

English Teaching, Vol. 54, No. 3, Fall 1999

An Analysis of Teacher Talk in a College EFL Classroom*

Youngja Lee
Imdeuk Kim
Moonsub Han
Soyeung Koh

(Hanyang University)

Lee, Youngja., Kim, Imdeuk., Han, Moonsub., & Koh, Soyeung. (1999). An analysis of teacher talk in a college EFL classroom. *English Teaching*, 54(3), 259-278.

In L2 classrooms taught by native speaker (NS) teachers, the teachers are expected to give students both communication and instruction on language usage. NS teachers can respond to this request by organizing the classroom discourse to provide both communicative opportunities and instructions on the formal features. In this process-oriented study of teacher talk in a college EFL classroom, a segment of classroom discourse is micro-analyzed to reveal a structure of interaction between an NS teacher and Korean students in a freshmen English classroom. This article concludes with an evaluation of the analyzed interaction, suggesting that the value of classroom discourse should be understood in its own context. It also recommends engaging teachers in a process-oriented microanalysis of teacher talk in order to achieve a deeper understanding of L2 classroom interactions.

This article presents a microanalysis of a segment of freshmen EFL classroom interaction. It shows how one NS teacher managed to provide authentic language experiences plus structured grammar practice in a freshmen English classroom. The speech event described here is a 20-min. teacher-led, whole-class activity for

* Funding for this research was provided through a grant by Korea Research Foundation in 1997.

instructing on English conditionals. One discourse pattern that this segment illustrates is a conversation in which the teacher creates frames and keeps moving in and out of the frames in order to provide an authentic and natural context for engaging in a construction of the target structure.

We first present a rationale for undertaking discourse analyses of actual classroom discourse in order to better understand the teaching and learning that take place in language classrooms. We then present the analysis. The teacher is a native American with many years of teaching experience in Asian countries. A brief description of data collection prefaces the actual analysis of the discourse. We conclude with implications from the analysis and suggest that informing teachers and teachers-in-preparation of the knowledge inferred from the microanalysis of classroom conversation holds a great potential for influencing and improving L2 classroom teaching and learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

As a medium of instruction, the language of the classroom has long been considered a fine lens through which to view the teaching and learning that occur in classrooms (Allwright, 1988; Brown & Wragg, 1993; Cazden, 1988; Goldenberg & Patthey-Chavez, 1995; Greenleaf & Freedman, 1993; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Tuyay, Jennings, & Dixon, 1995; van Lier, 1988, 1994; Ulichny, 1996; Wilson & Haugh, 1995; and other works discussed below). Classroom discourse studies focus on the structure of classroom conversation which differs from everyday conversations (Mehan, 1979; Poole, 1990; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and also on its substance which shows how classroom talk fosters the construction of knowledge. The classroom conversation has been typically described in three parts—teacher initiation (I), student response (R), followed by teacher evaluation of the response (E). With the evaluating sequence, the teacher assumes the right to control the talk and also as an initiator, the teacher manages turn-taking and orchestrating the classroom discourse. This structural approach to the classroom discourse has provided an understanding of the social role and relationship of teachers and students, however, it does not provide a deeper account of what kind of interaction occurs and what kind of learning is promoted through the interaction.

The substance of classroom conversation, rather than its structure is important

particularly in L2 classrooms. For the examination of the substance, as Cazden (1988, pp. 3-4) notes, can answer important educational questions such as "What learning is actually promoted?", "How do patterns of language use affect what counts as learning?" or "How do these patterns affect the equality, or inequality, of students' educational opportunities?" For example, it can show whether or how the "comprehensible" input (Krashen, 1981, 1982) and "comprehensible" output (Swain, 1985) are offered in real classrooms, both of which have been claimed crucial to L2 acquisition. It has been claimed that the comprehensibility of input is attained through an interactional adjustment, namely "negotiation of meaning". When a message is not successfully conveyed, interlocutors are asking for clarification-requests or comprehension check-ups and then a modification of input follows to make the input comprehensible. Empirical studies of negotiation for meaning (Doughty & Pica, 1986; Pica, 1991, 1996; Pica, Young, & Doughty, 1987; Varonis & Gass, 1985) have suggested that non-native speakers use negotiation of meaning when they are confronted with a gap in understanding and it has become one indicator of communicativeness of L2 classrooms (Nunan, 1987).

