# A CONVERSATION ANALYSIS APPROACH TO INTERACTION WITHIN AN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) CLASS INFORMATION GAP TASK

**by**

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## ABSTRACT

This research applies conversation analysis (CA) to interaction within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class information gap task. The research aims to investigate, firstly, how repair sequences and other side sequences and their subsequent discourse within the task do or do not present opportunity for learning; secondly, how members of the classroom orient to specific roles and identities within the talk-in-interaction to facilitate learning and promote the classroom as a place for learning. Finally, the research investigates the dynamic and complex nature of language classroom discourse. The results show that repair and other side sequences and their subsequent discourse within the task generally provide opportunity for negotiation for meaning and modified input, which by extension, provides opportunity for language learning; that expert/novice, teacher/student identity dichotomies are oriented to throughout the task to aid in the learning process; that the collaborative nature of classroom discourse provides much opportunity for learning, and that turns within the discourse may function simultaneously on a number of levels and facilitate both the forming and renewing of the language classroom context. The research also shows that CA can add to our understanding of the social nature of second language acquisition (SLA).

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Current student centered, communicative language teaching and learning methodologies place emphasis on providing learners with opportunity to communicate (Harmer 2001). Such methodologies, in no small part, are based on second language acquisition (SLA) theory that interactional modification of language and negotiation for meaning within talk provide a means for comprehensible language input and output, which in turn, are considered valuable to the SLA process (e.g. Krashen 1980; Long 1983a, 1983b, 1996; Swain 1985). As a result, the "landscape of the language classroom" (Mori 2004: 536) has adapted to incorporate a large amount of pair and group work, and activities, for example, information gap tasks, which promote the acquisition process in this way. However, little research has been done on the sociolinguistic front to determine "how participants achieve some of the pedagogical behaviors" (Markee 2004: 583) common in today's language classrooms and that may be considered as conducive to SLA. Indeed, Hall and Walsh (2002: 197) note that while a connection between social interaction and language learning has long been asserted, "only recently have researchers begun gathering empirical evidence for those assertions." Conversation analysis (CA) has become an analytic tool commonly used in the attempt to gather such evidence (Huth 2011).

Evolving from ethnomethodology in the 1960's and 70's, CA was designed to study people's mundane conversation and how it was used to make sense of their day to day life. While CA was not originally intended to investigate interaction within SLA, the focus of its adoption into this field has been to provide insight into the "social aspects of language acquisition" (Kasper and Wagner 2011: 117). Although defining the contribution of CA to SLA is an ongoing process, the use of fine grained transcriptions of classroom talk as the main source of analytical data lie at the heart of any such contribution. CA has been favorably considered as an analytical tool in the SLA canon (Markee and Kasper 2004). For example, Sert and Seedhouse (2011: 2) consider its methodology "well equipped to investigate various dynamics of classroom talk-in-interaction and shed light on teaching and learning practices," while Mori and Hasegawa (2009: 66) further hail its "robustness in explicating interaction practices [while advocating] the exploration of emic (participant relevant) perspectives."

CA is the methodological tool used in this study, however, as is the case with much CA-SLA investigation (Markee 2000), the research is grounded in the study of interaction and negotiation for meaning in SLA, which culminated in the interaction hypothesis (Long 1996), and the perceived importance, in SLA terms, of comprehensible input and comprehensible output. Using a CA approach, this current research is interested in offering empirical evidence for how the turn-by-turn organization of talk-in-interaction within an information gap task may or may not provide learning opportunities for SLA, and the extent to which such opportunities are observable within the talk-in-interaction. Specifically, this research will focus firstly on how sequences of repair and their "aftermath" (Mori 2004: 539), as well as other side sequences within the task, do or do not present opportunity for learning. Secondly, the research will investigate how members of the classroom orient to specific roles and identities (i.e. teacher and learner) within the talk-in-interaction to facilitate learning, and promote the classroom as a place for learning. The final consideration of the research is the "dynamic nature of context" (Sert and Seedhouse 2011: 2) of the interaction within the task, in other words, how turns within the discourse are complex and are used to talk the institutional classroom context in and out of being. As a consequence of applying CA within the field of SLA, this research will also attempt to add to the discussion on the contributions CA may or may not be able to make to this field.

The first section of this research offers a literature review of relevant research on the role of interaction in SLA and the notion of interactional competence. This is followed by an introduction to conversation analysis and its application to language learning and teaching. Next, the research methodology, including data collection, research subjects and the chosen classroom task will be outlined. Then, the chosen data will be analyzed and discussed and conclusions will be drawn in light of the analysis.

