly and welcome

interaction than there are moments of disinterest or demotivation. As noted in many

episodes presented in this chapter, students repeatedly laugh and indicate their interest in

response to the teacher's interactional moves. Their responses in interviews further

highlight why they perceive Mr. Nelson to be an effective teacher for their language

learning, and such rationales have seldom mentioned aspects of native-speakerism or

teacher authority. Instead, the reasons they perceive the Practical English class to be

useful contributes to the themes in this chapter, and thus the necessity of dynamic

classroom discourse practices made apparent through the teacher's instructional shifts.

Preliminary propositions

Taking the findings in this chapter into consideration, I can generate a series of

preliminary propositions to hold up to further scrutiny in the next chapter, which will

synthesize the findings in this chapter to discuss how instructional shifts contribute to

what classroom atmosphere the teacher's overall discursive practices foster. In addressing

RQ1 relating to the ontology of the instructional shift, I make the following propositions:

- *The teacher observed in this study shifts instructional practices to foster a classroom environment that adheres to his expectations for language learning.*
- *The teacher's instructional shifts employ and are confined to the interactional resources that he perceives are useful to classroom objectives.*

As discussion of the first theme in this chapter highlights, I generated these

propositions through combinations of codes for challenges and opportunities and codes

for modes of communication and other interactional resources. The tendency to shift

between various resources highlights the potential of expanding the interactional space

between teacher and student, while the decision-making processes in choosing some

resources over others (e.g., L1 usage) sets the boundaries of this expanded space. While this space is still bounded to some extent, the expanded use of interactional resources by both teacher and student allows for the greater ability of interactants to interactionally shift and negotiate meaning and power dynamics with each other. Of course, the limitations of that negotiation are connected somewhat to the limitations of the interactional space, as the classroom atmosphere is still mainly (though not exclusively) crafted by the teacher's attitudes about English learning and by the students' perceptions of those attitudes. Still, what I highlight here is the likelihood that interactional and instructional shifts are only as effective as the interactional resources that participants accept and the expectations those participants have about the interaction.

The propositions above are not so much a critique of previous claims made in research regarding dialogic interaction and dynamic assessment as they are an expansion of such theories in a manner that transcends strictly verbal forms of communication. I assert that the main principles of Vygotskyan approaches to teaching and learning are present in the classroom practices observed, but acknowledging as much requires an expansion of what has been traditionally perceived as "dialogue" to include more than speech. While the spoken word is often the primary aspect of dialogue between teacher and student, the contemporary literature on teacher discourse, particularly in language learning contexts, has yet to fully take into account interactional resources that expand the range of contextual cues from which classroom interactants draw and negotiate meaning. My analysis of the data presented to this point contends that recognizing the various ways in which speakers aim to make themselves understood broadens the

opportunities for understanding the various dimensions of how meaning is

co-constructed.

This is true for students as it is for the teacher. As Mr. Nelson shifts instruction in

a number of episodes, he also takes into account how his students respond, whether

verbally or through other occurrences in interaction such as laughter, body language, and

facial expressions. Especially in situations where students hesitate to contribute verbally

to spoken discourse, the teacher sees a need to rely on other signs to determine the

effectiveness of his teaching practices and, as a result, the need to shift practices when

necessary.

As a result, the analysis of the data allows for two ancillary propositions:

- *Dialogic interaction involves primarily speech but also interactional resources mutually accepted by interactants within a dialogue.*
- *The likelihood and efficacy of interactional shifts are related to the range of interactional resources mutually accepted and understood by both teacher and student.*

I choose the phrase "mutually accepted and understood" since an expanded view

of dialogue to recognize nonverbal interactional resources only goes as far as those that

the classroom participants view as effective and useful in interaction. The explicit and

implicit language policies present within the classroom require that classroom

interactants are accepting of the linguistic and interactional resources employed. Outside

the classroom, discussions about tensions between language policies and linguistic

diversity (Piller, 2016) have long established that the bounds of multilingualism are

typically only as broad as the range of language upon which speakers within an

interaction are willing to mutually agree. If this is applicable to spoken language, so, too, is it for other forms of communication, as evidenced by the research presented thus far.

Finally, the likelihood of flexibility in interaction has a direct relationship to the range of mutually accepted affordances employed to co-construct meaning. Arnold's (2012) research emphasized that gestures in conjunction with verbal explanations permit a greater likelihood for clarifying meaning in the organization of sequences of tasks. Various examples in the episodes presented in the previous chapter have demonstrated similar functions of clarification manifest in using different interactional resources when classroom interactants encounter and negotiate challenges in mutually constructing meaning.

This is not to say that interactional and instructional shifts are not possible without multiple forms of linguistic resources. After all, Wortham et al.'s (2011) presentation of examples of shifts in alignment through verbal utterances in interviews partially forms the basis of the theory presented in Chapter 3. That said, what the research to this point shows is that, even within the domain of mutually accepted interactional resources, the use of one form of communication to negotiate challenges encountered during the interaction employing other resources speak to the complementary and thus cumulative role of resources contributing to the potential of mediation in any interaction. Simply put, the broader the range of resources that interactants can employ, the greater the likelihood exists for mutual understanding.

As for the epistemology informing Mr. Nelson's instructional shifts, which is the focus of RQ2, my interpretation of the data analysis yields the following propositions:

- *The teacher perceives a need for changes to his own practices as challenges to and opportunities for language learning arise during the course of classroom interaction.*
- *The teacher may take advantage of opportunities in interaction to establish rapport through referent power and further align with students through mutually shared knowledge and identities.*

As with the propositions addressing RQ1, the first proposition addressing RQ2 is an extension of existing theory about dialogic interaction relevant to this dissertation, generated primarily from Engin's (2017) assertion about limited dialogue attributed to challenges encountered in interaction. While there are, indeed, episodes involving instructional shifts where Mr. Nelson perceives a need for repair or clarification, other excerpts from the data also indicate that instructional shifts in fostering dialogue are also built on perceived opportunities. These opportunities may relate to generating more positive learning outcomes or a deeper exploration of language or topical knowledge, but the instructional shifts built on opportunities serve as a means for establishing rapport with students, at times because of challenges arising from uneven power dynamics seen in other situations.

Both recent literature (e.g., Arghode et al., 2017; Estepp & Roberts, 2015) and Mr. Nelson's stated perspectives reflect beliefs that rapport between teacher and student is associated with positive learning outcomes. The data highlights numerous instances where Mr. Nelson shifts the classroom dialogue to validate students' contributions or to provide moments for students to laugh or relax, allowing for teacher and student to establish affinity with each other. Moreover, interview excerpts of students' perspectives

about the PE class also seem positive attitudes about language learning when that rapport is achieved.

Altogether, the various circumstances described above transcend the capabilities of a mechanical, overly methodical approach to pedagogies of language teaching. What has been shown thus far are discrete instances where the teacher encounters the need to make unanticipated changes or additions to any prepared lesson plans and interact with students on a more dynamic, more conversational level. The presentation of findings and preliminary propositions generated from data in this chapter, thus, presents an opportunity to provide a synthesis of the themes surrounding the instructional shift in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

CONTRIBUTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS

Thus far, I have presented the data in the previous chapter along the lines of discrete episodes and discrete strategies informed by shifts in the teacher's conceptualization of his classroom. However, while I have detailed the instructional shift in terms of what Mr. Nelson does and, to some extent, why he engages in shifts, it is also important to discuss their overall contribution to the classroom. After all, within the context of education, the discussion of dynamic instructional practices extends only as far as their potential to have a positive effect on students and their learning.

Mr. Nelson's practice of the instructional shift, informed by various rationales working in tandem, speaks to a broader approach to pedagogical practices that aligns with the dynamic nature of interaction between a teacher and their students in order to foster greater engagement within the classroom. In this chapter, I assert that the teacher's instructional practices and the shifts meant to negotiate the changing dynamics of the classroom interaction contribute to a nonthreatening environment that aims to foster language proficiency and agency in learners. As a result, not presenting a synthesized understanding of the data as a whole would be short-sighted. By keeping in mind the different circumstances and rationales that contribute to the teacher's use of instructional shifts, I will be able to close this dissertation with the importance of dynamic instructional practices in language learning contexts.

Each of the themes presented in the previous chapter contributes to the classroom as a safe space for new learning; at minimum, the instructional shifts presented thus far

provide a representation to students that the teacher and the classroom provide a

nonthreatening and positive influence in their language learning experience. In producing

this representation to students, the teacher can more effectively understand the knowledge

students bring to the classroom and build a mutual understanding of new knowledge as a

result. Here, I argue that ability of Mr. Nelson to flexibly shift instructional practices with

respect to classroom discourse in the face of challenges to and opportunities for positive

learning outcomes contributes to the positive and engaging environment generated in the

classroom.

The purpose of this chapter, which is an extension of the presentation of findings

in the last chapter, is to observe the series of propositions presented in the previous

chapter and further build on those propositions through an analysis of two episodes.

Doing so allows observation of how the themes in the previous chapter are intertwined

and complementary, contributing as a whole to the nature of instructional shifts and

dialogic interaction. This chapter will then close on how a holistic view of dynamic

instructional practices observes the building of rapport and mediated agency and

attributes these qualities to the use of instructional shifts.

The following two episodes further highlight these changes and demonstrate how

they contribute overall to the classroom discourse. This chapter will then close with a

treatment of the positive aspects of the observed classroom interaction that might be

attributed to instructional shifts and dynamic discursive practices. In particular, I will use

the discussion in this chapter to associate the dynamic nature of classroom interaction

affords Mr. Nelson with the greater opportunity to build a meaningful rapport with

students and instill a sense of empowerment through mediated agency and validation of their ideas.

Describing customs and traditions

One of the two episodes explored in this chapter relates to a discussion activity conducted in pairs, after which students report to the whole class. In the discussion activity, Mr. Nelson asks the students to read a series of prompts about traditions and customs in their country. In pairs, they then brainstorm in English about what traditions and customs are common in Japan, what has disappeared, and what should be preserved. I observe a number of instructional shifts in this episode, touching on the themes explored in the previous chapter.

In the PE2 class, when Mr. Nelson asks for volunteers to report about a traditional item that people in Japan still use today, Ayaka volunteers with "furoshiki," which is a Japanese cloth used as a wrapping for gifts or for carrying everyday objects. This prompts Mr. Nelson to ask follow-up questions and scaffold a dialogue around explaining what a furoshiki is.

> PE2 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Ayaka?
> 2   Ayaka: Furoshiki. Using furoshiki.
> 3   Mr. Nelson: Furoshiki. Which is…? Explain to foreign people what…
> 4   [points to Roehl]
> 5   Students: [laugh]
> 6   Ayaka: Clothes to…putting, put something in the furoshiki.
> 7   Mr. Nelson: Okay. So, something. What is something?
> 8   Ayaka: [*ee*]
> 9   Mr. Nelson: For example?
> 10   Ayaka: Uniform.
> 11   Mr. Nelson: Uniform.
> 12   Ayaka: In my junior high school, we use it for…putting uniform on.
> 13   Mr. Nelson: Oh, okay. And, so you put uniform in furoshiki, which is
> 14   what? A box? A backpack? What is it?

15 Ayaka: [gestures a round shape]
16 Students: [laugh]
17 Mr. Nelson: Okay. You wrap it, right?
18 Ayaka: Wrap.
19 Mr. Nelson: And it's, what, made from what?
20 Ayaka: [ee]
21 Mr. Nelson: What is it? What is it? Is it plastic? Is it metal?
22 Ayaka: Clothes.
23 Mr. Nelson: Clothes, okay. So we, in English, it would be…[writes on
24 board] cloth, which is, like, material, like, clothes material. Cloth
25 wrapping. [writes on board] Or sometimes the reverse. Wrapping
26 cloth. Cloth wrapping or wrapping cloth, could go either way. So, and
27 you wrap…yeah. It's a good example, you still see them when people
28 walking.

I chose this episode because Mr. Nelson encourages Ayaka to provide more

details through extended student contributions (line 3) and responds accordingly (e.g.,

lines 12-13), two criteria defined by Goldenberg (1992) in building an instructional

conversation. In this exchange, the teacher is challenging students to transcend merely

mechanical practice of English and contribute more useful details to the interaction. Mr.

Nelson had, in other classes, established the notion that oversimplified English is "lazy."

That said, even after Ayaka produces only short answers in line 2, line 17, and line 21, the

teacher, without providing admonishment, encourages her to go further by providing

guiding questions that allow for further details that are within her ability to provide.

Besides the obvious challenges of language, there is more to this exchange,

particularly when he uses the opportunity provided by my presence. Mr. Nelson gives the

instruction "Explain to foreign people what…" (line 3) while pointing me out to the rest

of the class, which is what elicits the laughter. By now, students are aware that Mr.

Nelson has lived in Japan for a significant period of time; surely, then, he is aware of

what a furoshiki is. The other non-Japanese person in the room, on the other hand, may

not be so familiar (at least, that is the representation that Mr. Nelson creates), and may require an explanation. My presence is seen as an opportunity to have students use English in the manner that he previously defined with respect to "flexible English."

In any case, it is also arguably an attempt at raising students' motivation: another L1 English speaker in the room is perhaps another point of interest of this particular classroom. Research on both student and teacher perspectives in the Japanese EFL context (e.g., Evans & Imai, 2011, and Miyazato, 2009, respectively) has generated assertions about the cultural power of English that, in French and Raven's (1959) terms, highlight the sort of referent power that L1 English speakers have over L2 English learners. Mr. Nelson, through speech and gestures to point me out in front of the class, makes a conscious decision to employ me in his instructional practices in order to interest and motivate the students.

Of course, Engin (2017) defines linguistic resources (or, more to the point, the absence of such resources) as a challenge to dialogic interaction. As a result, when there are pauses, or when Ayaka indicates that she is having trouble immediately producing a desired response. The sound [*ee*], made twice by Ayaka in this exchange, appears to indicate that "What is something?" (line 6) is an unexpected question, or to a question which Ayaka needs an extended moment to come up with an answer on her own. Seeming to recognize this, Mr. Nelson restates his question, asking what a furoshiki is made of but also providing choices that, to those who are familiar with what a furoshiki is, are clearly wrong (line 21, in which Mr. Nelson says, "What is it? What is it? Is it plastic? Is it metal?"). However, this gives Ayaka an idea of what a desired answer should

look like. In this case, a furoshiki is an article of fabric, so when she says the word

clothes (line 21), it prompts Mr. Nelson to engage in direct teaching of the difference

between "cloth" and "clothes" (lines 22-27). At this point, the teacher appears to have

elicited as much interaction from Ayaka as he believes is possible without needing to

resort to Japanese. Once this has been achieved, he carries the remainder of the

interaction to provide language with which students may not likely be familiar (e.g., the

phrase "wrapping cloth" in line 24).