However, its reality in actual L2 classrooms is often put into question. For example, based on their observations of L2 classroom interactions, Foster(1998) argues that in real classrooms, negotiation of meaning is not always a naturally employed strategy, because a different communication strategy can be employed: waiting and hoping that a future utterance, not negotiating, would clarify the incomplete understanding, or because of teachers' and learners' expectation of appropriate classroom behavior, because of teacher's sensitivity to affective variables in L2 learning or because of inevitability of teacher-fronted settings. Therefore, it can be argued that classroom discourse studies complement empirical or theoretical studies by presenting classroom constraints which shape the discourse patterns and therefore by providing reasons to value classroom practices which do not necessarily comply with recommendations based on experimental studies. And this study attempts to illuminate the support to these classroom discourse studies.

In native-speaker-teaching (NST) college EFL classrooms in Korea, teachers are conscious of the learners' needs (a) to hear and produce L2 as they would in out-of-class encounters and (b) to be instructed on the correct pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary that they are unable to express by themselves. In addition, the teachers are conscious of the facts that the medium of instruction is also the content of the lesson and students vary considerably in their abilities. The

teacher's job, then, is to mediate all of these considerations for a heterogeneous group of learners and construct an efficient instructional discourse.

With these considerations in mind, we examined the discourse of a freshmen English class in order to discover how the particular pressures in NST classrooms shape the classroom discourse. As we demonstrate below, a solution to the problem of accommodating these goals is apparent in the unique pattern of teacher talk. As we will demonstrate, the talk between the students and the teacher becomes an item of language to base instruction on, which constitutes a part of the larger instructional conversation. Within this larger speech event, the teacher creates and interrupts a conversation, to engage the whole class in instruction, story telling, correction and, even entertaining. Thus the teacher puts the instructional frame on hold for either a drill-by-repetition routine or a story telling, which in turn is embedded in an instructional conversation.

II. METHOD

1. Context of the Study

This study was carried out in NST college English classes, as a part of a larger study of the classroom interaction between an NS teacher and Korean students in a regular classroom setting (25-30 students). The larger study focused on the types of utterances asked to produce and the role of teacher feedback in learning to communicate with a native speaker. It included studies of the teaching styles of the faculty and the students' behaviour in NST classrooms.

We observed classes for a period of 10 weeks and tape-recorded sessions taught by ten different teachers. The two cameras, one for facing the teacher and the other facing the students, had been installed before the class started. All were documented in field notes written immediately after observation sessions. After leaving the field, we relistened to the record of sessions and simultaneously compiled a rough transcript of the classes. A review of both our field notes and the rough transcripts revealed a discourse pattern that characterizes the work in each class. We then located several instances of the patterns and closely transcribed them.

2. Data

The episode analyzed here was selected from the video-taped record of a classroom taught by one of the teachers in the larger study, Mr. Brown. The speech event in the following microanalysis of classroom discourse is a teacher-led instruction. The class was a beginner level communication class, required to all freshmen. They met twice a week and each session lasted two hours. The teacher was supposed to cover the assigned textbook which dictates the structural and functional targets to teach and also includes reading passages, picture stories and other materials. The teacher described the students as knowing a lot about English grammar from previous language instruction but having had little opportunity to actually use English or to interact with native speakers. His goal in this class, was to increase their confidence in communicating in English. The students understood that they were expected to converse with the teacher as much as possible. However usually five or seven out of 20 students participated in the teacher-led conversations.

This particular segment occurs at the beginning of a lesson, when the teacher is engaging in a conversation with the students, which was about a picture ("Washing machine") and a short passage ("A washing machine commercial") in the textbook. Even though we report here one lesson, it illustrates a pattern of discourse that was common throughout his lessons we observed, independent of the nature of the ongoing activity. In fact, these instructional conversations appear to constitute typical instruction for his class.

III. ANALYSIS

To analyze the exemplar we have adopted discourse analysis. The analysis presented here draws on the work of Abdesslem (1993), Cazden (1988), Goffman (1974, 1981), Sinclair and Coulthard (1977), Patil (1994), Tannen (1984, 1989, 1993) and the interactive sociolinguists. It adopts notions like "speech acts" and "moves", but in addition, it uses the notion of "frame". It gives the categories of acts and moves additional dimensions, makes the analysis flexible, and thus yields a deeper understanding of what is going on in a classroom interaction.

The term "frame" has been variously used in linguistics, artificial intelligence,

anthropology and sociology. The notion of frame adopted here is the one which characterizes interactive sociolinguistic work. The interactive notion of frame refers to a definition of what is going on in interaction, as developed by Bateson (1972) and Goffman (1974) and as Gumperz (1982) uses the term "speech activity".