## 2. INTERACTION AND THE SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA) PROCESS

This section will discuss two SLA hypotheses pertinent to CA-SLA studies such as this (Markee 2000), respectively, the discourse hypothesis and the interaction hypothesis. According to Hatch (1978), discourse analysis would benefit SLA studies by tracing how L2 learners learn language. Her belief was that "language learning evolves out of learning how to carry on conversations" (ibid: 404). Through such belief emerged the discourse hypothesis, which states that at the beginning of the L2 learning process, the learner overcomes difficulty in accurate identification of topics through the use of repair. Later, the learner uses "knowledge of past discourse and shared information" (ibid: 423) to predict routes (i.e. possible comments and questions) through discourse on a topic. As learning progresses, turns then become longer and more complex, with "repairs and new hypotheses being generated at discourse break-down points" (ibid: 423). Hatch's idea was radical in that it contrasted with the view at the time that language learning was a computational process of receiving language, fitting it together and only then using it.

Subsequently, Hatch's insights on discourse influenced work by Krashen (1980) and Long (1983a, 1983b, 1996), among others, who emphasized the need for comprehensible input and social interaction, respectively, as vitally important to language acquisition. It was Krashen's belief that when learners are exposed to input slightly above their current level (i+1), students will both comprehend and acquire language. Long developed this idea further into his interaction hypothesis, based on studies of native and non-native speaker interaction. His idea assumes that "environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that these resources are brought together most usefully, although not exclusively, through *negotiation for meaning*" (Long 1996: 414). In other words, comprehensible input alone is not enough, it is social interaction and negotiation for meaning that allows language to be produced as modified input, and this mechanism allows learner's to develop their communicative competence (Hymes 1972). Long (1980) pointed out that modification of interaction may involve various strategies, including comprehension checks, clarification requests, self repetition and confirmation of message meaning among other conversational adjustments. Such a causal, albeit indirect, relationship between modified interaction and a learner's language development is

summarized as follows:

1. Interactional modification makes input comprehensible;
2. Comprehensible input promotes acquisition;

Therefore,

3. Interactional modification promotes acquisition. (Lighbown and Spada 2003:43)

Subsequent research on the interaction – acquisition relationship, e.g. Sato (1986), complicated the role of input, and it was around this time that Swain (1985) forwarded the notion that comprehensible output also plays a crucial role in a learner's language development. Swain asserts that for successful acquisition, it is also necessary for a learner to develop their syntactical ability, something not always important when comprehending input alone, but necessary when producing comprehensible output. What is for sure is that the role of interaction in language acquisition is complex and more research is needed to address the issue of the relationship between interaction and progression in SLA.

## 2.1 Interactional Competence

The current SLA paradigm has led to the popularity of communicative language teaching (e.g. Canale and Swain 1980), in which communication is both the goal and the means of learning. The aim of such an approach has been to develop in learners, communicative competence. An "extremely important" sub category of communicative competence, as rethought by Celce-Murcia (2007: 49), is interactional competence, the learners' ability to interact with their fellow interlocutors. According to Celce-Murcia (2007) interactional competence subsumes actional competence, knowing how to complete speech acts such as expressing feelings or dealing with problems; conversational competence, knowing how to take turns in conversation, and paralinguistic competence, which includes all the non-verbal interaction such as body language, gaze and silence. Development of interactional competence, alongside discourse, strategic, linguistic, socio-cultural and formulaic competence improves the learners overall communicative competence. A learners' interactional competence is displayed in their 'interactional practices'. It is conversation analysis that allows us to investigate such interactional practices and thus "make our understanding of interactional

competence more specific, more systematic, and more pedagogically sound" (Wong and Waring 2010: 8). This issue will be developed further in sections 3.1 – 3.1.3.

# 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The following chapter first outlines CA as the research methodology of this study, including its principles, interactional practices as defined by the methodology and its application to language learning and teaching. The subsequent sections (3.2-3.4) provide information on the method of data collection, the chosen data and reasons for such choice, and the participants of the study.

## 3.1 Conversation Analysis (CA)

Broadly, conversation analysis examines "the order/organization/orderliness of social action... in discursive practices, in the sayings/telling/doings of members in society" (Psathas 1995: 2). In other words, talk is a fundamental aspect of human life and CA attempts to understand how it is organized and how interactants understand and display understanding of each other as their talk unfolds.

The process of CA should be undertaken from an emic, or bottom up, position. That is, talk-in-interaction, the generally recognized object of CA research, should be viewed from the participants perspective, by stepping inside their shoes, as it were, with an aim to "discover how participants understand and respond to one another in their turns at talk, with a central focus on how sequences of action are generated" (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998: 94). Such emic analysis offers evidence of what interactants themselves orient to, in situ, thus making it possible to piece together the machinery that "enables interactants to achieve this organization and order" (Seedhouse 2005: 166).

### 3.1.1 Principles of CA

According to Seedhouse (2005) there are four principles of CA, discussed as follows. The first principle of CA states that there is order at all points in interaction (Sacks 1984). Such a notion was radically different from the paradigm at the time of CA's inception, that conversation was, in fact, disordered. This lead to the idea of 'rational design', that human interaction is an "emergent collectively organized event" (ten Have 2007: 9) of which, one

must ask, 'how' it is done.