Mr. Nelson goes into some detail regarding this pedagogical approach when I

interview him later about this episode.

Teacher interview #02 - 06/21/2019
1 Roehl: And the students laugh. Um…I guess to describe the shape for
2 a furoshiki. Um…what, uh…I, I guess when you're trying to, um, you
3 know, ask the students to report in this kind of activity, what kinds
4 of…how do you choose the selection of the questions that you ask?
5 [silence]
6 Mr. Nelson: Probably, well…these particular questions about, like,
7 things that are disappearing or things that are still done, these are
8 right from the textbook.
9 Roehl: No, but, how do you choose the follow-up questions?
10 Mr. Nelson: Oh. Freeform?
11 Roehl: Okay.
12 Mr. Nelson: I mean, for example, this is a follow-up question that,
13 that, that we've done before, so that was easy. But, then…and then,
14 for example, if they're being asked, "For example…" Because,
15 yeah…previous classes, the students say something like, "Oh, it's a
16 Japanese…I like Japanese sweets."
17 Roehl: Yeah.
18 Mr. Nelson: Okay, well, that's a giant category, for example. But, um,
19 and it, "for example" is something I have them practice in their
20 conversation between each other. However, like, when, oh, and "made
21 from what," we've done "made from" or "made of," we've practiced
22 those before as well.
23 Roehl: Okay.
24 Mr. Nelson: Um, and I sort of prompt them. "Plastic? Metal?"

There are two takeaways from this interview excerpt, one broad and one specific. First, when Mr. Nelson interacts with students as they report out their answers from the prior discussion, he says simply that the follow-up questions he poses are "freeform," or generally unrehearsed. This approach to classroom discourse aligns with Arnett's (1992) understanding of dialogue as an open-ended endeavor which opens up the teacher to unanticipated outcomes. Nonetheless, as Mr. Nelson guides Ayaka through the interaction, he provides additional prompts to use her cultural knowledge (e.g., "What is it? What is it? Is it plastic? Is it metal?"), especially after she indicates a loss for what to say next..

Overall, this is a challenging interaction if the student interacting with Mr. Nelson does not easily arrive at the desired answers, if not for the help that Mr. Nelson provides. When I interview Ayaka about this episode, I try to get a sense of how she feels about being put on the spot.

Student interview #03 - 06/19/2019

1 Roehl: He got many questions. Um, but…so, you did not expect this
2 question?
3 Ayaka: Mm-hmm.
4 Roehl: [*kitai shinakatta* – did not expect]
5 Ayaka: Ah, yes, yes.
6 Roehl: Um, and then, okay. But…so, but after this question, do you
7 think, "Oh, maybe there are other questions. Maybe he will ask me
8 another question"?
9 Ayaka: Yes.
10 Roehl: Like, um, so…"put uniform," this is the teacher, "you put
11 uniform in furoshiki, which is what? A box? A backpack? What is
12 it?" Alright?
13 Ayaka: Yes, yes.
14 Roehl: Um, did you…um…did you, were you surprised by this
15 question? Or…
16 Ayaka: No, no, I don't. Because, because he explained the, explained
17 about furoshiki. So, this question is surprising to me, but next
18 question is not surprise to me.

19   Roehl: Yeah, because maybe you get, because after this, you get used
20   to…
21   Ayaka: Yes.

If the instructional conversation paradigm defined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) and Goldenberg (1992) is taken in prescriptive fashion, then the fully open-ended nature of the dialogue presented in Mr. Nelson's class differs from a more focused or more structured approach in which a teacher leads students through the learning process. However, as the interview excerpt with Ayaka indicates, the practice of the open-ended dialogue between Mr. Nelson and Ayaka still allows the teacher to determine what knowledge can be elicited and what requires more direct instruction.

Up to this point, the dialogue in class is very limited, even with Mr. Nelson's scaffolding. Later in the exchange, he tries to elicit further answers without having to choose a student. Kotaro eventually does speak up, but only after a bout of classroom silence. The answer is enough for Mr. Nelson to build on, as he asks students for a show of hands, perhaps as a way to have students involved in the interaction without much difficulty. Then, he relies on me again to model the dialogue for the class.

PE2 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Anything else? People in Japan still…?
2   Kotaro: Have tatami room.
3   Mr. Nelson: Have tatami room, okay. People still have tatami. Who
4   has tatami room in your house? Or mansion or apartment, whatever?
5   [students raise hands] One, two, three, four, only four. Okay, the other
6   class, about half. Okay. Um, how about in your grandparents' house,
7   has tatami? My house has tatami, just one room. Yeah, I think houses
8   that are all tatami are now pretty rare. Most houses will have, like,
9   one tatami room. Anyone have all tatami house? All, every room?
10   Except kitchen? Kitchen, toilets. How about your house in America,
11   Roehl? Lots of tatami?
12   Roehl: Oh, yeah, everywhere.
13   Mr. Nelson: Everywhere.
14   Roehl: And on the walls.

15 Mr. Nelson: Yeah. [laughs] Ceiling, tatami ceiling.
16 Students: [laughs]
17 Roehl: Bathroom, yeah.
18 Mr. Nelson: Tatami bathtub.
19 Roehl: Yeah, yeah.
20 Students: [laughs]

There are two instances where Mr. Nelson demonstrates responsivity to his students. The first is where he builds dialogue on Kotaro's answer about the tatami room (a traditional Japanese room with rice straw floors and simple furnishings). This allows him to tell a brief anecdote about his own house having a tatami room, which I interpret as a means to draw interest from the students in bringing up a potentially surprising revelation that a foreigner would live in a house with a traditional Japanese room. I see this as a way of incorporating elements of what his students might find familiar into the construction of his identity in front of the class. Just as in previous instances where Mr. Nelson incorporates topics such as Japanese customs and Japanese music into the PE course, the choice of what knowledge to center within the classroom allows students to engage in the interaction using ideas that are likely more familiar to them, even as they interact in the target language.

One of the propositions presented at the beginning of this chapter relates to interactional resources contributing to dialogue, which the recent literature considers as more than speech alone; if this is accepted, then so, too, must the dialogic moves that come in response to those affordances. After asking for a show of hands, Mr. Nelson makes a brief comparison to his PE1 students that, after a fashion, constitutes a validation of his PE2 students' contributions. It shows to the class that he has internalized the

collective meaning that his students have formed (i.e., most of the students in class do not live in houses that have tatami rooms).

Continuing with the whole group activity gives me the impression that Mr. Nelson wants to sample the answers from the class until he is satisfied that the students understand the discussion prompts. As he asks other students about "holiday customs," he has the feeling that this is not the case.

PE2 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Okay. A holiday custom that I enjoy is…Sakiko, what's a
2   holiday custom you enjoy?
3   Sakiko: [*shogatsu* – New Year's Day].
4   Mr. Nelson: [*shogatsu*], but what about, what about [*oshogatsu*] that
5   you like? Like, something you do or eat or watch or…? What's a
6   custom you do? Like, every [*shogatsu*], you always [*nya nya nya* –
7   blah blah blah].
8   Sakiko: [silence] Eat [*osechi* – traditional New Year's Day meal in
9   Japan]…in my grandparents' house.
10   Mr. Nelson: Alright, so, your custom would be [*osechi*] and your
11   grandparents' house.

Here, Mr. Nelson believes that his understanding of the word "custom" – which can be described in this case as actions that are done out of habit – is not in alignment with how Sakiko might understand it. Perceiving this challenge, he asks further questions to scaffold the word as he wants it understood by his students. Phrasing a custom as "something you do or eat or watch," Mr. Nelson guides Sakiko to an answer that is closer to what he is looking for.

However, as he asks another student, Kimi, about a holiday custom she likes, she repeats the answer that she came up with after speaking to her partner.

PE2 observation #05 - 06/17/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Um…let's see. Kimi, what's a holiday custom that you
2   enjoy?

233

3 Kimi: [*shogatsu*]
4 Mr. Nelson: [*shogatsu*], what, what custom? [*oshogatsu*] is the
5 holiday. What is the custom that you like? You always do blah blah
6 blah, or you always…watch [*nantoka nantoka* – blah blah blah], or
7 you always…
8 Kimi: [silence]
9 Mr. Nelson: Okay. Is there some confusion between a holiday and a
10 custom? We're thinking of them as two separate things. So, like, I'll
11 give some American examples. Like, the holiday is Halloween
12 [writes on board], the custom would be something…wear a costume.
13 Okay? Or the holiday is Christmas [writes on board] and the custom
14 is, um, um…eat turkey on Christmas. Or the holiday is, um,
15 Independence Day and the custom is fireworks [writes on board].
16 American-style [*hanabi* – fireworks]. So, the holiday is [*oshogatsu*],
17 what custom of [*oshogatsu*] do you like?
18 Kimi: [silence] [checks with classmate?] I, I, I always get [*toshidama*
19 – small gift of money on New Year's Day].
20 Mr. Nelson: Ah, [*toshidama*], okay. From your parents or
21 grandparents or…? Yes, [*otoshidama*].

In this part of the episode, it is possible that Kimi is still not in alignment with Mr.

Nelson's representation of the word "custom" or that she is just repeating what she told

her partner in the pair discussion. Either way, Mr. Nelson judges that he may need to

clarify his understanding of the word to the class as a whole. He uses the board to provide

a quick lecture about the differences between holiday and custom, between Christmas

and eating turkey, and between Independence Day and fireworks. These differences are

put into a table written on the board, allowing Mr. Nelson to point to the sorts of

"customs" he is looking for, which he hopes will provide enough context for Kimi and

the rest of the class to understand the presented concept.

  Kimi eventually does come up with a satisfactory answer – otoshidama, in this

case – and Mr. Nelson provides a brief validation of her answer before trying to build

dialogue around the subject of otoshidama. He asks Kimi whether her parents of

grandparents give her otoshidama, but that only elicits a slight nod from her. At this

point, he could have pushed the dialogue further and asked more scaffolding questions to

elicit a more detailed answer, but at this point, he decides to move on and ask another

student about holiday customs they like.

This decision to leave the dialogue alone without pressing for more details seems

to have been made in the moment, perhaps given the lack of engagement thus far, brings

up a remark by Mr. Nelson when talking about when to engage the students and when to

leave matters alone, which raises a parallel to this episode. One of our interviews

centered around a group of students he was monitoring and, in his mind, was struggling

with a task. When he asked them if they needed any help, they quietly looked amongst

themselves and said no. That was enough for Mr. Nelson to move on to another group. In

a later interview, he was asked to explore his thinking about that moment.

> Teacher interview #06 - 07/26/2019
> 1　Roehl: Um, I think, um, and I think I'm trying to get at, let's say that a
> 2　student, when you ask them, "Is everything okay?" And then they
> 3　nod. Is there a situation where a teacher shouldn't take that at face
> 4　value? Where, it's like, maybe he's really not okay, he's really
> 5　struggling? [silence] Or are these instincts enough to tell you, "Okay,
> 6　yeah, he's okay"?
> 7　Mr. Nelson: […] Well, and, and, I mean, when you asked the question
> 8　in that way, honestly, the person that popped in my head was my
> 9　second year, low motivated classes. Sometimes, they'll say they're
> 10　okay, meaning they just don't give a damn.
> 11　Roehl: Ah.
> 12　Mr. Nelson: I talk to them, like, talking to a wall. So, I'll just, for my
> 13　sanity, I would like, "Alright, you're okay, I won't press the issue."

Within Goldenberg's (1992) framework, I look at this episode and perceive a

possible tension between the imperative to develop connected discourse and the

importance of fostering a nonthreatening classroom, two elements seen as necessary for

productive dialogue. In situations where students encounter challenges or are, in cases where the teacher perceives a lack of motivation, Mr. Nelson considers not continuing engagement with the students as a means for preserving the peace within a classroom despite foregoing the potential for learning that requires a development of dialogue. In this episode, however, other opportunities for classroom interaction remain open to the teacher, and he chooses Kenta next in order to confirm the extent to which the class understands the word "custom."

PE2 observation #05 - 06/17/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: Uh, one more. Kenta, what's a holiday custom you
2   enjoy?
3   Kenta: [*shogatsu*]
4   Students: [laughs]
5   Mr. Nelson: [laughs] That's the holiday! What's the custom you
6   enjoy?
7   Kenta: I…watch…Hakone Ekiden.
8   Mr. Nelson: Ah, good one. Me, too. I like the custom of watching
9   Hakone Ekiden. Who watches Hakone Ekiden? Oh, quite a few
10   people. Yeah, yeah, this year, Rintaro is going to run in Hakone
11   Ekiden. Joining Aoyama Gakuin's team. True?
12   Rintaro: Not true. [laughs]
13   Mr. Nelson: You should say yes. [laughs]

One more time, a student repeats an answer that does not match Mr. Nelson's expectations. This time, however, the answer prompts Kenta's classmates to laugh. By now, they seem to be largely aware that answering a question about holiday customs with New Year's Day is not what their teacher is looking for, and laugh as a result. A quick recast of the question is all Mr. Nelson needs to elicit a desirable answer.

When Kenta answers with "Hakone Ekiden," an annual road race held just after New Year's Day in Japan, Mr. Nelson appears to sense an opportunity to align himself with his students, particularly on a well-known custom that he follows. He gives

236

particular validation to Kenta's answer (i.e., "Ah, good one") and asks for a show of hands to involve the rest of the class in the dialogue about the race. Then, he turns to Rintaro, joking with him about running the ekiden, prompting laughs to keep the mood in the classroom light.

Challenging moments such as these, where the teacher perceives a significant difference in understanding between him and his students, are certain to raise issues foreign language anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) provide some illumination to the perspectives of language learners when they are not confident about their abilities to use the language they are studying. Moreover, the presence of the teacher and the task of speaking to the teacher in front of the class certainly has an effect on students. Effiong (2016) touches on this concern when students that he interviewed expressed negative attitudes toward teachers they perceive as "serious," despite their judgment that they are good teachers knowledgeable with English.

As described in the previous chapter, Mr. Nelson seems to try to mitigate challenges arising from his status as a knowledgeable English teacher by employing humor and jokes in his class. Kotaro, who was involved in this episode, expresses his belief that Mr. Nelson's sense of humor makes a difficult or boring class more interesting.

Student interview #13 - 07/15/2019
1   Roehl: Um, in any case, um, in general, um, uh, how, no, what do you
2   think of Mr. Nelson's teaching?
3   Kotaro: It's very good. [laughs]
4   Roehl: Very good, okay, what do you think so?
5   Kotaro: Because he trying to make fun.
6   Roehl: Mm.
7   Kotaro: Make us fun. And he, he looks like enjoying teaching
8   English.
9   Roehl: Oh, okay. Is…? Go ahead.
10   Kotaro: Other English teacher, I think, sometimes looks like boring.