A key element in framing is the use of identifiable linguistic "register". Register is simply variation conditioned by use: conventionalized lexical, syntactic and prosodic choices appropriate for the setting and audience (Tannen, 1993, p. 63). For example, in addition to the conventional conversational registers, we found in the data "follow-me register", a register characterized by exaggerated shifts in pitch, marked prosody (long pauses followed by bursts of vocalization), and drawn out vowel sounds accompanied by a rising intonation at the end of idea unit or hand gestures in order to draw students' attention to upcoming activity. Also there is "performing register" in which the role of teacher is to perform an act and to invite students into the act as co-performers. In contrast to these intonationally exaggerated registers, the teacher uses a flat intonation to give a drill on structures to whole class, which is called "drill register". In addressing a particular student and checking his utterance, the teacher uses "consulting register".

Although register shifting is one way of accomplishing frame shifts, it is not the only way. Whereas each frame is associated with an identifiable register, the teacher also shifts footings with each audience. In other words, he not only talks differently, but he also deals with students differently, depending upon the frame in which he is operating. The four frames identified in this interaction are the "invitation frame", "performance frame", "drill frame" and "consultation frame". Each of the frames entails addressing students differently. The invitation frame shows that the teacher entertains the students, establishes a relaxed atmosphere and the students watch his entertainment. The performance frame shows that he performs an act and keeps the lesson "on hold" to use Goffman's term, until the act comes to a point where the lesson and the performance have been connected. Once the connection has been acknowledged, the students are supposed to join the performance. In the frame of drill and consultation, the students focus on both message and form, in other words "transacting in L2" as described by Abdeslem (1993). Now, the teacher is acting as an organizer, seemingly delaying his corrections and to favour self-repair and the teacher gives the students instructions on what to do later on. In these frames, the students seem to make use of a lot of control and to rely on their highly analyzed knowledge of the language, within

a narrow range of language structures. Throughout the talk, the teacher moves among the frames. Often these frames are served simultaneously, such as when the teacher is telling a story and instructing on vocabulary. The teacher uses a paralinguistic cues when he signals the frame shift and its communicative effect is more immediate than the words spoken to literally signal the transition into a new frame.

1. Transcript

The data presented here make up one continuous segment of classroom interaction. Following Tannen (1984) among others, we analyze the discourse via a running commentary on what the speakers are communicating, based on the uptake or responses to utterances and also on intonation and prosodic cues to interpret meaning systems employed. As a naturalistic and humanistic analysis of discourse (Beretta, 1993; Cummings, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Edge & Richards, 1998; Erickson, 1986), it provides a description and also an interpretation of what is in the data. It seeks to produce understanding of this particular situation and it does not seek to produce a generalization on the situation described, thus the interpretation and conclusions reached are understood in its own context.

We have divided the segment into smaller units to facilitate the description of the data. In fact, the teacher's opening speech is not included because the class was not ready. The teacher routinely started the class by asking individual students questions to relate them to the points of lesson. He engaged in conversation while the students were settling in their chairs, getting their books out, and chatting quietly with their neighbors.

Transcription Conventions: Adapted from Tannen (1984)

- . . noticeable pause or break in rhythm (less than 0.5 second)
- . . . half second pause (an extra dot is added for each half second of pause)
- underline marks emphatic stress
- CAPS mark very emphatic stress
- marks a glottal stop or abrupt cutting off of sound
- : indicates lengthened vowel sound (extra colons indicate greater lengthening)
- . marks phrase-final intonation (more to come)
- ˆ marks falling intonation (not necessarily marking the end of a sentence)
- ? marks yes/no question rising intonation

dec indicates words spoken slowly

acc indicates words spoken quickly

p indicates words spoken softly and an extra *p* indicates a greater degree of softness

f indicates words spoken loudly and an extra *f* indicates a greater degree of loudness