The second CA principle states that "contributions to interaction are context shaped and context shaping" (Sert and Seedhouse 2011: 1). In other words, it is essential to consider the sequential environment in which contributions to talk take place and in which participants are interacting, as this plays a role in the form of the interaction. Furthermore, each contribution to talk 'renews' the context in which it occurs.

The third principle states that "no order of detail can be dismissed a priori as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant" (Sert and Seedhouse: 2011: 2). As previously noted, such attention to detail has given rise to the use of extremely fine grained transcriptions, as the primary source of data. One drawback of such transcriptions is that they are incomplete due to space constraint, and therefore incomprehensive. However, the use of excerpts of such incomplete transcripts do allow for readability and intensive analytic consideration.

In natural progression, the final principle states that "analysis is bottom up and data driven" (Seedhouse 2005: 165). This may be alternatively defined as "CA's stance on exogenous theory" (Kasper and Wagner 2011: 122), which is that CA is agnostic towards any form of sociological, externally imposed theory, for example about power or gender, and does not have any form of theoretical framework to which talk may be fitted into. Instead, meaning is derived from the locally organized social action as it unfolds.

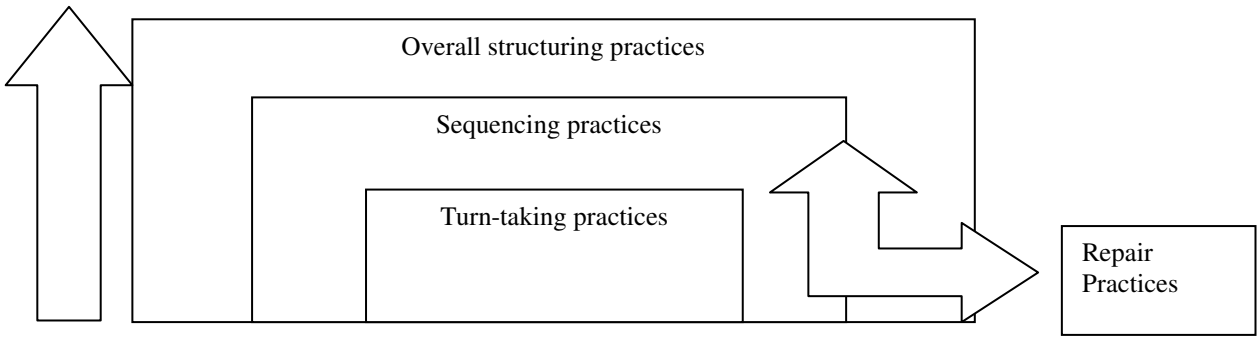
One further, relational point should be made about CA's stance on identity. In the case of L2 learning, the focus of this study, participants are not treated as native or non-native speakers, or indeed as any other macrosociological identity such as their gender or nationality, for example, may presuppose. Instead, CA treats all interactants as "participants in talk-in-interaction" (Helermann 2009: 96). Any role or identity, i.e. as teacher or student, are "interactionally produced, locally occasioned and relationally constitutioned" (Kasper and Wagner 2011: 121-2). That is to say, identity, much like meaning, is grounded in the social practices of interactants and talked into being through their interaction.

Seedhouse (2005: 166) warns that the principles of CA "are not to be considered as a formula or to be applied in a mechanistic fashion," rather it is incumbent on the analyst to develop the CA mentality, or way of seeing data, via the principles. The crux of such a mentality may be defined as an attempt to answer the fundamental CA question: "why that, in that way, right now?" (Seedhouse 2004: 16).

### 3.1.2 Interactional Practices

Interactional practices should be understood as what "interactants use normatively and reflexively both as an action template for the production of their social actions and as a point of reference for the interpretations of their actions" (Seedhouse 2011: 167). Such practices, rather than being understood as units of analysis, are free of context themselves, but are used by people in a context sensitive manner. That is, context is 'talked into being' by people as they orientate to relevant social and institutional actions. CA use of the emic perspective uncovers such interactional practices and thus the social significance of their implementation (Seedhouse 2011). The various institutional practices are modeled in Figure 1 and discussed below:

**Figure 1 Model of Interactional Practices (Wong and Waring 2010: 8)**




Turn taking practices "refer to the way of constructing a turn and allocating a turn" (Wong and Waring 2010: 15). Turns are fundamental to interaction, and consist of one or more turn construction units (TCU), which may be lexical, phrasal, clausal or sentential. The final moment of a TCU is termed a possible completion point (PCP), which itself is a transitional

relevant point (TRP), in that it is the point at which another speaker may begin a new turn. TCUs contain projectability, the element that allows interactants to predict the PCP. Interactants project a PCP by employing grammatical, intonational or pragmatic resources (ibid).