11 Roehl: Oh, okay.
12 Kotaro: [*mendoukusai*]
13 Roehl: [*mendoukusai*], troublesome.
14 Kotaro: Troublesome. But Mr. Nelson don't show that, that feeling.
15 […] If difficult and boring tasks, he say some joke and try to best, so,
16 it's easy to starting task.

In this episode, the difficulty is established through the repeated challenges in having students understand Mr. Nelson's representation of the word "custom." Despite various shifts employed to scaffold understanding and build on the students' ideas through interaction, the dialogue is still somewhat formulaic and mostly generated through Mr. Nelson's prompts. The teacher "trying to make fun" is seen by Kotaro and a number of other students as a welcome aspect of the PE class and Mr. Nelson's teaching. In the face of challenges where substantive mediation is required for positive learning outcomes, Mr. Nelson shifts practices to mitigate negative attitudes about language learning through jokes and humor. The last remark he makes to Rintaro about running the ekiden comes at the end of a lengthy struggle about the meaning of a particular word, which could be seen as demotivating. The passing joke allows for some relief from what could be, at least for some, a tense learning experience.

To be sure, there are more material purposes to Mr. Nelson's use of humor, as he indicated in an earlier interview referencing the questions he asks to students.

Teacher interview #01 - 06/14/2019
1 Mr. Nelson: "Yeah, okay, you got to go deeper with the what are you
2 studying for, how many hours do you plan to study?" Something like
3 that. "Where are you going to eat lunch? Who is your friend? Why
4 wasn't I invited?"
5 Roehl: Sure.
6 Mr. Nelson: [laughs] I like slipping joke questions into just, just to…
7 Roehl: Why is that important? You do it a lot, and I know why.
8 Mr. Nelson: It's more for me. [laughs] I like to get the humor reaction,
9 obviously, but, um, a lot of it's for me. Well, I mean, humor is one

238

10 way to also gauge how they're paying attention, what they're
11 understanding, if they laugh at some quip that's related to, uh, what
12 I've been talking about.

The shift to employ humor in class, on top of making the class light and as free of anxiety as possible, serves an immediate purpose in providing Mr. Nelson with an indication of the extent to which his students are engaged in the class and understanding what he is saying. The students' laughter after Kotaro's answer indicates the developing alignment in understanding between Mr. Nelson and at least parts of his class. In turn, the laughter the teacher elicits from Rintaro about running in the ekiden indicates the student's current engagement in the interaction.

That said, the responses elicited by Mr. Nelson's attempts at humor indicate an effort to establish a degree of comfort in the class and evidence that, for the students, the classroom is a nonthreatening environment that is conducive to language learning. Most relevant to this discussion, the use of humor is an invitation to the students to engage in participation with the classroom discourse, despite foreign language anxiety. The degree to which this participation is realized is further explored through discussion of the next episode.

Connected speech

The second episode examined in this chapter is similar in nature to the first in that there is a pair discussion previewing a reading unit about laughter being healthy (hence the title of the textbook unit referencing the adage that laughter is the best medicine). Mr. Nelson divides the class into pairs of students who ask each other a set of questions, particularly who is the funniest person in their family.

As with the previous episode (and as with a similar episode mentioned in the previous chapter involving PE2 students doing the same task), the pair discussion in his PE1 class is followed by a whole group activity where students report their answers in a largely unstructured interaction with Mr. Nelson.

PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: Okay, so, raise your hand, who thinks you are the most
2   funny in your family? Most funny? You think you are the most
3   funny? [no one raises hand] Really? Really? Because my image, as I
4   look at everyone, who do I think is the most funny in their family? I
5   think Manami might be.
6   Students: [laughs]
7   Mr. Nelson: No?
8   Manami: No.
9   Mr. Nelson: Maybe Arisa is the most funny. You have such a bright
10 personality. Uh, Toru, most funny in his family?
11 Toru: 'Cause my mother's face is very funny.
12 Students: [laughs]
13 Toru: Just stand, she is funny than me.
14 Mr. Nelson: Just standing there.
15 Toru: Yeah.
16 Students: [laughs]

The search for volunteers to answer Mr. Nelson's first question comes up empty, requiring the teacher to choose some students to engage in dialogue with him. He relies on Manami, Arisa, and Toru for help in building dialogue about the subject. Manami disagrees with Mr. Nelson's presumption while Arisa says nothing at all. Finally, Toru makes some comments about his mother being funny (albeit in a way that is not particularly flattering), which prompts students to laugh.

Within the PE1 class, Mr. Nelson often relies on these three students, just as he relies on Kotaro and Ayaka in the PE2 class, in terms of facilitating dialogue in English within the classroom. Mr. Nelson has a particularly complicated but clearly established

rapport with Toru, whom is seen by the teacher and students as proficient in English and

willing to engage in class more frequently. Mr. Nelson's remarks about Toru in one

interview highlight the dimensions of the relationship they have in class.

> Teacher interview #06 - 07/26/2019
>
> 1 Mr. Nelson: Toru, for one, is just like, we're having a conversation the
> 2 other day, "You know, I really hate English." "Oh, really?' [laughs]
> 3 But he's, he has no, but he has a personality that he has no qualms
> 4 about, like, bullshitting in English.
> 5 Roehl: Yes.
> 6 Mr. Nelson: So, when he said that, I was actually surprised.

The surprise appears to stem partly from the degree of candor Toru has when

talking with the teacher, which is something that Mr. Nelson does not seem to find

characteristic in many of his other students. Nonetheless, and despite Toru's attitude

toward English, there are indications here that Toru feels comfortable speaking to Mr.

Nelson in a manner which allows the teacher to rely on him and other students with

whom he has similar rapport when development of dialogue is desired.

This rapport and the effects of this rapport are also observed by other PE1

students as well, as evidenced in my interview with Keiko.

> Student interview #19 - 07/24/2019
>
> 1 Keiko: Chie and Arisa and Toru has, um, they don't feel shy about
> 2 speaking English.
> 3 Roehl: Mm.
> 4 Keiko: So, they, Mr. Nelson try to ask them.

Having established some dialogue at the beginning of the whole class activity, Mr.

Nelson makes a determination that no one in class has answered that they themselves are

the funniest in their family, or are not willing to say it out loud in front of the class.

Regardless of the reason, he changes his question based on the answer Toru gave about his mother.

> PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019
>
> 1 Mr. Nelson: Who else? Your mother is funny in your family? Mother
> 2 is most funny.
> 3 [Riko raises hand]
> 4 Mr. Nelson: Riko, why is your mother funny?
> 5 Riko: Uh…'cause, she can talk with a [inaudible] for me… [silence]
> 6 Students: [laughs]
> 7 Mr. Nelson: What she says is funny or how she says?
> 8 Riko: What she says. Uh…she can do [*tsukkomu* – having a straight
> 9 face in funny situations].
> 10 Students: [laughs]
> 11 Mr. Nelson: Pardon?
> 12 Riko: Do you know [*tsukkomu*]?
> 13 Mr. Nelson: I know, but how would you explain to…?
> 14 Riko: [*ee*]
> 15 Mr. Nelson: So, then, you're, okay, [*tsukkomi*].
> 16 Riko: Reaction?
> 17 Mr. Nelson: Reaction, ah. Her reactions are good.
> 18 Students: [laughs]
> 19 Mr. Nelson: So, your homework is to videotape you and your
> 20 mother…
> 21 Students: [laughs]

Mr. Nelson's exchange with Riko is characterized by a number of unanticipated turns that the teacher takes to overcome challenges and take advantage of opportunities. At first, Riko's answer as to why she thinks her mother is the funniest in their family is almost inaudible. She sits in the back of the class and speaks in a low voice to the point that Mr. Nelson needs to lean forward in order to hear. However, instead of making Riko repeat herself, he asks whether it is what she says or how she says it that is funny, giving Riko a choice between two possibilities rather than requiring an open-ended response. This allows her to answer more quickly, while also giving her the opportunity to provide more details (i.e., "tsukkomu," or having a straight face).

242

Given Mr. Nelson's insistence on keeping the use of Japanese to a minimum, at least in whole class activities, he relies on a familiar and previously established concept of explaining something as if they are explaining it to a foreigner who does not speak Japanese. That said, Riko provides just enough of an answer (i.e., "reaction") to satisfy Mr. Nelson, who provides the rest of a desirable answer (i.e., "Her reactions are good") so they can continue the activity without further delay. Seeing another opportunity to make a joke, he gives Riko homework, which prompts students to laugh.

Moving on, Mr. Nelson asks about other family members, getting Daigo to raise his hand and say that his sister is the funniest person in their family.

> PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Um, whose father is funniest in their family? How about
> 2   your brother or sister? Daigo, why is your sibling so funny?
> 3   Daigo: My sister always talk to her doll.
> 4   Mr. Nelson: Always talks to her doll? How old…?
> 5   Daigo: 25.
> 6   Mr. Nelson: 25. She's 25.
> 7   Students: [*ee*] [laughs]
> 8   Mr. Nelson: What does she say to her doll? No, what conversation
> 9   with doll?
> 10   Daigo: "What did you do today?"
> 11   Students: [laughs]
> 12   Mr. Nelson: Okay.
> 13   Daigo: She said she, she responds as a…
> 14   Mr. Nelson: Ah, okay. So, she talks to the doll, and maybe it will…it's
> 15   funny. Funny conversation.

This part of the interaction is presented here to establish an opportunity for connected discourse that arises later in the exchange. Daigo's story about his older sister having and talking to a doll is particularly amusing to both the teacher and classmates that it prompts Mr. Nelson to ask follow-up questions and revoice (Inan, 2014) Daigo's answer to ensure that the rest of the class understands the story. The act of the teacher

rephrasing the student's words for this purpose, as opposed to providing clarification or correction, validates what the student is saying in the interaction and allows the rest of the class to hear the answer in different ways for greater understanding.

Mr. Nelson finds effectiveness in shifting from asking for volunteers to polling his students based on which family member is their answer. This prompts him to continue asking about other family members, including pets. This strikes me as odd but it does elicit Shoko to add to the dialogue.

PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Uh, anyone? Your grandparents? Your grandmother or
2   grandfather is funniest? Your pet is the most funny? Your dog or your
3   cat? Shoko, what kind of pet do you have?
4   Shoko: Uh, my cat is very funny. When other people come to the
5   house, my cat goes… [gesture: spinning finger around]
6   Students: [laughs]
7   Mr. Nelson: Becomes excited.
8   Shoko: Uh…
9   Mr. Nelson: Excited or scared?
10 Shoko: Scared.
11 Mr. Nelson: Scared. Oh. Is it a boy or a girl?
12 Shoko: Boy.
13 Mr. Nelson: [silence] Boy cats tend to be more social around people.
14 So, like, when new people come to my house, my cat wants to meet
15 everyone.
16 Students: [laughs]
17 Mr. Nelson: "For me! Look! Look!" He will kiss you too, new people.
18 He always wants to kiss you. Kinda like a dog is.

Shoko has an initial answer for Mr. Nelson about why she thinks her cat is funny as it is what she discussed with her partner in the pair activity. As Mr. Nelson tries to elicit more details and Shoko lacks an immediate answer, however, he has to ask more specific questions providing choices rather than requiring an open response, allowing Shoko to continue to participate in the dialogue. Having found a detail on which to

develop the interaction (i.e., Shoko's cat is male), Mr. Nelson takes the opportunity to insert an anecdote about his own male cat to further align with Shoko and draw more interest from the rest of the class.

Once the thread about cats has run its course, Mr. Nelson moves on and asks Soichi, who raises his hand to volunteer an answer.

> PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019
> 1   Mr. Nelson: Who's the most funny in your family?
> 2   Soichi: Maybe…my father.
> 3   Mr. Nelson: Your father. Why is your father the most?
> 4   Soichi: He finds big dolls.
> 5   Students: [laughs]
> 6   Mr. Nelson: What?
> 7   Soichi: When he sees a cute doll, he bought, he buy it.
> 8   Mr. Nelson: He bought it.
> 9   Students: [laughs]

The second mention of dolls draws everyone's interest, but is also elicited after a fashion by Daigo's answer about his sister. That previous interaction eventually prompts Soichi to want to contribute to the classroom interaction. When I asked about this episode in an interview with Soichi, he talked about how speaking up in class risks embarrassment, but said that hearing Daigo's story might be of interest to his classmates. At two different parts of our interview, he talks about this anxiety being negotiated by hearing about a classmate's story and the desire to make the rest of the class laugh.

> Student interview #11 - 07/10/2019
> 1   Roehl: So, when he says this, when you catch it, what do you think?
> 2   Soichi: Uh, [laughs], uh, that's funny story, and, um, I talk, I talk
> 3   about my father and I, I, I embarrass…
> 4   Roehl: Embarrassed?
> 5   Soichi: I, I don't want to talk about my father. [laughs]
> 6   Roehl: I see.
> 7   Soichi: But I, it's funny, funny story, my father's…
> 8   Roehl: Sure.

9   Soichi: …so, when Daigo talks about, talks, I think my father
10   is…same. Similar.
11   […]
12   Roehl: Does the teacher do anything to make it less [*hazukashii* –
13   embarrassing]?
14   Soichi: Uh, I think, I think teachers and student, uh, I want, I want, I
15   want teachers and student to laugh at, laugh at, about this story. If, if,
16   if they not, they doesn't, don't laugh at this story, that is, um, I'm
17   more, more embarrassed.
18   Roehl: Ah. Okay. Okay, but, um, actually, many times they laugh.
19   Soichi: [laughs]
20   Roehl: So, how does that feel?
21   Soichi: I think easy to talk.
22   Roehl: So, they laugh, so, now, it's easier to talk, tell the story.
23   Soichi: Yes.

By this point, interviewing the students to elicit their perspectives has generated

two different narratives. First, the presence of the L1 English teacher compels some

students to talk more "seriously" or perhaps less openly in class. On the other hand, the

environment of the classroom has become a safe space for general participation, at least

for some students, to the extent that Soichi can feel comfortable with contributing to the

classroom discussion. These two narratives do not necessarily conflict since Kusumi

(2018) asserts that individual learner differences change how power dynamics are

interpreted. For some students, Mr. Nelson may make it less likely for them to contribute

to the classroom discourse. In Soichi's case (and hopefully in that of others), the

classroom dynamic fostered by Mr. Nelson encourages interaction without significant

fear of embarrassment or reprisal.

My interview with Soichi speaks to the concept of "mediated agency" (Wertsch et

al., 1993), placing the concept of agency within interactional situations, particularly in

classroom contexts involving a teacher and students, while also accounting for intrinsic

motivation as a source of agency. Through this and other whole class interactions

represented by the teacher as informal, at least some students who are not already likely

to contribute to the discourse feel more comfortable with participating in the interaction.