decp indicates words spoken slowly and softly

accf indicates words spoken quickly and loudly

The above notations continue until punctuation, unless otherwise noted

{ } indicates overlapped speech

/words?/ within slashes indicate uncertain transcription

[brackets] are used for comments on quality of speech and context

(del) indicates segments of conversation were deleted in the transcript

Segment 1

- 1 T: Now, look at . . the second picture. What is he doing?
- 2 S: /, . ?/.
- 3 T: OK. What do you see You see a man, as a young man or an old man?
- 5 S: Young man.
- 6 T: Young. He looks young. Is he, is he putting the clothes IN a washing machine or taking them out of the washing machine?
- 8 S: Putting in.
- 9 T: Do you think he is putting them in? OK. OK. Let's say he is putting them in. Let's say he is putting them in.
- 11 T: *dec* What other steps of the processes . . of washing clothes in a washing machine? What do you do first?
- (del)
- 14 T: You got the clothes, you got the soap, you got the water, and then next, put the clothes, put the soap, fill in the water, and then?
- 16 S: Close the cover.
- 17 T: Close the cover, close the lid.
- 18 S: /button?/
- 19 T: Push the button, turn it on.
f Repeat. Turn it on. [class repeat]
 What do you do after the washing machine has washed the clothes?
- 22 S: /take them out, open the lid, . . . ?/ [class laughing]
- 23 T: Open the lid, take them out, and do what?
- 24 S: hang them.
- 25 T: HANG. Yeah, you have to dry them. If you don't have an automatic dryer, you've got to do WHAT.
- 27 S: Hang.
- 28 T: You gotta hang them up. Repeat. *acc* Hang them up. [class repeat]

Segment 2

- 29 T: *dec* Look at the picture. Do you think he is married?
 30 S: [laughing]
 31 T: Do you think he is married?
 32 S: No.
 33 T: No, why not?
 34 S: /wives are doing . . . ?/.
 35 T: If he is
 36 H: married. If he . . . if he . . . married.
 37 T: *accf ee?-ee?-ee?*
 38 H: [laughing] he
 39 T: IF . . . uh . . . He . . . uh . . . were. [laugh and mockingly imitate the previous utterance]
 41 T: Repeat. IF. HE. WERE. MARRIED, [class repeat] his WIFE. WOULD. WASH the clothes. [class repeat]
- (*del*: responding to the students' comments on the division of household chore)
- 44 T: Now notice the problem. He is a genius, he got an A in English. And YET, he said, If . . . he . . . married . . . if . . . what . . . [mockingly repeat his utterances] everybody forgets that grammar. Unit 12 presents the three different conditionals and number 2 is for that one.
 48 T: IF he WERE, IF he WERE, IF he WERE, he WOULD do, WOULD do, WOULD do. Repeat. IF. DID. WOULD. DO, [students repeating]. That's the formula what is called Present Unreal Conditional. IF. DO. WILL. DO, [class repeating] IF. DID. WOULD. DO, [students repeating]. And the Past Conditional is IF HAD DONE. WOULD HAVE DONE, [teacher asked to repeat the formula one more time].

Segment 3

- 54 T : Now, students, let's practice, let's practice, TWO eggs. [holding up the eggs]
 Now, *decp* what do you call an egg that is NOT boiled? NOT cooked?
 57 S : Raw egg.
 58 T : A Raw egg. And you see? Which one is which? The other is a boiled egg. But . . . I forget, which one is which. How can you tell? How can you tell? Repeat. How can you tell? [students repeat]. How can I tell which one is raw and which one is boiled? [looking at S]
 62 M : / . . . ?/ By spinning.
 63 T : Spinning them? Really? And how can I know?
 64 M : If . . . if . . . it were . . . a boiled egg, it would spill, SPIN, it would spin.
 65 T : Ah, *accf* But, but, but, *dec* IF-DID-WOULD-DO means unREAL, that means NOT true, something that is not true.

- 67 M : Aaaah. If it is a boiled egg.
 68 T : Yeah, IF-DO-WILL-DO. If it is a boiled egg.
 69 MS: it will spin fast.
 70 T : Keeeck. *f* Show us. [class laughing] *ff* Camera! [class laughing]
 71 M : [spin the egg] It's not, it's not, it's not a boiled egg, it is a . . . raw egg.
 72 T : It's not a boiled egg? Let's see it spins. [give the same egg to another student.
 who succeeded in spinning it]
 74 S : *fff* Uuuuuuh.
 75 T : Which one is it.
 76 S : Boiled egg.
 77 T : Well, compare. [spin both eggs one by one]
 78 S : Aaaaaah
 79 T : Satisfy yourself. [give S1 a chance to spin them again] *dec* If you spin a raw
 egg, it DOESN'T turn fast. *dec* If you spin a boiled egg, it will turn fast. Repeat.
 accf IF, DO, WILL, DO [students repeat]. *dec* If you spin a boiled egg, it will
 turn very fast. *dec* If you spin a RAW egg, what, it will NOT spin fast. O.K.
 84 T : Na-na-na-na [keeping switching the two eggs in his hands] Which one is
 it. Which one is it. [spin the egg and it does not spin fast]
 86 M : Raw egg.
 87 T : The raw egg. Why? *dec* How, do, you, know, it is not a boiled egg?
 88 M : If . . . it . . . were a boiled egg,
 89 T : If it were the boiled egg,
 90 M : It . . . would turn fast.
 91 M : If it were the boiled egg, then it would turn fast.
 92 T : It would turn very fast. It will spin like THAT. [spin the egg] But, it doesn't,
 so it is not. *accf* IF-DID-WOULD-DO, IF-DID-WOULD-DO.
 (del: repeating the formula)