As interactants speak, turns come together to form sequencing practices, which are "ways of initiating and responding to talk while performing actions such as requesting, inviting, story-telling or topic initiation" (Wong and Waring 2010: 10). Social actions, such as greetings, for example, are implemented through the employment of sequencing practices. Two important generic sequences have been identified, which are the 'adjacency pair' and 'preference'. According to Seedhouse (2011: 167), adjacency pairs are "paired utterances such that on production of the first part of the pair (e.g. question) the second part of the pair (answer) becomes conditionally relevant". That is not to say that the second part must occur, instead it is a "normative frame of reference" (ibid), therefore its absence also holds significance.

Preference may be described as a "structural organization in which the alternatives that fit in a certain slot in a sequence are treated as non-equivalent (i.e. preferred or dispreferred)" (Wong and Waring 2010: 62). Many adjacency pairs have alternative second parts, for example, an invitation may be accepted or refused; acceptance is preferred, refusal is dispreferred. Preferred responses promote social solidarity, while dispreferred responses do not. However, the negativity of such an action may be minimized, for example, through the use of accounts and excuses (Seedhouse 2011).

Overall structuring practices are "ways of organizing a conversation as a whole, as in openings and closings" (Wong and Waring 2010: 147). Knowledge of openings is largely based on data of telephone openings as face to face openings data is "nearly impossible to collect" (ibid). Four key opening sequences have been identified, which are the greeting sequence; the how are you sequence; the identification-recognition sequence and the summons answer sequence.

On the other hand, closings consist of two adjacency pairs, the first a preclosing sequence, designed to initiate closure and the second a terminal exchange employed to end a

conversation (Wong and Waring 2010). Closings are more complex than openings as there is potential for interactants to end with things still left to say, and a rushed or overly long closing may have negative connotations.

Repair Practices are "the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use" (Seedhouse 2011: 168), wherein trouble may be defined as anything problematic in the interaction. It is important to note that as all language is a potential a source of trouble for interactants and therefore repairable. There are four types of repair, distinguished in terms of who accomplishes the repair. Firstly, self initiated self repair, is accomplished by a speaker who both initiates and completes the repair. Self initiated other repair is initiated by the current speaker, but repaired by another interactant. Other initiated self repair is initiated by an interactant other than the current speaker and repaired by the current speaker. Finally, other initiated other repair is both initiated and repaired by an interactant other than the current speaker. In everyday conversation, there is a general preference for self repair as the current speaker is often given time by others to fix their own trouble source, while other interactants tend to mitigate repair upon speakers other than themselves (Wong and Waring 2010).

### 3.1.3 Applying CA to language learning and teaching

The application of CA to language classroom discourse grew in popularity, partly as a result of criticism of SLA research by Firth and Wagner (1997). Such criticism was aimed at the lack of consideration for social and contextual features of language; that approaches to SLA were top town, rather than bottom up and furthermore, that they were in need of broadening. There became an acknowledged need within SLA research for "a holistic approach which include[s] the social dimension and emic perspectives" (Seedhouse 2011: 174), CA is one such approach.

However, there have been three major criticisms of the incorporation of CA in SLA studies (Markee 2000). The first criticism states that "CA is a behavioral discipline while SLA studies is a cognitive discipline" (Markee 2000: 30). This notion has been refuted with the

claim that cognition may be viewed as socially distributed and observable in conversation, and therefore analyzable through a CA perspective. One school of thought suggests that SLA is, at least partly, introspective, passive and singular. In this respect CA is not useful, as it cannot analyze what is not observable. He (2004: 573), however, argues that CA does become useful when SLA is considered not as passive and static, rather as "an active process of problem solving," as is the case with much classroom interaction. This claim is furthered by Schegloff (1991) who argues that sequencing, turn taking and repair may be seen as socially distributed cognition.

The second criticism suggests that CA may be equipped to examine language use, but not language acquisition (Markee 2000). The negation of this claim, while accepting that language use is subsumed by acquisition, asserts that both are inextricably linked and that SLA studies would, in fact, be enriched by "conversational analysis of the sequential and other resources that speakers use to modify each others' talk and thereby to comprehend and learn new language" (ibid: 32).

The final criticism of the use of CA in the study of SLA argues against the turn as an appropriate unit of study and that the 'utterance' is preferable (Crookes 1990). Markee (2000) argues against the utterance as a unit of study as it takes a speaker's, rather than the preferable hearer's perspective (e.g. Sacks et al. 1974). Furthermore, as talk-in-interaction is collaborative, the individual perspective is not wholly sustainable. Instead, it is essential to "view the conversational resources that individuals potentially draw on to learn new language as collaboratively achieved micro-moments of cognition... best understood as socially distributed phenomena that subsume at least some individual cognitive processes in SLA" (Markee 2000: 33). Such a perspective, therefore, may make the turn a valid unit for SLA studies.

The view of CA's contribution to SLA taken in this current research is in line with Markee (2000: 44), who states that "CA can help refine insights into how the structure of conversation can be used by learners as a means of getting comprehended input and producing comprehended output." Furthermore, the uniqueness of the language learning classroom, the setting of this research, as having language as both the means and the goal of

the class, coupled with the fact that interactants are not fully proficient in the language, make their "display of and orientation towards understanding... critical to the overall purpose and outcome of the talk itself" (Huth 2011: 300).