The opportunity for connected discourse raised by Soichi's answer cannot be

ignored, so Mr. Nelson uses it to draw parallels to his interaction with Daigo.

PE1 observation #13 - 07/03/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: What, what does he do with them after he buys it? Is he,
2   collection? Or, like, what does he do?
3   Soichi: He put it in, they are, they put on many, many [inaudible]. In
4   house.
5   Mr. Nelson: All over the house? Like, on the tables, and on…how
6   many? How many has he bought?
7   Soichi: [laughs] Just, just some, but…20.
8   Students: [*ee*] [laughs]
9   Mr. Nelson: So, your father…just 20? That sounds like a lot. So,
10 maybe your father should invite Daigo's sister. They can have…great
11 for cats to run around.
12 Students: [laughs]

Through follow-up questions, Mr. Nelson's interaction with Soichi further

captures the attention of the rest of the class, evidenced by the nonverbal utterances they

make while Soichi speaks. In the end, Mr. Nelson ties all of the threads together to

reference Daigo's and Shoko's answers, making it clear, with the help of the rest of the

students who have been engaged all this time, that all of them have contributed

something important and interesting to the discourse.

Rapport and agency

One final layer of data analysis provides evidence necessary to explore the

importance of instructional shifts in fostering rapport with and mediating agency in

learners. The previous episode, like the one presented before it, highlights a number of

instructional shifts to accommodate the ideas that various students bring to the interaction, which started as quiet and limited in dialogism and ended with some degree of involved interest from most, if not all, of the class. Looking at both episodes explored in this chapter, dialogic interaction in this classroom may be considered limited and embryonic in a number of cases, especially if we were to apply Reznitskaya's (2012) framework for dialogic interaction or make comparisons to interactions considered dialogic by Kathard et al. (2015). However, applying an objective standard for what constitutes "dialogue" in terms of quantifiable student output to this research seems to return to a reliance on pedagogies that prestige the output hypothesis, which returns the discussion to compelling students to talk or produce more. Moreover, such an approach fails to examine how Mr. Nelson's shifting instructional practices negotiates the dynamics of the classroom while providing a safe (or, at minimum, a safer) space for students to feel encouraged to contribution to classroom interaction.

While it is clear through these two episodes that the teacher plays a guiding role in building dialogue relative to what his students contribute, he seems to do so with the expectation that his students will engage with the interaction more actively than they would without the guidance he provides. As Mr. Nelson perceives the presence of both challenges and opportunities to interaction, he uses and allows for various interactional resources to come to a mutual understanding with his students and provide clearer expectations that allow his students to contribute to the classroom discourse. In tandem with the teacher's validation of the students' ideas and utterances, this appears to create an environment that is more welcoming of what students bring to the classroom while

mitigating anxieties they might have about participating in interaction. This appears to be the case, at least to a certain extent, when students that I have interviewed reference the teacher's expressiveness (in all the forms he expresses himself) and the casual atmosphere he creates during class as reasons they enjoy the Practical English course.

This is not to say that the teacher is successful in erasing all negative feelings about English and participation in interaction in English. That said, Mr. Nelson's instructional practices appear to take away at least some of the force behind any anxieties that his students have in speaking up or participating. In a number of interviews, some students do admit that they are afraid or anxious to speak up while also reporting possible negative feelings in not speaking English in class when called upon. When I asked them about the material consequences for not participating (e.g., whether their grades would be negatively affected or whether the teacher would get mad at them), however, they all acknowledged that there were no adverse consequences for not participating. This seems to align well with the duality of Goldenberg's (1992) criteria that classroom discourse should be both challenging and nonthreatening.

While some students might struggle with and feel intimidated by using English, they recognize that there is little, if any, coercion or reprisal in the perceived expectation of practicing English. Moreover, some of Mr. Nelson's students in interviews have expressed feelings of validation and positive attitudes about their participation in class. I associate this circumstance to the discursive opportunities (e.g., opportunities for validation and humor) that Mr. Nelson takes advantage of in order to establish a greater bond with his students. It might be overly simplistic to assert that a caring and respectful

teacher is key to encouraging a more productive dialogue with students; however, it is through this bond, in tandem with principles of dialogic interaction, that Mr. Nelson is able to probe more deeply into the knowledge that his students can contribute to the conversation.

At this point, a discussion of whether dynamic instructional practices that allow for instructional shifts actually make a difference in terms of how students approach language learning and interaction. The research presented thus far has established the teacher as a practitioner who resists mechanical pedagogies and opts for a more participatory classroom. To what extent does this make the classroom a more welcoming learning space and its students a more cohesive and more productive group?

An examination of the data through a lens of teacher-student rapport confirms that, in almost all of the episodes identified as having instructional shifts, Mr. Nelson engages in behaviors that Webb and Barrett (2014) identify as attempts to foster rapport with students. Injecting humor into the discourse, seeking common ground through common knowledge of Japanese culture, and sharing of information about himself and American culture are among the most employed strategies that Mr. Nelson uses while engaging in instructional shifts, though this is also apparent in classroom activities where shifts were not identified. Rapport being dyadic (Gremler & Gwinner, 2008), however, it is important to examine whether his students recognize such strategies. To a certain extent, the data from interviews associated with classroom observations during which instructional shifts were recognized point out that students acknowledge that Mr. Nelson is trying to establish rapport within the classroom. In many cases, they recognize his

attempts at humor and his penchant to provide necessary information in the form of hints and other interactional resources to foster mutual understanding. In addition to this, they also acknowledge his courtesy, in that he never appears to become angry or frustrated with them during breakdowns in communication or misunderstanding of expectations.

In place of overt exercises of legitimate or coercive power, Mr. Nelson's practices of establishing a connection with students through humor and validation of their contributions to dialogue contribute to the classroom atmosphere in a positive manner. The previous episode about funny people in students' families, for example, demonstrates the importance of an attentive ear to opportunities that arise for humor built on dialogue to take place, as well as the ability of the teacher to connect utterances together to present a cohesive discourse that evokes a particular, positive response in students. Furthermore, the episode on customs and traditions, particularly with respect to Mr. Nelson and Ayaka co-constructing a description of a furoshiki, provides similar evidence of attentiveness on the teacher's part, while also highlighting how the teacher seeks out common ground in terms of sharing the same interactional resources (e.g., gestures).

As evidenced in interviews, Mr. Nelson overall believes that he has grown closer with his students over the course of the observation period and certainly over the course of the semester. In particular, he talks in one interview about Mari, a PE1 student, who has become comfortable speaking English with him toward the end of the semester, even if she is perceived by the teacher as shy and quiet in front of her classmates.

Teacher interview #06 - 07/26/2019
1   Mr. Nelson: Well, just…yeah, I feel, like, speaking with Mari, for
2   instance, I feel like I'm trying to be more coaxing and encouraging in
3   how I phrase my questions, for example. [...] With Mari, I was trying

251

4   to, uh, trying to connect with her a little more. She mentioned that
5   she's a twin.
6   Roehl: In the speaking test?
7   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, in the speaking test. Her twin sister is in, uh, in a
8   different university, and I said, "Have you and your sister ever
9   switched places to try to confuse people? Did your sister ever come to
10   PE class and I thought it was you?" She smiled, like, "No, no, we
11   don't do that." And I said, "Do you have, um, do you talk with your
12   sister?" She says, "Yeah, we Skype almost everyday." "Oh, do you
13   miss your sister?" And, "Yes." I said, well, she mentioned earlier she
14   was going to her grandparents' place in Ehime during summer
15   vacation.
16   Roehl: That's right.
17   Mr. Nelson: And I said, "Oh, will you get to see your sister?" She
18   managed to smile and said, "Yes." I was, I don't know, I was, I was
19   trying to do kind of a gentle coaxing, trying to relate to her rather than
20   trying to give a generic, well, I don't think any of my questions are
21   generic, but, uh…I guess I was trying to be more personable
22   somehow.

Even in the one-to-one speaking test, Mr. Nelson has to provide some guidance to

elicit Mari's contribution to the dialogue. Still, the environment, free from fear of

embarrassment or failure in front of her peers, appears to prompt Mari to answer the

teacher in more detail than she is otherwise accustomed during a regular class. It is still a

task with which Mr. Nelson struggles, even at the end of the semester, but the rapport he

has built with his students, Mari included, seems to have played a role in eliciting

students' engagement.

My interview with Daigo presents an interesting representation of Practical

English compared to Mr. Nelson's notion that students' reticence to speak up in class

indicates that they are struggling with English. Still, it provides insight from the students'

perspective that the classroom, through Mr. Nelson's instructional practices, is a space in

which they can feel encouraged to join in the interaction.

Student interview #18 - 07/24/2019

1 Daigo: In high school, we often studied grammar and reading and
2 memorize the words, so, it was very hard and difficult.
3 Roehl: Sure.
4 Daigo: But PE class didn't, didn't teach grammar, so, grammar in
5 detail.
6 Roehl: Should PE class, you said PE class is not difficult or it's easy,
7 should it be more difficult, do you think?
8 Daigo: Uh...I think it will, it will be, it will enhance ability of English,
9 but PE class is very interesting, exciting.
10 Roehl: Okay, go ahead.
11 Daigo: I, PE…[*sono mama de ii te iu ka* – I say it's good as it is?]
12 Roehl: [*dakara* – because of that], if PE class was more difficult,
13 maybe it's not interesting?
14 Daigo: Uh, yes, yes.

In lines 1-5, Daigo compares English class in high school to the PE class, and

says the former is more difficult because, in high school, they were more focused on

grammar and reading activities. This contrasts with the greater focus on speaking practice

in Mr. Nelson's class. Because of this, Daigo says that PE class "will enhance ability of

English" (line 8), and that it is "interesting, exciting" (line 9). Many of the findings

presented in this chapter and the previous chapter have emphasized the prolonged

silences and the moments where students seem to struggle with what to say, which might

suggest that it is a challenging class. Despite this, students such as Daigo express a belief

that Practical English is not only not difficult, but also beneficial to learning English.

An analysis of the episodes for evidence of agency as perceived by learners also

highlights the value of dynamic instructional practices. Under Mercer's (2011)

framework, many of the students, while talking about their experiences within episodes

of instructional shifts, provide evidence of self-perceptions of or statements indicating

motivation and positive affect defined by Mercer as a "willingness to exercise...agency"

(p. 433), with evidence to some extent of self-regulation defined as "goals, metacognition and reflection" (p. 433). In other words, in coding students' responses in stimulated recall interviews for codes related to learner agency, there is evidence to suggest that Mr. Nelson's shifts of instructional and discursive practices contribute to the building of agency in his students.

Kotaro's reflection of the first episode in this chapter provides for some indication of greater motivation and willingness to participate in class activities as a result of the teacher's discourse and actions. As he compares Mr. Nelson to other English teachers he might consider "boring," he feels that participation becomes "easier" as a result of the teacher's use of humor and shows of interest during class. In the second episode, Soichi demonstrates a greater willingness to share some insight about his family to the rest of the class, despite any potential embarrassment, because of the dynamic turns made to foster a nonthreatening classroom atmosphere.

This is why it is important to decenter normative or prescriptive standards for dialogue in discussions about foreign language learning contexts. While the instructional shifts documented in these findings may not appear, at least to some, to bring about the free-flowing exchange that resembles the most idealized forms of dialogic interaction, there is a noticeable change in some students in terms of the willingness they have to participate in the class. Rintaro, a somewhat quiet PE2 student, nonetheless indicates in interviews outside of class that he enjoys the class and likes to practice English, even in teacher-fronted activities when Mr. Nelson models the language with students. In the next interview excerpt, Rintaro and I reflect on exchanges Mr. Nelson has with students in a

whole-class activity to talk about musical instruments they can play and why they play

them. Rintaro answered in class that he played the guitar, to which Mr. Nelson and

Rintaro have an extended exchange in front of the rest of the class. At other times, he is

particularly quiet and rarely speaks in whole-class activities when called upon. That said,

his attitudes about the class provide a stark contrast to what might be, upon further

analysis, a surface observation.

> Student interview #08 - 07/03/2019
> 1   Roehl: So, how did you feel about this activity?
> 2   Rintaro: Very fun.
> 3   Roehl: Very fun? Why do you say so?
> 4   Rintaro: We can know about classmates. We can know what, what
> 5   they like.
> 6   [...]
> 7   Roehl: Okay. Um, um, so, in this activity, um, the teacher is asking
> 8   students at random. First, he asks Yosuke, then, he asks Nanako, I
> 9   think, then, he asks Haruka. Then, he asks me.
> 10 Rintaro: [laughs]
> 11 Roehl: [laughs] Um, and finally, he asks you. This seems random.
> 12 Choose a student, choose a student. Um, uh, do you feel nervous
> 13 about being chosen?
> 14 Rintaro: No.
> 15 Roehl: No? So, speaking English in class is not a problem?
> 16 Rintaro: Um, difficult but it's very fun. Fun.

In this excerpt, Rintaro identifies two sources of motivation while the whole-class

dialogue is taking place. In lines 4-5, he likes the activity because he gets to learn some

insights about his classmates, while he finds the act of participating in the exchange fun

even if it is challenging (line 16). As a result of these two reasons, Rintaro does not

indicate any anxiety that might prevent him from wanting to contribute to the classroom

dialogue.

Classroom environment

At many times, students still refrain from interacting in English as freely as either they or Mr. Nelson would like, which is evidenced by a number of interview excerpts about how they may not feel comfortable with engaging in the classroom without having the "correct" answer. That said, even in instances when the classroom is not an absolutely safe space, it is apparently a *safer* space than one that tends more toward a more rigid sort of classroom discourse. This is in part because of the instructional shifts that the teacher employs in order to establish greater rapport and provide more opportunities to students to contribute to discourse, to which students positively respond through a greater presence of agency. As excerpts in Chapter 6 illustrate, I perceive a marked difference in the degree to which Mr. Nelson and his students interact with each other depending on the teacher's flexibility in shifting his instructional practices. In episodes where Mr. Nelson is engaged in a more monologic or less flexible instructional approach (as was the case in PE2 observation #08), the development of dialogue is limited with fewer or no confirmatory moves to indicate mutual understanding or responsivity by students. On the other hand, an analysis of the data indicates that more dynamic or more dialogic approaches coincide with more frequent and more meaningful contributions by students.

Beyond observing instructional shifts, I see the overall classroom environment as a more productive space owing to dispositions of dialogic interaction. One episode from the June 19 PE1 class highlights the sort of dialogue that takes place when Mr. Nelson and his students have established a rapport with each other through a rich degree of alignment. This class is focused on previewing a reading unit about the effects of sugar

on the body. By the end of this particular class session, the teacher poses some discussion questions about Japanese food and prompts students to address these questions in pairs or groups of three.