Segment 4

- 94 T : Bara-bara-ba. [switching eggs again] Now, it is a big moment. All we have to
 do is past-conditionals. I have no idea which one is which. Ready? [holding up
 an egg, ready to drop it] What will happen, if it's a raw egg, better move back.
 What will happen, if it's a raw egg?
 98 S : Break.
 99 T : It will break, and make a big mess. [he drops the egg and it stays on the desk]
 101 S : *fff* Wow. [laughing]
 102 T : Well, it's a good thing, *accf* lucky, lucky, lucky. I chose a boiled egg. BeCAU::se
 if
 104 S : /it didn't make . . . ?/
 105 J : If . . . had . . . picked

- 106 C : {AaaaHAA
 107 J : {If you . . . picked . . . a raw egg,
 108 T : A raw egg,
 109 J : It . . . wou:ld . . . HA:VE . . . made a {mess,
 110 T : {Big mess.
 111 T : If I had dropped a raw egg, Repeat [class repeat] it would have made, [class repeat] a big mess. IF HAD. DONE. WOULD. HAVE. DONE.

Segment 5

- 113 T : Back to the washing MACHI::NE,
 114 S : YE::S,
 115 T : Back to the washing machi::ne, so you said he probably isn't married. If he were married, [hand-movement to invite student's participation]
 117 S : {His wife would wash.
 118 T : {His wife would wash, would probably wash. Maybe he is a student, and maybe he lives in his family home. Is that possible? Do you think he lives with his family?
 121 S : {Yes
 122 S : {No.
 123 T : No? Why? Why not? If he lives with his parents,
 124 S : /mother would do?/
 125 S : {If he lived with his family, his mother would wash.
 126 T : {If he lived with his family, his mother would wash.

Segment 6

- 127 T : STUDENTS, *dec* thi::nk . . . abou::t . . . washing machi::nes. Think about . . . few years ago . . . I forgot maybe five years ago . . . on Korean television . . . a TV commercial for DAEWOO washing machine . . . a funny commercial, the actor did something funny. Do you remember? What . . . on that commercial? Do you remember? You remember?
 132 S : He put himself into the washing machine.
 133 T : Yeah, he put himself in a washing machine. And did someone turn it on? the washing machine? Did somebody turn the machine on?
 135 T : *acc* Yes, it worked and he went around. Right, it was few years ago. As you may remember, after they started showing the commercial, one case . . . a ten-year-old boy put his five-year-old sister in a washing machine, the family washing machine, and he was trying to turn it ON when his mother came into the room, HUH. SAW what he was doing and STOPPED him. It's LUCKY she

- came in.
- 141 T: BeCAUSE [holding up his hands and making a hand-horn] *dec*
if-had-done-would-have-done.
- 143 S: Aaaaaaha
- 144 B: If she hadn't come?
- 145 T: Good, if she hadn't come.
- 146 B: the younger sister. .would have done. .would have been. .hurt.
- 147 T: Excellent. You can have en egg. [throw an egg to S]
- 148 S: *fff* Aaaaaaah. [laughing]
- 149 T: If she hadn't come. *f* Repeat, if she hadn't come, the little girl would have been hurt, maybe she would have been killed, maybe would have died. *accf* Repeat, would have, could have, might have.
- 152 T: After that, after that, the TV network. TV network television had to take off the commercial on TV and you never saw that commercial again. Did you like that commercial? Did you like the commercial?
- 155 S: Not much.
- 156 T: Not much, *p* OK. All RIGHT.
f Do you think it is a good idea to take the commercial off?
- 158 S: Yes.
- 159 T: You DO. WHY.
- 160 P: If. the commercial, . . hadn't . . um had . . had . . not . . been taken off, many other accidents . . would have . . um . . occurred.
- 162 T: would have occurred or could have occurred. Would have occurred. might have occurred. Repeat, would have happened, could have happened. might have happened. All of those are perfectly good examples of that past conditional.
- 166 T: Now, probably the people who made the commercial, who made the commercial, they thought, *ff* NO, our goo:d IDEA, SUCH a SUCCESSFUL commer::cial.
- 169 T: *ff* Now, just because of the STU::PID kid: [class laughing] just because of ONE STUPID kid, IF, .HE. . . .
- 171 P: hadn't put, / . . the girl!/?
- 172 T: *f* If he hadn't DONE it. If he hadn't put her in a washing machine.
- 173 P: If he hadn't done it, they would . . not . . have . . taken . . it . . off the TV.
- 174 T: Right. Perfect.