Therefore, while CA is in no way a theory or methodology of SLA, it is a useful tool to aid understanding of language use within the language classroom. In this respect, CA may better our understanding of SLA, in as much as analysis is able to take on an emic perspective of participants interactional practices, describe them using fine grained transcripts, use such transcripts to identify evidence of learning and understanding as they occur in conversational behavior and in doing so, add to our understanding of the social interaction hypothesis (Markee 2000). This current research aims to gain insight into the discourse of a high intermediate Korean university EFL class by attempting to show whether interactions in the language classroom either between teachers and student or student and student are "'doing' what we expect them to, and *how*?" (Huth 2011: 300).

### 3.2 Data Collection

The data gathered for analysis was collected from a non-compulsory, high-intermediate English language conversation/discussion class at the language institute of a university in Seoul, South Korea. Classes ran from 7:50 am to 8:40 am, Monday to Thursday for ten weeks during the spring 2012 semester. Written permission was obtained from the pupils and the language institute to record and analyze the lessons. To protect the anonymity of the participants of this study, their names have been replaced with random letters.

The general aim of the course was to improve students' four skills i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking, with a focus on listening and speaking. Of the ten week semester, two weeks were recorded, amounting to eight fifty minute classes. During the recorded lessons students were working from Clive Oxenden and Christina Latham-Koenig's textbook *American English File 3* (2008), drawing either from the student book or supplementary activities provided in the teacher's manual. The textbook is divided into seven units, with each unit further divided into three unique subsections, categorized topically, for example, unit three contains three subsections entitled *Modern Manners, Judging by appearances* and

*If at first you don't succeed...* Each unit contains various exercises for grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Communicative exercises in the teachers guide are designed to supplement the subsections of each unit.

Data were recorded by means of a video recorder placed in the front of the class and small MP3 recording devices placed in front of each pair of students, as and when they arrived to class, so as to catch any data missed by the video recording device. During recording, classrooms were quiet, with little extraneous noise. Problems with transcription were limited to accurate transcribing of discourse when students were placed in pairs and were simultaneously speaking. The problem was successfully overcome by switching from transcription of video file to transcription of audio file when necessary.

In line with CA practice, all data used in this study comes from the transcriptions of the video/audio recordings and a questionnaire designed to elicit only student's basic information. No pre or post testing took place, as CA does not rely on what participants, or indeed analysts, *think* may or may not be relevant, as such evidence is ultimately likely to prove vague and confusing to the analyst (Seedhouse 2004). The aim of relying only on the evidence provided in the transcripts is "to develop an emic perspective on how the participants display to each other their understanding of the context" (ibid: 43).

Following methodology outlined in Rylander (2004), of the eight recorded lessons, three were chosen at random to roughly transcribe, which were lessons three, six and eight. The first lesson was ruled out for transcription as this analyst felt the introduction of the recording devices may, at this point, have affected students' interaction. After the first lesson, however, I am of the opinion that the participants of the study were comfortable and the recording devices caused little or no distraction. A macro perspective of the discourse was achieved through rough transcription of the classes, from which, the CA technique of *unmotivated looking* (Psathas 1995), through the data was employed to select the speech event described in the following section.

### 3.3 The Chosen Task

A spot the difference task was chosen for analysis in this research, which occurred in lesson eight of the recorded data. The task was taken from the supplementary material section of the teacher's guide to the course textbook (see Appendix I). The aim of the lesson in which the task occurred was to cover parts of unit three, section B, of the textbook, entitled *'Judging by appearances'*. The teacher planned to use the spot the difference task to practice describing people and their general appearance and as a lead in to the unit section, in which such language would be necessary for study. The task consisted of two pictures, 'A' and 'B', of six people. Each of the people in the respective pictures looked similar, but had one or more differences in their appearance. The instructions on each of the pictures read "Describe your picture to **A/B**. Find ten differences. Mark the differences on your picture".

The spot the difference task will be presented in this study as a single case analysis. Mori (2004) weighs up the undertaking of a single case analysis versus analysis of a number of cases for recurrent practices. Mori (ibid: 539) states that the benefit of analyzing many cases "underscores the recurrence of a particular practice observed across different contexts," while the single case analysis shows how "the resources of past work on a range of phenomena and organizational domains in talk are brought to bear on a *single fragment* of talk" (Schegloff, 1987: 101, cited in Mori 2005: 539). In other words, the single case analysis highlights not unknown findings, but rather, what is already known about the discourse in question. Support for the single case analysis is further bolstered by Lazaraton (2003: 3) who states "the emphasis in CA is on understanding single cases in and of themselves, not as part of larger aggregates of data". It is the purpose of this present research to place such emphasis on the aforementioned spot the difference exercise, undertaken in a Korean university, high intermediate EFL classroom.