One of these questions relates to what foods are and are not typically eaten at breakfast. During this class session, Mr. Nelson makes a remark to the class that, at least in his perception, a traditional Japanese breakfast relies on salty or savory foods, while an American breakfast involves more sugar, either in cereal or in syrup used on pancakes or French toast. That said, it is likely that not all savory foods belong at a breakfast table in Japan. While walking around the class as students discussed the questions with each other, one pair of students asked me about breakfast. I responded by saying that, on my way to school that morning, I had stopped at a local chain restaurant famous for *gyudon* or beef bowl, as it was open 24 hours while most shops and restaurants in the area do not open before classes in the morning begin. The idea of something typically eaten for dinner drew responses of surprise from the students, indicating that beef bowl is an unlikely option in the morning.

Most importantly, those responses tell me that students do not take all answers as authoritative, even from an L1 English speaker. In this small sense, they are able to practice agency while contributing to classroom interaction, even in the presence of those they perceive as having a higher or at least different status. As intuitive as this disposition may be, this is an important circumstance to highlight given the problematization of power dynamics established in Chapter 6. At minimum, the data analysis shows that the practice of agency contributing to a dynamic classroom interaction is not a given without

an environment conducive to fostering meaningful dialogue. The excerpt below

illustrates that in an environment in which students feel safe to contribute during times

when the teacher invites dialogue, the classroom interaction feels more open-ended and

welcoming of all contributions.

PE1 observation #06 - 06/19/2019

1   Mr. Nelson: Before we jump into the last thing, I want to quick ask,
2   what are some answers for the last one? Who has a good answer for
3   what should never be eaten for breakfast?
4   Students: [silence]
5   Mr. Nelson: Anyone have a good example? What should never be
6   eaten for breakfast? Yeah.
7   Shoji: Uh, I shouldn't eat…uh, ramen.
8   Mr. Nelson: Ramen. Why? Tonkotsu ramen, why not?
9   Shoji: Ramen is so oily, so, and smell is…so oily and so, uh,
10   [inaudible]
11   Students: [laughs, crosstalk]
12   Mr. Nelson: Yeah, it's a heavy, something heavy. I like, in the
13   summertime, in the summertime, I can't eat tonkotsu ramen in the
14   summertime, daytime, because I feel like I will sweat.
15   Students: [*aa*]
16   Mr. Nelson: White sweat.
17   Students: [*ee*] [laughs]
18   Mr. Nelson: Uh, anything else that should never be eaten for
19   breakfast?
20   Student 1: [inaudible] rice.
21   Students: [laughs]
22   Keiko: [*nani sore* - what is that?]
23   Mr. Nelson: Anyone, anyone eat ramen for breakfast? Sometime? No
24   one wants to admit it. Arisa, you eat…?
25   Arisa: Cup Noodle.
26   Mr. Nelson: Cup Noodle.
27   Arisa: Sometimes.
28   Mr. Nelson: Do you make it, like, cereal, you warm up milk and put it
29   in the…?
30   Arisa: [laughs]
31   Mr. Nelson: I was, I was joking with this group that, in Utsunomiya,
32   they eat gyoza for breakfast with milk.
33   Arisa: [*ee*]
34   Mr. Nelson: No. No.
35   Ss: [laughs]
36   Arisa: Joke.

37 Mr. Nelson: Fujinomiya people, yakisoba with milk, like breakfast
38 cereal.
39 Students: [laughs]
40 Mr. Nelson: Yeah. Sorry, that's disgusting.
41 Students: [laughs]
42 Mr. Nelson: But now I want to try it.
43 Students: [crosstalk]

The above excerpt provides indicators of what Goldenberg (1992) calls general

participation, or the disposition where students feel free to participate in the classroom

dialogue without the teacher explicitly calling on them. In lines 5-6, Mr. Nelson calls for

volunteers to address one of the questions, while Shoji in line 7 answers with ramen.

While the teacher is still in a dominant role of moderator during this interaction, Shoji

volunteers himself to answer, rather than remain quiet until called upon. This

phenomenon repeats in lines 23-25, when Mr. Nelson poses another question and Arisa

raises her hand and responds. Lines 18-20 present a stronger indicator of general

participation, when one student responds to Mr. Nelson without raising his hand or

waiting to be called. These varying degrees of student contributions provide the

impression that students perceive a sense of agency to influence the classroom dialogue,

preserving the teacher's power as a central authority in the classroom while still acting on

spaces of opportunity to add their own ideas and in the target language.

The classroom dialogue rewards these exchanges with further developments that

validate students' contributions. When Shoji talks about why ramen is a bad choice for

breakfast, the students in line 11 respond in a way that indicates they are listening to him

intently. Mr. Nelson then revoices Shoji's answer in line 12, calling ramen "heavy" where

Shoji called it "oily." The students further validate this strand in the interaction by their

utterances in lines 15 and 17. At various turns within the excerpt, the students signal that they are following along with the interaction by laughing or making small utterances of interest or surprise. In turn, this signals to other participants that their peers welcome further development of dialogue.

Furthermore, the students' contributions provide a foundation for classroom participants to develop the dialogue. Beginning in line 31, Mr. Nelson tells an anecdote about *gyoza*, or fried dumplings, in Utsunomiya, a topic students might find familiar as that area in Tokyo is famous for the food. He tells a joke about gyoza being eaten for breakfast and, in line 34, has to remind the class that it is a joke after Arisa's utterance of surprise in line 33. It appears that he knows that the class is following along, so he continues with a similar humorous remark, which elicits further engagement from the rest of the class in lines 39, 41, and 43.

If this excerpt were analyzed strictly through Krashen's (1985) or Swain's (2000) theories (i.e., analysis for understanding how much English students are exposed to or produce within the interaction), then it is clear that Mr. Nelson has a dominating share of the classroom interaction, speaking more often and in more detail than do the students. From an output theory orientation, Mr. Nelson's instructional practices leave a fair bit to be desired as the students do not appear to practice speaking English with great enough frequency, at least in this interaction, to acquire the target language. In other words, through a conventional understanding of language education, there is a possible interpretation that the teacher speaks at length to elicit a nominal amount of target language utterances from his students.

However, this study can draw connections between the teacher's discursive practices to foster a dynamic classroom interaction and indications of rapport with students and evidence of students' enactment of their own agency. As he mentioned in teacher interview #06, he adjusts his instructional practices based on the "give and take" he shares with his students, becoming "looser" when he believes he has an alignment with the class judging on their responses to his asides. Similarly, Mr. Nelson views the responses in the above excerpt as positive confirmation that his interactional moves are effective and continues to dialogue accordingly.

Ultimately, the above excerpt and other similar interactions I have analyzed in this study provide evidence of continued perpetuation of native-speaker norms in terms of power relations within classroom interaction. As I wrote in Chapter 6, the rules of the classroom, written or otherwise, are what they are because the teacher as an expert of English sets them, while the students follow along. Even as Mr. Nelson is deeply engaged with his students in interaction, the center of attention nonetheless remains on him. That said, within the boundaries that the teacher has set, there are still spaces affording opportunities for students to contribute to the classroom dialogue in a meaningful and positive way, owing to the classroom atmosphere facilitated by the teacher's instructional practices and the teacher's ability to shift practices as conditions warrant and necessitate.

Those contributions and the interactions they produce, moreover, have a profound influence on the classroom participants, even if this ethnography does not observe them as overtly contributing to the dialogue through verbal utterances or other interactional resources. Specifically, the rapport established within the classroom opens up

opportunities for interaction between teacher and student, even if such interactions do not take place in within classroom activities. This rapport is produced in the interactions with certain individual students, but are also noticed by the rest of the class when they are not directly in dialogue with the teacher. Put another way, even if the students are not directly participating in the classroom dialogue, they are intently listening (as evidenced by responses of laughing and crosstalk in various observation excerpts) and use the dialogue as a resource to understand that there is room to feel comfortable with engaging in the target language without significant fear of reprisal or embarrassment.

Certain excerpts from the data provide evidence to the idea that Mr. Nelson's instructional practices have allowed students to feel more open to engaging with the teacher, whether within classroom activities or otherwise. The out-of-class interactions are particularly useful in this regard, especially with respect to students who may tend toward anxiety within the classroom, among their peers and in front of the teacher. Mr. Nelson speaks about Mari and her being able to speak at length about her personal life in a one-on-one interaction with him (teacher interview #06), prompting a contrast with her rather withdrawn or reserved demeanor in class (or, at minimum, withdrawn or reserved in Mr. Nelson's perspective). Meanwhile, other interactions I have noticed before and after class sessions, when Mr. Nelson engages in small, private conversations with students who approach him unprompted, out of earshot from the rest of the class, highlight the extent of comfort students have in building dialogue with the teacher.

This notion of a safe classroom environment potentially providing students with the belief that open interaction with the teacher is possible and welcomed is an important

avenue for facilitating the co-construction of meaning, particularly between interactants of different languages and cultures. Just as the teacher has various discursive tools employed dynamically to establish mutual alignment with students, other tools help to foster a safe environment that communicates to students that they are welcome to contribute in order to further pursue that alignment. This alignment of meaning and purpose certainly takes place within interaction during classroom activities, a number of which have been documented in excerpts provided in this and the previous chapter. However, for those interactants who are not directly involved in such teacher-student interactions, the dialogue they observe provides a useful insight about the extent to which the teacher welcomes and provides responsivity to their contributions. As this overall discussion of the contributions of instructional shifts aims to illustrate, such responsivity, within the dialogic space, can be (or, at minimum, is intended to be) empowering to students and beneficial to language learning.

Having observed and analyzed the discursive practices of classroom participants and the effects of the produced dialogue on those participants, it then becomes possible to reexamine the proposed formal expansions of theory on dialogic interaction, and their implications for devoting future research to the more dynamic aspects of teacher discourse, which are presented in the next and final chapter.

CHAPTER 8

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

As presented in Chapters 6 and 7, a number of the instructional shifts observed in this study (1) facilitate understanding through multiple and extended interactional resources that transcend verbal utterances yet still contribute to classroom dialogue, (2) take advantage of opportunities to further develop interaction as well as overcome challenges to mutually dialogic alignment, and (3) seek to mitigate differences arising from asymmetric power dynamics between teacher and student. In turn, the overall disposition toward dynamic discursive practices through instructional shifts provides benefits to learners in that the resulting classroom environment facilitates (1) rapport between the teacher and student and (2) beliefs of learners in their own agency to use English and participate in the classroom, both of which have connections in the contemporary literature on classroom research to positive learning outcomes. These findings are consequential to the overall discussion on classroom interaction in language learning contexts as they require the contemporary literature to reconsider commonly understood conceptualizations of dialogue in terms of form and function.

The conceptualizations of interaction within this research holds implications for expanding on the current scholarly understanding of the form of classroom dialogue in language learning contexts. Such an understanding that has yet to incorporate consideration of the narratives presented in this dissertation would have overlooked classroom dialogue that transcends strictly verbal channels of communication and simple paradigms of meaning-making between interactants. The features of "dialogue" that one

will find in discussions of Vygotskyan theory by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) and Todhunter (2007), and that which is sought when Engin (2017) discusses challenges to dialogic interaction, are not to be found in abundance from the collected data for this dissertation. Put another way, the back-and-forth aspects of what may be commonly conceptualized by Arnett (1992) and Anderson (1991) as dialogue, where speakers eagerly take turns in a free and open exchange that promotes plentiful verbal interaction, are largely absent from Mr. Nelson's classroom. Data excerpts provided in the last two chapters show the teacher adopts a dominating role in dialogue with students, mitigated somewhat by his efforts to elicit their participation. Still, a large portion of interactions observed in this study, if viewed strictly in terms of spoken participation, lack a sense of balance in contributions between teacher and student.

In its place, however, are features of interaction that nonetheless contribute to the role of mediation in dialogic interactions if we expand the definition of what it means to have interaction between speakers. A normative view of what constitutes dialogue in terms of proportions of speech by teacher and student perpetuates "native speaker" norms while overlooking power dynamics generated by differences of language and culture that the most culturally responsive teachers may have already taken into consideration. Indeed, in keeping with sociocultural approaches to interaction across languages and cultures, a narrow view of dialogue, particularly in classroom interaction, also narrows our awareness of various interactional resources and power dynamics that can contribute to multicultural understanding (or, at minimum, observation of multicultural spaces).

Moreover, the presentation of themes that were made apparent in this research necessitates discussions about classroom teaching and learning that transcend simple knowledge transmission. Many examples presented in this dissertation highlight interactional turns where teacher and student co-construct meaning together within a comfortable and productive classroom atmosphere that facilitates the sharing of knowledge through mediated interaction. Instructional shifts that validate students' contributions to discourse in its many forms and establish rapport across distances of language and culture are seen as creating a nonthreatening classroom atmosphere. Such an atmosphere is an essential element of teaching and learning in its own right as it accommodates the potentially vast array of learners that can enter the classroom without fear of failure or reprisal because of perceived shortcomings in interactional resources or ratified knowledge. However, Goldenberg (1992) asserts the utility of having a welcoming and safe classroom space in terms of eliciting students' contributions to dialogue by negotiating the potential sources for anxiety that may discourage students from participating in dialogue.

On one hand, theories of teaching and learning by Ennis (1985) and Engin (2017), and of dialogue in the general domain by Anderson (1991) have emphasized the importance of alignment between speakers as a necessary prerequisite for the co-construction of meaning. However, this study's exploration of power dynamics and the teacher's efforts to mitigate the perceived power distances with his students should prompt researchers and educators to examine the more affective dimensions of classroom interaction not simply as a function of classroom management or learner development,

important as both dimensions are. Rather, this research presents the concepts of rapport and agency as fostered by the teacher through dialogue as tools for inviting more substantive contributions to dialogue by students to achieve more positive learning outcomes.

Proposed conceptualization

The empirical research on the subject of classroom interaction presented in Chapters 2 and 3 can benefit from an understanding of the aspects of interaction emphasized in Chapters 6 and 7. Contemporary narratives on dialogic interaction typically frame productive dialogue as evidence that common ground exists between speakers. How that common ground can be established and expanded for the purposes of classroom learning, on the other hand, is the potential contribution of this research.