2. Analysis of the Interaction

1) Segment 1

In the first segment, Mr. Brown sets up a warm-up conversation. He uses the

picture, "Washing picture" and invites the students to join in the conversation. When the students' responses to his rather general question are not clear (line 2), he provides a series of more specific questions (lines 3-9). Once the students participate, Mr. Brown in line 11, tries to joint-construct a conversation about the processes of washing. Within this conversational frame, he responds to the content of students' contribution (line 25) and also highlights some words with a louder and faster intonation, a change in frame. He repeats them with a high pitch and shifts to a drill frame by repetition of his own contributions, "turn it on" (line 19) and "hang them up" (line 28). This nomination of the larger audience is the first indication that the ongoing conversation has been "downkeyed" to a whole-group drill. Goffman introduced the term "keying" as a central concept of frame analysis. A keying determines what is really going on. Practicing and actually doing what has been practiced is seen by Goffman (1974, p. 62) as an example of keying. "Downkeying", a move out of primary frame is common in L2 classrooms and tends to be triggered by the teacher who is often concerned with correctness of the linguistic form. The next segment of the exchange begins with Mr. Brown's saying (line 29) "Look at the picture", as he started the first segment.

2) Segment 2

Mr. Brown's intonation markedly lowers in the question. He shifts from a high-pitched melody that he used to converse in segment 1 to a very low pitch in "Do you think he is married?". His change to a low-pitched intonation is another indication that a change of activity is occurring, from warm-up to instruction. With H's unsuccessful try to respond in lines 36 and 38, the teacher expressed a need to deal with the problem in line 44. In line 37, Mr. Brown sees a good opportunity to instruct the whole class and repeats "ee?" with an intonational "kink". This impromptu practice drill is intended to reinforce the grammatical pattern being repeated (lines 36-48). At this point, the students are invited into the discourse as learners, not as conversation partners. He sets it up with the rhythmical intonation he uses to model the sentence he wants to be repeated and by gesturing to set up the rhythm for the choral repetition. His comment, "Notice the problem" (line 44), indicates that he thinks this is a good opportunity to instruct the class on a point of grammar. The drill is not picked up by the whole class, however, because the slot to fill requires the grammar which not everybody

was familiar with. Next, in a rather long stretch of discourse (lines 41-48) he continues his monologue to talk about the type of response he wants to hear (a metacomment about the utterance) and brings in the rest of the class as a potential audience for his lesson.

3) Segment 3

In the beginning of segment 3, the discourse shifts back to a conversational discourse, but Mr. Brown's contribution is more clearly framed as that of a teacher-performer in the egg-spinning experiment rather than a conversation partner. Lines 54-79 show how students get invited to the performance. Mr. Brown also signals the change in activity—from conversation to co-performance—by his exaggerated intonation (lines 70, 77 and 79). The rest of the extract is dedicated to a conversation with student M that involves a structural review and repetition. In lines 87-91, Mr. Brown is asking another question, which M answers but also Mr. Brown himself is in the slot-filler routine by repeating M's utterance.

4) Segments 4, 5

Segment 4 engages in the continuation of their dialogue about raw eggs and boiled eggs. He signals the next move with "Bara-bara-bara-ba" accompanied with his rhythmical gesture to attract students' attention to the upcoming activity, the past conditionals. In lines 94-111, the invitation frame (line 94), performance frame (line 99), drill frame (line 111) and consultation frame (lines 104-110) are all served within a short stretch of discourse. Mr. Brown drops the egg and seizes the opportunity to instruct the class on the more complex construction. While student J consults Mr. Brown, the teacher overlaps J's utterances and then he has the class repeat both parts of the structures several times to reinforce them.

The beginning of segment 5 is marked with an exaggerated intonation, as the beginning of segment 4 is marked with an exaggerated hand gesture. However, this time the students also key into the invitation frame, with copying the intonation (line 114). Throughout the segment, the same footing is demonstrated by the overlapping utterances (lines 117-118 and 125-126).

5) Segment 6

Mr. Brown then goes back to the conversation on the commercial. In this section, however, Mr. Brown has basically taken over the telling of the story by asking to elicit the grammatically correct form (lines 141 and 169). In line 141, the student is not clear on what Mr. Brown is asking, probably because it is an unexpected interruption of his story. He gives a clue by whispering the desirable form. Mr. Brown then provides an instructional metastatement clarifying the target structure and repeats the sentence with an intonation pattern that marks it as a case of mention, not actual dialogue (line 149). Mr. Brown continues the instruction by modifying the choice of words that can be used in the structure (another feature of audiolingual drills) but immediately slips back into story telling by providing a new piece of information on the commercial to relocate the class to the practice (line 152).