The spot the difference task was initially chosen because it presented a large amount of what appeared to be "learning opportunities" (Mori 2004: 536), which triggered motivation for further analysis. This researcher also felt the task represents those typically used in Korean language classrooms such as the one in which it occurs. The chosen excerpt also satisfies the general definition of a task in that it is an activity "where the target language is used by the

learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome" (Willis 1996: 23). Furthermore, spot the difference tasks, which may be subsumed under the heading of information gap exercises, are said to particularly promote negotiation for meaning, as well as language learning in general (e.g. Pica 2005, Jenks 2009).

This research is interested in how interactants negotiate completion of a spot the difference task and how, and to what extent, the task does or does not present opportunities for learning new vocabulary and language. Of particular interest are word searches, which "refer to a speaker grasping for a word that is temporarily unavailable or on the tip of his or her tongue" (Wong and Waring 2010: 218) and the aftermath of such phenomena. Special attention will be paid to word searches and side sequences that display teaching/learning of vocabulary in the analyses primarily because they are important cognitive incidents and are relevant to the promotion of SLA (Markee 2000; Mori and Hasegawa 2009), but also because they appear frequently within the chosen excerpt of discourse. Of further interest in this research is the manner in which the participants' identities are talked into being during interaction within this task. This research will, therefore, analyze and discuss how participants roles and identities are constructed during the moment-by-moment interaction (Markee and Kasper 2004), and how participants orientation towards their identities, e.g. as teacher and learners, within the task does or does not present opportunity for learning.

### 3.4 Participants of the Study

Seedhouse (2004) notes that due to the diversity of L2 classes, background information on the participants in studies such as this, becomes relevant. Such information is highlighted in Appendix II. Five students were present at varying times throughout the duration of the recording. However, during the lesson in which the spot the difference exercise took place, only the teacher, T, and three students L, D and R were present. At the time of research, L was a twenty two year old, female, second year, undergraduate, math education student from Korea. R was a twenty five year old, male, final year, undergraduate, business studies student from Korea. Finally, D was a twenty seven year old, male, first year, postgraduate business studies student from China. Prior to the class, all students were level tested using an in house

level test in order to be placed in the high intermediate class together. At the time of research, the teacher was a thirty two year old male, from England, with eight years teaching experience.

It must be noted that because there were an uneven number of students (three) on the day of recording, the selected exercise that may have otherwise been undertaken in pairs, becomes somewhat of a small group exercise, in which D was given picture 'B' and was paired off against L and R who both had picture 'A'. At times during the exercise the teacher sided with student D and took on the role of student. In fact, the teacher explicitly stated he will be doing this during the exercise, as shown in Excerpt 1. Uneven numbers of students is a common problem in this class and is often rectified in this manner.

**Table 1 Excerpt 1**

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | T: ...Uh kind of, kind of, uh, so a sort of spot the difference, ok? We're gonna talk about people. You two, you can be A together, ok? And D, you're alone, you're B, ok? |
| 4 | D: B. |
| 5 | T: Yes, and I'm B too, alright?... |

# 4. ANALYSIS

Analysis will follow a linear path through the task, presenting data excerpts in the order they occur in the task. The analysis generally employs the analytic strategies outlined in ten Have (2007), while at the same time bearing in mind Seedhouse's practice of analyzing the various interactional practices that occur in the data "at the same time" (2004: 60), that is to say, as and when they appear relevant to the analysis, rather than singling out and analyzing individual CA phenomena. Furthermore, this paper will use detailed written transcription as data for analysis, following transcription conventions outlined in Atkinson and Heritage (1984). This publication may be referred to for detailed transcription discussion. The transcription conventions are presented in Appendix III. Any unspoken actions such as gaze or gesture will be noted within the transcription and/or described within the analysis. Finally, the analysis is an attempt to build on and add to the small but growing body of research (e.g. He 2004; Hellerman 2009; Kasper and Wagner 2011; Markee 2000, 2004; Mori 2004; Mori and Hasegawa 2009; Seedhouse 2004, 2005; Wong and Waring 2010) that has applied CA to the field of language learning and teaching.

Prior to analysis it should be noted that the emic approach to CA using fine grain transcriptions, makes it possible to portray the "complex, fluid and dynamic" (Seedhouse 2004: 60) nature of language classroom interaction, whereas other etic forms of classroom discourse analysis (DA) such as the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) method, do not. Such a DA approach categorizes classroom discourse into initiation/response/feedback (I-R-F) cycles, which, while correct, may result in one dimensional overgeneralizations and oversimplification. The approach fails to point out that turns in discourse sometimes "perform different interactional and pedagogical work according to the context in which they are operating" (Seedhouse 2004: 63), in other words, labeling sequences of discourse as I-R-F cycles may be too simplistic as the sequences may be functioning differently within the discourse, depending on what interactants are trying to achieve. CA has shown that classroom discourse operates on a more complex level than the lock step I-R-F process (Seedhouse 2004), as is evident throughout the following analysis and discussed in detail in the analysis of Excerpt 9, section 4.6.