Figure 8-1 below is a proposed visualization of the instruction shift and the different rationales for instructional shifts that were presented in Chapters 6 and 7.
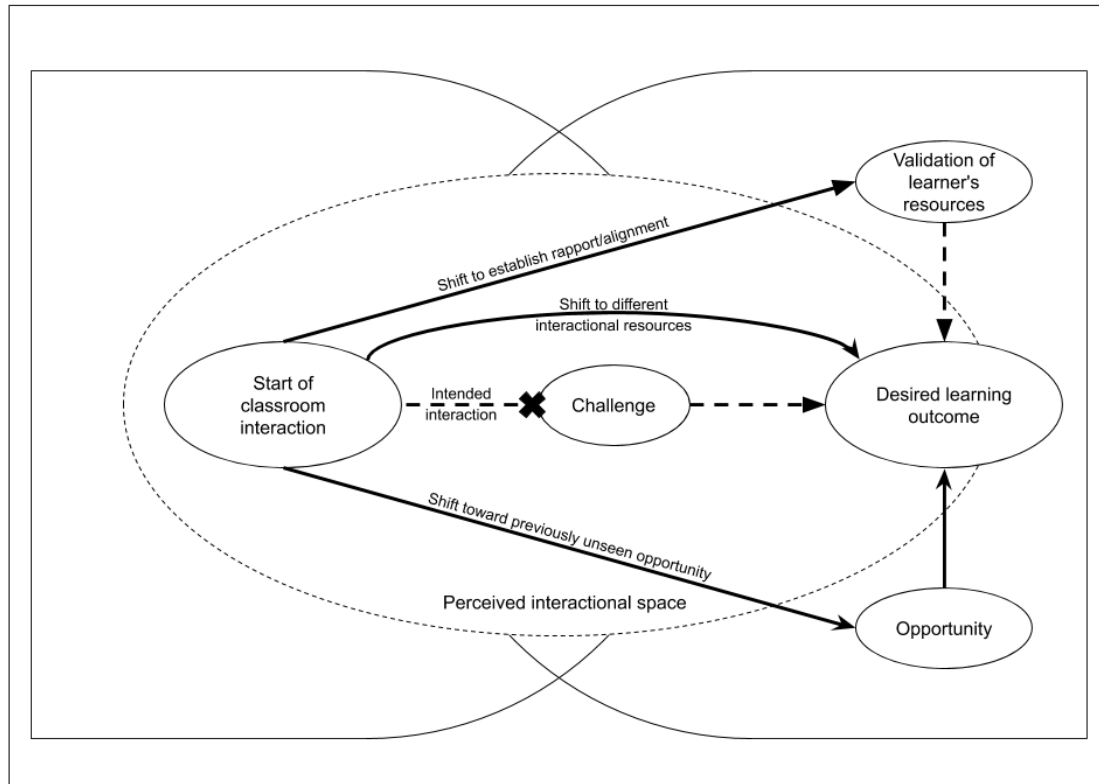
Figure 8-1 – proposed visualization of instructional shifts within classroom dialogue.

This visualization follows Hall's (1993) understanding of mediated dialogic interaction, where multiple speakers with differences in knowledge and identities co-construct meaning through commonly accepted interactional resources, which I have defined in Chapter 6 and in Figure 6-1 as the perceived interactional space. Within this space, the teacher and their students can move easily toward a mutual understanding. Absent challenges impeding that understanding, Figure 8-1 visualizes discourse as moving toward a desired learning outcome without significant difficulty. The dotted line in the middle of the interactional space depicts such movements, representing an intended direction for a given dialogue. This line is straightforward; the teacher perceives that this would result in the quickest and most efficient path to academic success for students. Without impediment, the teacher could ably plan for classroom teaching in terms of a

script and a set of prescribed moves, for students would be able to respond in the manner that the teacher would be able to predict beforehand.

This conceptualization of dialogic interaction mirrors that for guided assistance through the learners' ZPD (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). However, while traditional Vygotskyan theory focuses on what learners are able to learn through guided assistance, discussions of dialogic interaction emphasize that the assistance that an expert is capable of providing informs learners' potential. One of the broader implications of the findings presented in this dissertation, then, is the ability of the expert teacher to shape their assistance according to what they inductively understand from interaction with their students.

A primary consideration in such interactions is that interactants can only perceive resources that other speakers might have, and thus can only guess at the dimensions of the common ground that exists between them. This can lead to communication breakdowns (Jacquemet, 2011) if such perceptions are inaccurate. As a result, the figure above defines the interactional space only as perceived. The common ground that a teacher may believe exists with their students is neither solid nor consistent. The "real" ground has holes and rocky terrain manifest in challenges arising from language, content knowledge, or academic expectations (Engin, 2017), which is why unanticipated challenges can exist within the perceived interactional space. Just as in the metaphor of flight in Chapter 1 requiring pilots to change their flight plans when the situation arises, such challenges, when encountered within the classroom, require a teacher to shift

instructional practices and, put simply, try something other than what they originally intended.

As I noticed during the observation period, these shifts tend to take advantage of other interactional resources that both teacher and student mutually acknowledge and accept. The use of gestures, facial expressions, pictures and charts on the blackboard, and, to a limited degree, the students' first language all contribute to the common ground on which Mr. Nelson conducts classroom interaction with his students. The wider the array of mutually accepted interaction affordances, the greater the number of possible ways the teacher can shift instructional practices to negotiate around challenges and achieve positive learning outcomes.

Conversely, the analysis indicates that the lack of instructional shifts goes hand in hand with the limiting of that which is mutually acceptable. The data presents a number of instances where dialogic interaction is limited or even halted because Mr. Nelson, in those cases, did not shift practices to more effectively elicit interaction from his students. With respect to the episode where Mr. Nelson has trouble eliciting students' contribution to dialogue around words to talk about taste and texture, the absence of a mutually perceived shift to other interactions resources reduces the exchange to a limited verbal monologue until the teacher resorts to using facial expressions and gestures. Once Mr. Nelson employs these resources, the students can more ably participate in the classroom interaction. Moreover, the use of other interactional resources (e.g., L1 usage) or other mediational strategies that could have generated some useful degree of interaction (e.g., discussion in groups) is not present when Mr. Nelson engages in other episodes of

monologic teaching. Interviews with Mr. Nelson indicate that he is aware of such resources at his disposal yet, in this instance, there is a perception in the class that their use is not appropriate during this exchange. The teacher's approach to instruction in this case cuts off the use of such resources, as a result, and limits the potential for fostering mutual understanding with students.

A teacher may also underestimate beforehand what interactional resources and knowledge students possess. Not taking opportunities they encounter during the course of classroom interaction into consideration may actually limit the effective learning outcomes that are possible. A teacher in such a case may also shift instructional practices to take advantage of those opportunities. In keeping with discussion by Lowenstein (2009) about teachers learning from their students, the recognition of opportunities prompting the possibility for instructional shifts affirms the importance of an attentive teacher to adduce their students' abilities during engaged classroom interaction.

Finally, Mr. Nelson's approach toward building rapport with students through instructional shifts has an intended positive influence on mediating a sense of agency in language learners. Such shifts may not have a direct effect on immediate learning outcomes at the time of interaction, at least in terms of co-constructing knowledge perceived as essential to language learning. Through rapport, however, students' perceptions of agency in English and within the classroom arguably aid in facilitating the use of interactional resources that can contribute to the development of classroom dialogue.

One important note to keep in mind is that the employment of an instructional shift - or any disposition that promotes dynamic interaction - is not a guarantee of success in fostering positive learning outcomes. In other words, the teacher's change in stance in response to a challenge or an opportunity within the classroom may not, in fact, overcome that challenge or build on that opportunity. This dissertation can only argue that the likelihood of success in classroom interaction is greater as a result of that recognition of that which transpires between teacher and student. Critiqued in this research, conversely, is the lack of responsivity that may be more common in monologic approaches to teaching, which this dissertation aims to contrast with discussion of shifting instructional practices.

In all, the themes explored in Chapters 6 and 7 describe the use of instructional shifts as a means of expanding the perceived interactional space, both through the modeling of dynamic interaction for the students' benefit as well as a tool to mediate meaning and expectations across differences in knowledge and language ability. In turn, the presence of dynamic interaction provides a space for facilitating rapport and empowering students. These assertions hold important discussion points for both theory and practice, and potential expansions in both areas are explored in the next subsections with respect to future research and challenges to contemporary approaches to language teaching.

Theoretical implications for dialogic interaction

The theoretical implications of this research can be summarized in terms of how instructional shifts and dynamic moves in dialogue (1) contribute to the co-construction

of meaning between interactants, (2) validate learners' sociocultural resources to encourage their contribution to interaction, and (3) foster rapport and mediate agency with language learners as a result. Most immediately, the discussion of multimodality through interactional resources as a feature of dynamic interaction provides new dimension to contemporary research in linguistic anthropology and language education. Indeed, empirical research already exists on the notion of visual or other nonverbal modes of communication as aids to mutual understanding (e.g., Arnold, 2012; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013). However, the contribution of this research is the overall notion that such interactional resources should be viewed as having a complementary and not supplementary role to the spoken word. In other words, nonverbal resources do not exist simply because verbal communication is, at times, insufficient; rather, the full range of interactional resources work in tandem to provide a space for ably co-constructing meaning among multiple interactants, especially in language learning environments.

In validating the role of such resources as contributing to the dynamic aspects of dialogue, there is thus a need for research to broaden the view of interaction to analyze gestures, facial expressions, and other such resources in the same sense that verbal utterances and written communication are viewed through discourse analysis. Research such as that presented by Arizavi et al. (2015) and discussed in Chapter 3, for example, continues to trend toward understanding classroom interaction as primarily a function of that which is spoken. This runs the risk of reducing representations of interaction to verbal exchanges without taking into account nonverbal utterances or visual representations of meaning.

Through the conceptualization of dialogic interaction proposed in Figure 8-1, the boundaries between expert and novice become blurred and complex. At various points in the observation period, the challenges and opportunities present within the classroom require Mr. Nelson "to know *how and when to modify or even abandon conventional ways* of participating in activities and conventional social identities" (Ochs, 2004, p. 105), a task that novices must successfully navigate in order to achieve literacy and participation within any community or practice. In this sense, while there are declared, socially constructed bounds within the classroom for determining who is the subject-matter expert and who are the learners, the teacher is still very much a learner of navigating the specific interactions situated between him and his students and must make inductive judgments about how to effect positive learning outcomes. This realization complicates discussions of expert-novice distinctions by reifying the various layers of expertise that play a role in any interaction. This research highlights the notion that an attentive teacher can become aware and take advantage of what students bring to the classroom for the benefit of positive learning outcomes. Furthermore, excerpts that highlight this attentiveness reaffirm that ratified experts can be novices in certain situations while novices can be empowered experts in other situations.

What this discussion also highlights is the nature of the instructional shifts arising from perceptions of events that speak to power dynamics within the classroom. On one hand, the contemporary literature on pedagogy and dialogic interaction within classroom contexts, as established in Chapters 2 and 3, has increasingly placed a more important value on understanding what knowledge, interactional resources, and sociocultural

identities learners bring to the classroom. Despite this, scholarly discussion that examines the classroom through a sociocultural lens continues to situate the responsibility of facilitating productive interaction and learning outcomes in the abilities of the teacher (Skidmore & Murakami, 2012).

One of the ancillary aims of this research was to seek out ways that teachers identify and mitigate the challenges posed by an asymmetric power dynamic that bestows power in the ratified expertise and prestige of native-speakerism in the L1 English teacher. After all, in doing so, there is a greater potential for a more productive and nonthreatening dialogue to develop between teacher and student. The part of the findings that highlights instructional shifts to build rapport within the classroom draws connections between a stronger connection with students to more productive interaction (or, at least, greater alignment). Evidence provided in data excerpts provides for a recognition of the teacher's validation of his students' sociocultural resources, which include not only their identities but their affinities (Gee, 2011) as well. Establishing rapport through this validation, with the understanding that rapport within polytopic spaces has benefits, emphasizes that the concept of dialogic interaction involves a more holistic recognition of interactants not merely for the knowledge they possess but also for the characteristics and dispositions that further define them.

However, while perspectives expressed by students in interviews indicate a degree of comfort within the classroom thanks to Mr. Nelson's pedagogy, what continues to drive the direction of the classroom is the primary expertise of the teacher. Even as dialogic interaction and instructional shifts intend to empower students by inviting their

275

contributions to classroom discourse, the nature of the classroom interactions observed in

this study indicate that there is an implicit understanding as to the teacher's responsibility

to facilitate that interaction. In short, an imbalance in power dynamics, however

mitigated, still remains because of the overt acts that the classroom practitioner must

effect in order to realize a productive dialogue with students.

This is less a shortcoming of the concept of dialogue than it is an

acknowledgment of the effects of schooling on both teacher and student. It may be, after

all, unrealistic to expect influences of behavior and contributions to interaction to be

completely free of perceptions of expert and referent power, particularly in a context

where learners aspire to goals that are seen as dependent on that expertise. This should

not be seen as invalidating the strides Mr. Nelson makes in connecting with his students

and working to establish a nonthreatening atmosphere that is conducive to classroom

interaction, particularly given the vast distances generated by differences in sociocultural

identities between classroom participants. Still, this research can benefit from a more

expansive discussion on how the larger contexts such as those explored in Chapter 4

contribute to widening such distances that a practitioner can lessen but not entirely

eliminate.

For example, the role of expectations and policies regarding language and

academic success is sure to have an influence on the how challenges within the classroom

are generated in the first place. Interviews with the engaged student participants in this

study indicate that they are, at minimum, tangentially operating under assumptions that

participation within the classroom and constant use of English are perceived as essential

to success within the Practical English classroom. Furthermore, students have expressed feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, and shame when they do not feel they are actively participating in the classroom interaction as they feel that they should.

To a certain degree, the teacher's discourse practices shape those expectations, as does the larger educational context surrounding the classroom. In interviews, Mr. Nelson makes specific mention of the Practical English program's English-only policy within the classroom, even if they are supported by his stance on limiting L1 usage to foster communicative competence. Meanwhile, there are numerous references in student interviews indexing English proficiency to internationalism or prosperity, speaking to the cultural forces that perpetuate English-only narratives within academic expectations.

These expectations influence the decisions that classroom interactants make when deciding what interactional resources are mutually acceptable for interaction, particularly if all but the most accurate forms of English, and certainly any use of Japanese, are seen as unacceptable in interaction with the teacher. While Mr. Nelson may shift instructional practices to reassure students that the use of varying resources is, in his classroom, permissible, cultural forces outside the classroom cannot be seen as separable from the discourse between Mr. Nelson and his students. Past research has addressed language policies represented by language ideologies at the classroom or student level, particularly in the domain of EFL education (e.g., Bruthiaux, 2010; Matsuda, 2003). However, continued research in this area can benefit from a more thorough examination of how interactants perceive and thus negotiate classroom policies at a discourse level.

This strand of the discussion also establishes the possibility of future inquiry holding various theories of language and communication against an understanding of shifting interactional moves and stances in and out of the learning space. Inquiries relevant to Question under Discussion (Clifton & Frazier, 2012), for example, examine the various semantic possibilities that interactants perceive in others' utterances and intend in their own. Synthesizing this research with an understanding of interactional shifts (Wortham, 2011) can provide a framework for understanding interaction through a psycholinguistic lens. Future ethnographic research employing stimulated recall interviews can elicit perspectival data that examines how teacher and student perceive the semantics at various points of a mediated interaction, as well as the changes in those perceptions over time.