6) Summary

This particular structure of the classroom conversation is common in language classrooms. Though its seamless sequence is rather rare in other classes observed, the basic feature of interrupting an ongoing activity, whether it is reading or story telling to focus on the language form, is commonplace in NST classrooms. The tension between focusing on instructing and keeping up students' involvement creates a constant shifting back and forth among different instructional frames. This moving in and out of frames is a common feature of language classroom discourse that is neither only communication oriented—with everyone engaged in some communicative activity without considering how it is being performed—nor drill oriented, with everyone engaged in the explanation or practice of language. In other words, it is an instantiation of the assumed dual purpose of NST classrooms—to get students involved in language use as well as to overtly instruct formal features that have not yet been mastered by them.

IV. DISCUSSION

What do we infer about the instructional discourse in this particular class? The

most obvious inference is that the class does not allow students much opportunity for practicing communicational skills. In spite of all the effort the teacher invests to create students' involvement, most of the students participate only modestly. Only a few students choose to participate and the rest of the students are participating in the repetition drill. In this aspect, the class does resemble non-communicative traditional classroom interaction, rather than "genuine interaction", as Nunan (1989) discussed. However, as often argued (Abdesslem, 1993; Seedhouse, 1994), the evaluation of teacher talk only in terms of features of regular conversations ignores the reality of the classroom context and the features which make for effective communication within that context. In other words, the language classroom should be understood as a particular type of speech community with its own speech exchange system (Gumperz, 1982). As far as interaction in the language classrooms is concerned, it has an essential characteristic which distinguishes itself from other forms of interaction and this characteristic should be considered in any evaluation of its communicative value. Take the phenomenon of echoing students' responses. Studies have shown repetition not only plays an important role in real life communication (Johnstone, 1994). Language teachers may have perfectly valid communicative reason for doing repetition in classrooms (Seedhouse, 1994), such as making sure that everyone in the class has heard what has been just said, so that a discussion can continue. Also in a large class, it can be an effective way to give lower level students a chance to participate in class activities, as well as a way to provide feedback to students' responses.

In this particular classroom, the teacher's agenda is to create a conversation that serves as a springboard for his instruction, English conditionals. The conversation substitutes for a set of textbook exercises in providing language materials to work on. There are obvious motivational, educational and linguistic reasons for building the instruction on "genuine" communication, characterized by for example, "uneven distribution of information, the negotiation of meaning, topic nomination and negotiation of more than one speaker, and the right of interlocutors to decide whether to contribute or not" (Nunan, 1989, p. 137). However, the teacher's dual role in keeping the students involved in conversation as well as stepping out and commenting on or correcting students' output requires him to do most of interacting, even to the point of having to interact with himself. This type of interaction might be required to a greater degree in a class of students who cannot make themselves understood or who cannot understand the teacher's instruction in

the L2, which is typical of Korean college EFL classrooms. The reason for performing the conversation is to lay it out for the students who may not be able to talk but who are able to listen to it. Therefore, we describe its "non-communicative" interaction as a result of the constraints in NST classrooms and the purpose that the teacher tries to accomplish in this lesson.

V. CONCLUSION

As stated in the beginning of this article, the purpose of carefully analyzing particular examples of classroom discourse is to learn about the structure of teacher talk in a NST classroom at a Korean university. We have shown that shifting frames account for the complex nature of teacher-led interactions in an NST classroom. The usefulness of the analysis is significant. On a global level, this analysis answers the call for a deeper understanding of the use of classroom language in order to improve teaching and learning in L2 classrooms. However, unlike the studies using data collected in foreign countries (e.g., Park, 1998), this analysis is based on the interaction with Korean students at a Korean university. Thus, the categories of verbal interaction are rooted in the reality of Korean educational settings and on what typically goes on there. Therefore the model of teacher talk emerging from the analysis is likely to provide a more realistic picture of what is going on in Korean classrooms. For the same reason, it provides a more practical model for teachers-in-preparation to reflect on the common practice as well as their own teaching and eventually to move on to develop a better technique.