### 4.1 T's Counter Questioning/L's Initiation of a Word Search (Line 114) and Subsequent Discourse

Excerpt 2 begins at line 107 as the students begin to discuss the second person in their respective pictures. Having noticed two similarities of this person; that the man in both pictures is wearing a belt and glasses, all three students are looking for a difference. In line 113, D shows that he has not yet found the difference with an unfinished TCU, allowing L's turn in line 114 "And he have this?", while making a beard gesture with her hands. This turn by L triggers a counter question sequence. It is possible to note that the sequence follows the typical counter sequence trajectory outlined in Markee (2004), in which the student begins with a question (line 114), the teacher uses the following turn for the counter question (line 115), the learner provides the answer to the counter question (line 116) and the teacher comments on the learners answer (line 117). T initiates counter questioning because L is encountering trouble with the difference between beard and moustache, something relevant to the outcome of the task. T's comment turn in line 117 draws attention to the trouble source and acts as a springboard for T to guide the students through the difference between beard and moustache.

Markee (2004) notes that counter questioning can have negative consequences because the practice can provoke challenges from both teachers and students. Student challenges may occur in the answer turns subsequent to the counter questions, while teacher challenges may occur in either the question, counter question or comment turns. In this sequence, T could have challenged students in the comment turn in line 117, but avoids such direct negative action, opting instead for a cautionary "Mm." As noted, the counter questioning sequence is the catalyst for the collaborative discourse that follows, in which T suggests caution and asks questions, which allows students to come to an understanding of the difference between moustache and beard and thus complete the relevant part of the task. T's counter questioning technique on this occasion, therefore, may be considered successful.

**Table 2 Excerpt 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| 107 | L: ...And second person? |
| 108 | D: Second person |
| 109 | R: Second person? (1) He has a belt on, on, on his pants |

| | |
|---|---|
| 110 | L: Belt, yes |
| 111 | D: Yes, yeah |
| 112 | L: And he wear a glasses |
| 113 | D: Yeah, and u::m |
| 114 | L: And he have this? (1.5) ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 115 | T: ◦What's that? ◦= |
| 116 | R: =Mousta- moustache? |
| 117 | T: Mm. |
| 118 | D: [Yes- |
| 119 | T: [Be careful, err, (0.5) be careful, be careful (0.5) |
| 120 | D: He [puts his left hand |
| 121 | T: [What do y- no, no, no, no, don't, don't wait, wait, wait. = |
| 122 | D: Ok |
| 123 | T: What did you say? (0.4) |
| 124 | L: Here ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 125 | T: What's this, what's this called? ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 126 | R: Mousta, moust- |
| 127 | T: Be careful. (1) What's this called? ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 128 | L: Ah, this is mousta-? ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 129 | T: This is moustache ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 130 | R: [[moustache]] ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 131 | L: [[moustache]] ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 132 | D: ◦moustache◦ ((motions with moustache gesture)) |
| 133 | T: What's this? ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 134 | L: Beard? ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 135 | T: Beard |
| 136 | R: Beard ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 137 | D: ◦Beard◦ ((motions with beard gesture)) |
| 138 | T: Yes ok. You have a beard, you have a, what do you have Robert? |
| 139 | B: Moustache |
| 140 | T: Moustache, yes, you have just a moustache, yes. |
| 141 | L: M:::m |
| 142 | R: Ahh |
| 143 | T: M::m |
| 144 | L: Ok |
| 145 | D: He put his left hand into his left pocket... |

From a different perspective, in terms of repair, the majority of the discourse in Excerpt 2 is triggered by L's initiation of a word search in line 114, as she says "And he have this?" while motioning the beard gesture. In this instance, she is looking for the word beard, but cannot find it. Word searches such as L's in this excerpt may be considered language learning opportunities (e.g. Markee 2004, Mori 2004, Mori and Hasegawa 2009). According to Brouwer (2003: 542), language learning opportunities become available in word searches when "(a) the other participant is invited to participate in the search, and (b) the interactants demonstrate an orientation to language expertise, with one participant being a novice and the other being an expert." In Excerpt 2, T orients toward the teacher/expert role, for example, through the use of display questions (e.g. Ellis 1997) in lines 125, 127 and 133 and as all three participants, at various times, direct there gaze towards him and willingly answer his display questions for the purpose of understanding the words beard and moustache, they may be understood as orienting towards embodying Browers (2003) notion of novice in the sequence. The word search and its aftermath in this excerpt, therefore, may be considered a language learning opportunity.