Finally, as this study examined classroom interaction primarily from a focal lens on what the teacher does, the research can benefit from an examination of dialogue on more equal, if not completely equal, footing for the benefit of effecting positive learning outcomes. To more fully address the role that dialogic interaction can play in mitigating power dynamics, future research within the education space can benefit from a greater focus on learner perspectives. This study has explored to some degree the knowledge and identities that the PE students contribute to interaction with Mr. Nelson, but mainly as a catalyst for and as a product of the teacher's instructional shifts.

Practical implications for language educators

The findings of this study reaffirm the importance of multimodality, rapport, and agency as goals for classroom discourse within the context of effective teaching practices

as well as within the context of empirical research. As Hall (1993) asserts with respect to mediated interaction, teacher and student both benefit from a mutual awareness and employment of shared interactional resources to co-construct meaning. As established in Chapter 7, previous research (e.g., Arghode et al., 2017; Estepp & Roberts, 2015) has drawn connections between rapport and effective teaching and learning, while discussions of mediated agency (Wertsch et al., 1993) concretize the ability of the teacher to empower learners through discourse. Moreover, as the research has demonstrated, dialogue benefits the teacher as well in terms of understanding the knowledge and dispositions of students through eliciting their contributions to interaction. Both strands of research can benefit educators exploring effective discursive practices within the language classroom.

In more general terms, however, this research emphasizes the importance of dynamic classroom interaction in meeting these goals, and that fostering such interaction requires an attentive and responsive teacher. By extension, discussion of dialogic interaction in this study validates Mantero's (2008) imperative that process and product in teaching and learning be considered holistically, requiring the teacher to make conscious decisions regarding their instructional practices. The episodes presented in Chapters 6 and 7 are intended to depict the dynamic and unpredictable nature of classroom interaction that resists formulaic pedagogical approaches. Neither the professional literature (e.g., Brown, 2001) nor recent empirical research relevant to language education appear to fully address interactional moves in classroom dialogue, let alone any dialogue, that cannot be perfectly anticipated other than to acknowledge axiomatically

that there is a degree of uncertainty in interaction. Despite this axiom, discussions of

teaching practices continue to devote classroom-based research toward questioning

strategies (e.g., Arizavi et al., 2015; Gould & Gamal, 2017) and formulaic feedback

sequences (e.g., Jing & Jing, 2018; Morales, 2016), suggesting that education remains

oriented toward formulaic patterns of classroom discourse.

Largely missing with respect to this point has been a deeper discussion as to the

extent to which teaching and learning benefits from discussion of teaching approaches

prescriptively defined and bounded. This study reifies a principle in sociocultural theory

that interaction is situational and cannot be fully predicted because of the dynamic

negotiation between speakers. As a result, there is significant potential to critique

prescriptive teaching approaches such as task-based language teaching and

communicative language teaching as much as monologic lecture teaching is critiqued.

There is certainly a value to distinguishing between monologic and dialogic approaches

and, indeed, between approaches that are more conducive to desired learning outcomes.

However, the terminal goal of teacher education in language learning contexts, let alone

any context, should be to reinforce an understanding in teachers that they can benefit

their students through dynamically negotiating the challenges in and opportunities for

learning as they arise in classroom interaction. Within Vygotskyan paradigms to teaching

and learning, approaches to teaching that are more dialogic in nature may also be

essential to principles of guided assistance in fostering greater degrees of competence and

expertise. However, they are not in themselves a panacea, especially without a teacher's

willingness to engage dynamically and negotiate unanticipated challenges to fostering

mutual understanding with students.

Related to this, educators should be wary of the risk of adopting approaches to

lesson planning that carry assumptions that classroom activity can be so structured as to

be predictable to the point of being scripted. While critiques by Verner and Dickinson

(1967) and Chickering and Gamson (1987) have largely centered on the limited

effectiveness of monologic methods of teaching, their overall rationale applies also to

methods of teaching that do not account for the differences in understanding and

characteristics among learners.

A brief review of the research literature on teacher discourse in language learning

contexts does not appear to address how teachers can account for unanticipated turns in

interaction and thus shift accordingly. Literature on the subject of pedagogy for teaching

world languages appears to focus primarily on shaping language that is more

comprehensible beforehand (Nunan, 1991). More to the point, the contemporary

discussions on the subject could stand to benefit from a greater focus on discursive

practices responding and adjusting to potential or perceived challenges to interaction as

the interaction is unfolding. Moreover, as the contextual discussion earlier in this

dissertation notes, shifts in instructional practices to dialogue are typically facilitated

between lessons to reflect on previous interactions, missing opportunities for shifts while

in flight.

As for the larger, overarching question about eliciting students' contributions to

classroom interaction, the findings indicate there is no clear or singular pedagogical

strategy available to teachers, even if discounting the situational nature of communication. In simple terms, neither speaking more nor speaking less is, on its own, a viable instructional approach for teachers to promote dialogue. The most impactful and immediate advice this dissertation can provide to practitioners is to remain flexible and accommodating of unanticipated or undesirable challenges that occur within the classroom.

As evidenced in the findings, language teachers may find more positive learning outcomes in expanding the definition of what constitutes dialogue. Mr. Nelson and his students enact numerous examples where communication takes advantage of non-verbal resources such as gestures, body language, and facial expressions. Moreover, Mr. Nelson not only allows the usage of such resources, but validates and promotes it through his own discursive practices when providing explanations or instructions to students. These interactional resources, when mutually accepted by both teacher and student, serve as tools for both establishing alignment on meaning as well as for fostering a shared rapport useful for mitigating power imbalances within the classroom.

More generally, that rapport is a function of the teacher's efforts to understand or, at minimum, explore the resources and knowledge that students have. Freeborn and Gondree (2017) argue for not only the students' use of L1 but also the teacher's understanding of L1 as it can be "a tool to augment teaching effectiveness and a resource to enhance learning outcomes" (p. 90). This study provides evidence for the assertion that a broader understanding of the wider array of knowledge and resources that students bring into the classroom has benefits as well. In numerous examples where Mr. Nelson

demonstrates responsivity through shifting instructional practices to students' contributions to interaction, the overall classroom dialogue provides indication of not only alignment but also a deeper connection between teacher and student.

What is important here is that L1 usage, translanguaging, and revoicing can all be tools for enacting a broader imperative to include the voices of learners within the dialogic classroom. Whereas traditional IRF interactions or teacher-centered approaches to "teacher talk" provide to students feedback in terms of what the teachers views as accurate or otherwise, a more dialogic instructional approach does not merely involve multiple speakers for the sake of having them. Rather, in reflecting Anderson's (1991) criterion for interactants in dialogue to accept the unintended interactional turn, a dialogic teacher like Mr. Nelson shifts instructional practices according to those ideas and identities that students bring to the interaction. Echoing Lowenstein (2009), a broad but key implication for educators is the importance of centering the interaction around not simply the utterances of language learners but the ideas attached to those utterances. In centering and validating those ideas (and, by extension, the identities and ideologies attached), a dialogic teacher must be prepared to negotiate unanticipated turns in interaction with students.

On the foundation of this discussion, language educators, and indeed all educators, should reflect on their instructional practices by asking the following questions, keeping in mind that differences between teachers are bound to exist and that answers are likely to differ.

- To what extent do the teacher's discursive practices actively engage students in eliciting their ideas?

- To what extent does the teacher express attentiveness and responsivity to students' contributions to classroom interaction?
- How does the teacher define the accepted bounds and resources for interaction within the classroom?
- To what extent is the teacher's perception of the interactional space within the classroom in alignment with that of their students?
- What is the effectiveness of the teacher's discursive practices in fostering a safe and nonthreatening environment for students to contribute to classroom discourse?

Substantive reflection of these questions about any individual's instructional practices allows for a space for educators to seek out their own means to achieve the ends detailed in Chapters 6 and 7. It is less important that a teacher uses a particular resource than that they choose the appropriate resources specific to their particular classroom in a manner that fosters a productive classroom dialogue. Moreover, teachers should be flexible in adjusting their instructional practices after a thorough consideration of the knowledge and identities that students present in discourse. The mediational aspects of effective classroom interaction dictate that decisions of teacher discourse transcend easy, formulaic approaches. Ultimately, an analysis of this research reaffirms that a teacher in any dynamic classroom environment must be ready to shift from intended lesson plans and prescribed strategies and create an environment that is conducive to a productive and positive interaction with their language learners.

This research holds important expansions of discussion about teacher education, which I assert has an outsized focus on reflective processes monitoring past teaching experiences. The discussion of the instructional shift, on a theoretical level, identifies the possibility for change and development in teachers during the course of classroom interaction. While the act of reflection, assisted as documented by Tharp and Gallimore

(1988) or unassisted as documented by Sampson (2016), is an essential tool in the development of teaching practices, I pursued this research on the assumption that greater focus is required to examine teaching practices in flight. This research has sought to illustrate how the development of one's instructional practices can occur in the moment just as it can occur after the experience has passed.

Moreover, what I have witnessed in this study is the likelihood that the shift during teaching and learning and the reflection afterward, in tandem, further facilitates the process of change in teachers. The latter reflections of which I have been a part during interviews with Mr. Nelson illustrate the importance of multiple factors that inform the teacher's thinking. Admittedly, the stimulated recall nature of these interviews provoked discussion of practices that may not have otherwise taken place without my presence in the interaction (or, at minimum, the presence of another interactant to talk about pedagogy). Nonetheless, what I highlight here is the importance of expanding the discussion of teacher development to include not only post-teaching reflections but in-class interaction, acknowledging that development can occur in the moment of teaching just as it does with guidance from peers.

Furthermore, I have attempted in this dissertation to demonstrate how discourse analysis of the interactional episodes presented in this study can observe this development as it occurs. If this dissertation's presentation of findings prove persuasive, it does so in part by compelling teachers to prepare for the unanticipated and, in turn, provide a safe space for their students to do the same. Only then can the classroom foster

a dynamic creation of dialogue aimed at the co-construction of meaning and alignment, as well as the validation of participants' sociocultural resources.

That said, one of the larger takeaways of this dissertation is the affirmation that teachers be flexible and responsive to learners and their contributions to classroom discourse (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Although this research emphasizes how one teacher does so in interaction with students, it also opens up questions as to how teacher education and other aspects of professional development can foster this quality. Research into the connection between professional development and culturally relevant pedagogy can provide some insight into addressing this issue. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that teachers should demonstrate cultural competence and foster learning spaces that provide students with pathways to developing consciousness to address injustices around them, two characteristics that align with principles of teacher responsivity and mediated agency. Christ and Sharma (2018), meanwhile, observe how preservice teachers in United States K-8 contexts apply this approach in their service experiences.

Future research can apply this same process to similar teacher education endeavors with the overall theoretical framework that this dissertation employs. As detailed in Chapter 4, Mr. Nelson has several years of teaching experience that, undoubtedly, have informed his teaching practices and allows him to make decisions in the moment about what may prove effective in the classroom. Principles in socialization theory regarding peripheral learning and participation affirm the value of any experience, formal or otherwise, that aids in fostering productive dispositions for any professional practice. Whether teachers with little to no professional development can naturally

demonstrate a propensity for responsivity is less important than establishing practices in

teacher development and other formal structures supporting newer teachers that can

foster that sense of responsivity.

Limitations and reflections

Overall, my evaluation finds that the research largely aligns with Tracy's (2010)

criteria for assessing the worth of qualitative research, particularly in terms of rigor,

sincerity, credibility, ethics, and coherence. Of course, it is ultimately the response of

readers of this research that will determine whether that criteria has been satisfied. That

said, there are aspects of this study that new research can address. As a result, this section

details future avenues for research based on the limitations I have identified in the

research design and data collection processes on reflection, as well as what the

expansions of theory and their resulting implications produce in terms of new research

inquiries. This discussion of potential, new research touches on theoretical, practical, and

methodological issues that the current study has highlighted for the sake of future

endeavor.

In general, any ethnographic study is limited by what it cannot observe. A

classroom, particularly one that relies on group work and engaged interaction, has a great

number of actors and moving parts that make it challenging to capture everything of

relevance to the research agenda. That said, the observational lens of the ethnographer is

neither able nor intended to be omniscient, only that it reports what it sees to be important

and useful in current and future research. The reporting in this dissertation is thus my best

attempt to comprehensively detail my understanding of the conceptualization of the

instructional shift as informed by my positionality in the study and my reading of the relevant empirical research.

Furthermore, the coding process I have undertaken to provide the analysis in Chapters 6 and 7 is also similarly subjective. While coding is an attempt to facilitate a sense of meaning and order to the data, it must account for the subjective nature of interpretation (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004). Methodological discussions typically tie subjectivity to research validity or confirmability, but subjectivity may also yield the potential of overlooking useful segments of the data that could address the research questions or provide negative cases to challenge any developing propositions.

What the ethnographer does not observe (or, more to the point, does not adequately document) is also as significant as what the ethnographer cannot observe. Discussions of the study with dissertation committee members raised a point about the importance of analyzing student-student interactions and their influence on the classroom environment and the teacher's instructional practices. While there are limited instances in interviews where students discuss interaction with their classmates, I did not touch on this subject deeply enough with Mr. Nelson to justify presenting any meaningful assertions. Also, this research, while centering on the teacher's shifting practices and acknowledging that all interactants (students included) shift dynamically during interaction, missed opportunities to fully document students' shifts to the extent that I could present significant findings. Future research should explore these aspects of classroom discourse and the influence they hold on the development of dialogue between any and all classroom interactants.

Assurances of theoretical saturation, as discussed in Chapter 5, are meant to address such potential threats to the confirmability of this research, in that analysis of the data continues until no further insights can be made to develop the propositions advanced in this chapter. While this is a useful criterion on which to judge the rigor applied to the data analysis process, the potential for finding useful insights goes only as far as the data that is collected and coded. Put another way, unseen developments and overlooked opportunities to code data can never be analyzed and cannot contribute to efforts to address the relevant research inquiries.

Several excerpts from the data provide evidence of the effects of native-speakerism (Holliday, 2005) bestowed not only on the teacher-student relationship, but potentially of any relationship involving L1 English speakers and Japanese learners of English. To a lesser but still present extent, this applies as well to the effects of professional identities in contrast to those identities held by students or other novices. While I am not the teacher of the students in this study and, thus, lack the reward or coercive power that a teacher might have over students, my projected identity as an L1 English speaker, combined with the connection I have with Mr. Nelson, led students to perceive a difference in status between me and them. As such, it was clear in both words and actions that my presence influenced what both teacher and student did and said.