Evaluating process-oriented classroom research, Spada (1994) writes "it is simply not enough for researchers to describe what goes on in classrooms. We need to discover what features of instruction are most beneficial for learning. This aim requires research that focuses on both process and product variables" (pp. 687-688). Both process and product variables need to be considered, however, a comprehensive understanding of what actually goes on in a particular educational setting and why it is a critical first step in optimizing classroom instruction. When teachers take this step, they may be able to adjust their practice to more adequately guide the learning of their students. Research that helps build this knowledge among teachers is, we argue, the most promising direction for

understanding and positively influencing L2 classroom teaching and learning.

REFERENCES

- Abdessellem, H. (1993). Analyzing foreign language lesson discourse, *IRAL*, 31, 221-235.
- Allright, D. (1988). *Observations in the language classroom*. London: Longman.
- Bailey, K., & Nunan, D. (1998). *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative research in second language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. New York: Ballantine.
- Beretta, A. (Ed.). (1996). Theory construction in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics (Special issue)*, 14.
- Brown, G., & Wragg, C. (1993). *Questioning*. London: Routledge.
- Cazden, C. (1988). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Cummings, A. (Ed.). (1994). Alternatives in TESOL research: Descriptive, interpretive, and ideological orientations. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 673-703.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Doughty, C., & Pica, T. (1986). Information gap tasks: An aid to second language acquisition? *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 305-325.
- Edge, J., & Richards, K. (1998). May I see your warrant, please?: Justifying outcomes in qualitative research. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 334-356.
- Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 119-161). New York: Macmillan.
- Foster, P. (1998). A classroom perspective on the negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 1-23.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Goldenberg, C., & Patthey-Chavez, G. (1995). Discourse processes in instructional conversations: Interactions between teacher and transition readers. *Discourse Processes*, 19, 57-73.

- Greenleaf C., & Freedman, S. W. (1993). Linking classroom discourse and classroom content: Following the trail of intellectual work in a writing lesson. *Discourse Processes*, 16, 465-505.
- Gumperz, J. (1982). *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Jarvis, J., & Robinson, M. (1997). Analysing educational discourse: An exploratory study of teacher response and support to pupils' learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 18, 212-228.
- Johnstone, B. (1994). *Repetition in discourse*. New Jersey: Ablex.
- Krashen, D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Krashen, D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Mehan, H. (1979). *Learning lessons: Social organization in the classroom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1987). Communicative language teaching: Making it work. *ELT Journal*, 41, 136-145.
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Understanding language classrooms*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Park, D. J. (1998). An analysis of classroom discourse in adult ESL classrooms. *English Teaching*, 54, 17-42.
- Patil, B. (1994). Strategies of teacher talk. *IRAL*, 32, 154-166.
- Pica, T. (1991). Input as a theoretical and research construct. *IRAL*, 29, 185-196.
- Pica, T. (1996). Do second language learners need negotiation? *IRAL*, 34, 1-21.
- Pica, T., Lincoln-Porter, F., Paninos, D., & Linnel, J. (1996). Language learners' interaction: How does it address the input, output and feedback needs of L2 learners? *TESOL Quarterly*, 30, 59-84.
- Pica, T., Young, R., & Doughty, C. (1987). The impact of interaction on comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 737-758.
- Poole, D. (1990). Contextualizing IRE in an eighth-grade quiz review. *Linguistics and Education*, 2, 185-211.
- Seedhouse, P. (1994). Linking pedagogical purposes to linguistic patterns of interaction: The analysis of communication in the language classroom. *IRAL*, 32, 303-320.
- Sinclair, J. McH., & Coulthard, R. M. (1975). *Towards an analysis of discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spada, N. (1994). Classroom interaction analysis. In A. Cummings (Ed.),

- Alternatives in TESOL research: Descriptive, interpretive, and ideological orientations. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 685-688.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass, & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235-253). Rowley: Newbury House.
- Tannen, D. (1984). *Conversational analysis: Analyzing talk among friends*. Norwood: Ablex.
- Tannen, D. (1989). *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tannen, D. (Ed.). (1993). *Framing in discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tharp R., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching learning and schooling in social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tuyay, S., Jennings, L., & Dixon, C. (1995). Classroom discourse and opportunities to learn: an ethnographic study of knowledge construction in a bilingual third-grade classroom. *Discourse Processes*, 19, 75-110.
- Ulichny, P. (1996). Performed conversation in an ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30, 739-764.
- van Lier, L. (1988). *The classroom and the language learner*. Harlow: Longman.
- van Lier, L. (1994). Forks and hope: Pursuing understanding in different ways. *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 328-346.
- Varonis, E., & Gass, S. (1985). Non-native and non-native conversations: A model for the negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 71-90.
- Wilson, J., & Haugh, B. (1995). Collaborative modelling and talk in the classroom. *Language and Education*, 9, 265-282.