In order to mitigate such a difference in status, one measure I took during this research study was in sitting amongst the students and facing the teacher, whereas in the pilot study I was seated in a manner that may have felt detached from the rest of the class. I found this change to be useful in establishing a working rapport with students, as I sat

amongst them and could make small comments or convey my feelings through facial expressions with those sitting next to me. Over time, as I described in Chapter 5, I sensed that they were less on guard with me as we became more familiar with each other. While this may not entirely eliminate the awareness of differences in our respective sociocultural identities, this feeling of greater familiarity, especially toward the end of the observation period, contributed to my intuition that the data I was collecting on their perspectives was richer and more genuine as a result.

As with all qualitative research, there are caveats against casually applying the propositions advanced here to research at scale, or even research in other contexts. Every classroom and especially every classroom participant are unique and hold similarities across contexts in only the most superficial of circumstances. With respect to Mr. Nelson, for example, it is clear through classroom observations and in interviews that the teacher is quite comfortable with employing humor, either for the benefit of his students or merely for his own amusement. As such, it plays a major role in his instructional practices, a role that may not be suitable for teachers less apt to rely on humor. Discussion of this research has tied the use of humor to fostering a more nonthreatening classroom with a useful degree of rapport between Mr. Nelson and his students. However, the only implication that can be drawn from this assertion is on the importance of providing a safe classroom space for students to contribute to dialogue, not necessarily on any specific prescriptions about how to effect any learning space. Determining the relative effectiveness of other characteristics that might serve as alternatives to humor in

contributing to classroom dialogue is a topic for future research to explore so that this research can more ably apply to other contexts.

One major consideration regarding the discussion of interactional resources is that the observations of gestures, facial expressions, and other visual forms of communication were limited to that which was recorded in field notes and pictures, the latter of which were limited to photographs of board work, textbook pages, and students' written work. Previous written representations of research data of discourse such as that found in studies by Arnold (2012) and Smotrova and Lantolf (2013) benefit from the use of pictures of research participants engaged in embodied interaction, while verbal dialogue was initially the main focus of this study, thus missing out on opportunities to capture the pragmatic moves of classroom participants. To a certain extent, this consideration has arguably been mitigated through extensive member checking through stimulated recall interviews about utterances and actions taking place in class. Nevertheless, future research on the subject of multimodal classroom discourse can benefit from more visual representations of engaged interaction to provide a clearer depiction of how meaning is co-constructed between interactants.

Finally, there are opportunities through this dissertation research to pursue discussion of methodological implications. This ethnography relies a great deal on my interactions with not only Mr. Nelson, but also his students. Those interactions undoubtedly necessitate discussions of how power relations owing to differences in language, cultural background, and knowledge influence the data collection process. This discussion spans not only issues of ethical research but also a full consideration of how to

interpret the collected data. Where the contemporary discussion of methods of participant observation thoroughly explores issues of anxiety in research participants to engage in the data collection process, a number of interactions where research participants express eagerness to engage with the research raises questions as to whether data collection occurs because of native-speaker norms.

On a personal note, this ethnographic study provided a significant opportunity for me to reflect on my own teaching practices. As someone who has been in a similar position as Mr. Nelson and aims to return to teaching after this dissertation, I found myself comparing my practices to Mr. Nelson's practices during classroom observations. His use of the blackboard and ability to employ humor through wordplay or reference to students prompted me to think about how I would change the way that I teach non-L1 English students. This dissertation has highlighted and focused on how teachers grow in the moment that teaching and learning take place, which is bound to complement the other forms of change that teacher educators prompt posthumously. That said, the sort of personal reflection I have had during this study points to existing research that has established how reflection after teaching experiences also prompts change. Certainly, stimulated recall interviews provided Mr. Nelson with opportunities of his own to consider his teaching practices, as a number of instances in the interview data have indicated. In the end, the evidence of instructional shifts during and after teaching experiences illustrates the importance of social interaction in contributing to axiological change.

Closing thoughts

Returning one more time to the metaphor of flight, if communication between speakers is the act of flying the plane, then the interactional resources are the instruments a pilot uses to perceive turbulent conditions, while the instructional shifts are the controls to navigate around them and toward more favorable conditions. The more resources that a pilot has at their disposal, the more functionality he has in navigating the skies, provided they can demonstrate the flexibility to do so in a dynamic environment. The conditions in the sky, favorable or otherwise, are further informed by an inductive understanding of knowledge and power dynamics. Before takeoff and even while in flight, a pilot can only guess what those conditions are and must make decisions about course corrections that they cannot prepare for until they actually encounter them.

Until it becomes possible to fully probe what students think as they engage in classroom discourse, dialogic and dynamic interaction will remain an area of education research that presents numerous opportunities for study. The contemporary research orientation, relying primarily on structuralist or psycholinguistic assumptions founded within language acquisition, can benefit from a more comprehensive examination of the resources surrounding spoken language in classroom discourse.

Despite the caveats and limitations qualifying the assertions presented in the previous two chapters, by connecting the perspectives of the study's participants to the field observations and to relevant theory, there are aspects of this Practical English classroom that are arguably conducive to the promotion of dialogic interaction with language learners. Above all other aspects, the creation of a safe space for students to

experiment with the target language and interact freely with others, absent fear of reprisal or loss of status, has been examined repeatedly and on many levels during the study's data collection phase. Interviews with both the teacher and his students indicate little, if any, fear of failure, even as impediments to dialogic interaction are manifest through a need for greater linguistic or topical resources. To the contrary, perspectives from many of the students in both Practical English sessions have indicated that the power dynamics within the classroom relate not to coercion or rewards (i.e., immediate material gains or punishments according to student performance, or of loss to status within the classroom) but to genuine interest in achieving positive learning outcomes or respect for classroom participants or even a combination of the two.

Nonetheless, while these elements are present to a sufficient extent, inquiry into what promotes dialogic interaction within the classroom remains an open question, as evidenced by the various challenges perceived by the teacher, his students, and this researcher. What has been described in this final chapter represents a good starting point for language teachers to consider when promoting a productive dialogue with students. This dissertation invites practitioners, researchers, and all other stakeholders in education to continue to seek out a more complex and contextualized understanding of what factors contribute to dialogic interaction. Particularly in the language classroom where distances generated by language and culture are consequential to the teaching and learning process, providing further definition to answer this research inquiry can provide more illuminating implications for practitioners and further understanding of multicultural interaction in the classroom.

APPENDIX

CODING SCHEME

- 1000 – mediational strategies
  - 1100 – elements of instructional conversation
    - 1101 – thematic focus
    - 1102 – background/relevant schemata
    - 1103 – direct teaching
    - 1104 – complex language/expression
    - 1105 – bases for statements/positions
    - 1106 – fewer "known-answer" questions
    - 1107 – responsivity to student contributions
    - 1108 – connected discourse
    - 1109 – challenging, nonthreatening atmosphere
    - 1110 – general participation
  - 1200 – mode of communication
    - 1201 – verbal L2
    - 1202 – verbal L1
    - 1211 – written L2
    - 1212 – written L1
    - 1221 – gestures
    - 1231 – facial expressions
    - 1232 – body language
    - 1241 – pictures
    - 1251 – supplemental materials (YouTube, PPT, printouts)
    - 1261 – me as affordance
  - 1300 – teacher strategies eliciting student output
    - 1301 – asks students if they understand
    - 1302 – follow-up questions (MAYBE redundant with 1106, deprecates 2201)
    - 1303 – recitation/modeling
    - 1304 – hints
    - 1305 – exaggerates wrong response
    - 1306 – show of hands
    - 1307 – thumbs up/down
    - 1308 – change in questioning strategies
    - 1309 – asks for volunteers
    - 1310 – chooses a particular student (maybe deprecates 6141)

- ■ 1311 – uses humor
- 2000 – dialogic development
  - ○ 2100 – student behavior
    - ■ 2101 – student changes answer
    - ■ 2102 – student checks w/ classmate
    - ■ 2103 – student checks phone/dictionary
    - ■ 2104 – student checks other resource
    - ■ 2105 – student indicates (lack of) understanding verbally
    - ■ 2106 – student indicates (lack of) understanding w/ body language
    - ■ 2107 – student indicates (lack of) understanding w/ facial expression
    - ■ 2108 – student repeats teacher's words
    - ■ 2109 – student laughs
    - ■ 2110 – student makes a gesture
    - ■ 2111 – student asks a question
    - ■ 2112 – student volunteers an answer
    - ■ 2113 – student asks teacher privately
    - ■ **2199 – student does nothing**
  - ○ 2200 – teacher builds dialogue
    - ■ ~~2201 – teacher asks follow-up questions~~
    - ■ 2202 – teacher gives an example
    - ■ 2203 – teacher provides an anecdote
    - ■ 2204 – teacher repeats own explanation
    - ■ 2205 – teacher models
    - ■ 2206 – teacher repeats student's answer
    - ■ 2207 – teacher asks student to repeat
    - ■ ~~2208 – teacher tells a joke~~
  - ○ 2300 – comprehension check
    - ■ 2301 – teacher checks through verbal communication
    - ■ 2302 – teacher checks without verbal communication
- 3000 – bases of social power
  - ○ 3100 – reward power exercised by teacher
    - ■ 3101 – validation (coincident with 1107)
    - ■ 3102 – positive feedback (coincident with 1107)
  - ○ 3150 – reward power perceived by students
  - ○ 3200 – coercive power exercised by teacher
    - ■ 3201 – negative feedback
  - ○ 3250 – coercive power perceived by students
  - ○ 3300 – legitimate power exercised by teacher

- ○ 3350 – legitimate power perceived by students
- ○ 3400 – expert power exercised by teacher
  - ■ 3401 – language explanation
  - ■ 3402 – cultural explanation
- ○ 3450 – expert power perceived by students
- ○ 3500 – referent power exercised by teacher
- ○ 3550 – referent power perceived by students
- 4000 – challenges
  - ○ 4100 – Sedova et al.
    - ■ 4111 – linguistic resources
    - ■ 4121 – content resources
    - ■ 4131 – academic expectations
    - ■ 4141 – cultural expectations
  - ○ 4200 – shape of challenge
    - ■ 4201 – silence
    - ■ 4202 – grammar
    - ■ 4203 – pronunciation
    - ■ 4204 – student defers (deprecated by 2102)
    - ■ 4205 – time constraints
    - ■ 4206 – facial expressions
    - ■ 4207 – gestures
    - ■ 4208 – low voice
    - ■ 4209 – missed expectation
    - ■ 4210 – demotivation (may need own section)
  - ○ 4300 – source of anxiety
    - ■ 4301 – peers
    - ■ 4302 – teacher
    - ■ 4303 – observer (me)
  - ○ 4400 – other challenges
    - ■ 4401 – distractions
    - ■ 4402 – late student
    - ■ 4403 – absent student
    - ■ 4404 – missing materials
    - ■ 4405 – teacher makes a mistake
- 5000 – opportunities
  - ○ 5100 – opportunity for…
    - ■ 5101 – language extension
    - ■ 5102 – topic extension
    - ■ 5103 – rapport (deprecated by 5200)

- 5104 – academic expectations (e.g., e-learning, TOEIC, TOEFL)
  - ○ 5200 – rapport
    - ■ 5201 – humor/joke
    - ■ 5202 – references something about student
    - ■ 5203 – personal anecdote
    - ■ 5204 – validates student output (coincident with 1107)
    - ■ 5205 – talking freely
- 6000 – shifts
  - ○ 6100 – type of shift
    - ■ 6101 – rewords/rephrases
    - ■ 6111 – more words
    - ■ 6121 – more affordances
    - ■ 6131 – presents (gives up?)
    - ■ 6141 – asks another student
    - ■ 6151 – asks me (may be coincident with 1261)
    - ■ 6161 – clarifies expectations
    - ■ 6171 – makes suggestion
    - ■ 6181 – pragmatic shift (gestures/facial expression)
    - ■ 6191 – defers to/utilizes student
- 7000 – teacher perceptions
  - ○ 7100 – about students
    - ■ 7101 – motivation
    - ■ 7102 – goals
    - ■ 7103 – struggle
    - ■ 7104 – confidence
    - ■ 7105 – fear/anxiety
    - ■ 7106 – confusion
    - ■ 7107 – hesitation
    - ■ 7108 – interest
- ~~8000 – teacher intentions~~
- 8000 – theory
  - ○ 8100 – Webb & Barrett (2014) re: rapport
    - ■ 8101 – uncommonly attentive behaviors
    - ■ 8102 – common grounding
    - ■ 8103 – courteous behaviors
    - ■ 8104 – connecting behaviors
    - ■ 8105 – information sharing
    - ■ 8106 – balancing connection and authority
    - ■ 8107 – adapting rapport to student level

- - ■ 8108 – providing respite to norms
    - ■ 8111 – students' perception of teacher's uncommonly attentive behaviors
    - ■ 8112 – …
  - ○ 8200 – Mercer (2011) re: learner agency
    - ■ 8201 – student perceptions of motivation
    - ■ 8202 – student perceptions of affect → "willingness to exercise...agency" (p. 433)
    - ■ 8203 – student perceptions of self-regulation → "goals, metacognition and reflection" (p. 433)
    - ■ 8211 – my observation of students expressing motivation
    - ■ 8212 – …
- ● 9000 – student perceptions
  - ○ 9100 – about self
    - ■ 9101 – lack of English ability
    - ■ 9102 – embarrassment
    - ■ 9103 – confidence
    - ■ 9104 – anxiety
    - ■ 9105 – fear
    - ■ 9106 – unprepared
    - ■ 9107 – doesn't concentrate
    - ■ 9108 – no confidence
    - ■ 9109 – nervous
    - ■ 9110 – shy
  - ○ 9200 – about classmates
    - ■ 9201 – judging English
    - ■ 9202 – listening to other students
    - ■ 9203 – embarrassed
    - ■ 9204 – tired
    - ■ 9205 – friendly
    - ■ 9206 – supportive (implied in 2102)
    - ■ 9207 – good at English
    - ■ 9208 – good at speaking
  - ○ 9300 – about teacher
    - ■ 9301 – bad feeling
    - ■ 9302 – approachable
    - ■ 9303 – friendly
    - ■ 9304 – helpful
    - ■ 9305 – interesting

- ■ 9306 – funny
- ■ 9307 – not strict
- ■ 9308 – easy to understand
- ■ 9309 – kind
  - ○ 9400 – about English
  - ○ 9500 – about PE class
    - ■ 9501 – chance to use English
    - ■ 9502 – comfortable
- ● 10000 – miscellaneous
  - ○ 10001 – interesting quotes
  - ○ 10002 – interesting events
  - ○ 10003 – my reflections
  - ○ 10004 – interesting episodes
  - ○ 10005 – negative case
  - ○ 10011 – RQ1
  - ○ 10012 – RQ2

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