**Table 3 Excerpt 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| 68 | D: ...But she has long hair |
| 69 | L: [Oh long hair |
| 70 | T: [Yeah long hair, do you have long hair? Do you have long hair?... |

Returning to L's turn in line 114, it is here that T's identity as teacher begins to be talked into being. Earlier in the task, T had been assuming the role of student, as shown, for example, in Excerpt 3, in which, at line 70, although T has both pictures and knows whether or not the person in the picture has long hair, he is happy to play along within the exercise, in the role of student, to encourage the flow of discourse. However, in Excerpt 2, because T recognizes L's question at line 114 as relevant to the outcome of the task, he assumes the role of teacher, and gains control of the discourse through his counter question, as discussed above. T then continues to embody this identity as teacher, at least until both vocabulary words are understood and the relevant element of the task is complete. Such interaction highlights how members of the classroom, in this case the teacher, "construct roles and identities by observably orienting to the sequential, turn taking, and repair organization of talk-in-interaction" (Kasper and Markee 2004: 496). In other words, T uses the interaction, i.e. his

turn in line 115, to talk his identity as teacher into being. Furthermore, this highlights how the context of the classroom, in this case T doing being a teacher, is achieved locally, through the interaction and that he, along with all members of the classroom environment as they achieve their respective roles (Kasper and Markee 2004), are active agents in such achievement.

Focusing in more detail on the discourse in Excerpt 2 after the counter questioning sequence, in line 120, D seems unaware of the trouble T has been attempting to repair and tries to return to the task. In the following turn, T then displays his superior interactional rights (Seedhouse 2004), by cutting off D as he attempts to continue with the exercise. At line 123, T then returns to the trouble source by turning his gaze to L and asking her to repeat what she said. In the following turn, after a pause of 0.4 seconds, L answers with "Here" and again motions the beard gesture. The absence of either of the necessary vocabulary words, beard or moustache in L's turn, suggests to T that more work is necessary to make clear the difference between moustache and beard before the students should be allowed to continue. Such work begins at line 125, as T motions with the beard gesture and asks "What's this called?" He also directs his gaze to both L and R and in doing so, opens up the floor. In line 126, R incorrectly guesses moustache, however his reluctance to finish the word, coupled with his cautious tone, may suggest that he realizes that he is wrong. In line 127, T again cautions the students and leaves a pause of one second before asking the same question, this time with a 'moustache' gesture. L is the first student to recognize the difference and displays her understanding with an "Ah" before exclaiming, albeit cautiously, the answer "this is mousta-?" while motioning the moustache gesture. T offers a positive evaluation in line 129, "This is moustache." This may be viewed as T's use of the technique of scaffolding (e.g. Ellis 1997), as it is a simple and idealized version of the target language, which allows all three students to repeat aloud with some confidence the correct answer. At line 133, T then re-motions the beard gesture and asks "What's this?" At this point all students' gaze is directed at T and it is clear that they are aware that there is a difference between the two gestures, as they simultaneously mirror T's beard gesture. At line 134, L is again the first to respond with the correct answer. T repeats the correct answer as further scaffolding, after which, D and R also repeat to show they understand the difference. At this time all students gaze breaks from the teacher and is aimed at the respective pictures. Perhaps due to D's previously softly spoken turns, in line 138, T checks that D has understood correctly. The excerpt is closed with marks of agreement

from L, R and T.

Conversation analysis of the fine grained transcripts presented in Excerpt 2, is able to show us *how* teacher fronted talk within a task is organized, turn by turn, *how* phenomenon such as display questions, scaffolding and the use of gesture play out in a moment by moment basis, and *how* such interaction acts to aid students completion of the task and understanding of the target vocabulary. Furthermore, CA has shown how participant orientation towards identities of teacher/expert and student/novice during word search/repair sequences within a task can turn them into language learning opportunities.

### 4.2 L's Initiation of a Word Search (Line 156) and Subsequent Discourse

Excerpt 4 begins with L moving the task along to discuss the third person in the picture. She tries to describe the woman's hair but cannot find the word. At this point, L's word search, in line 156, becomes the catalyst for the discourse in the excerpt through to line 181, which is all related to comprehending and discussing the word 'afro'. In line 157, R provides the other repair by suggesting the word "roundy", which he, potentially, understands as incorrect and has likely said for humorous effect as he utters the word while directing his gaze at his paper, chuckling and smiling. L understands R's turn as humorous and laughs in response.

**Table 4 Excerpt 4**

| | |
|---|---|
| 156 | L: ...Third woman, (0.5) um. (1) She's hair is? (0.2) |
| 157 | R: Roundy? Ha:h ((directs gave at paper and smiles)) |
| 158 | L: Ha::::h |
| 159 | T: Her hair is? (0.5) |
| 160 | L: However, her hair is cu- uh cu- ani? |
| 161 | T: What do we call this? |
| 162 | D: Perm |
| 163 | L: Curl, curl |
| 164 | T: Curly, yes, but if, especially if on black people |
| 165 | L: Uhh |
| 166 | T: What do we call. (0.5) |
| 167 | R: Perm? |

| | |
|---|---|
| 168 | T: Not perm (.4) Special for black people (1.2) it's called afro. |
| 169 | L: Afro? How we can? |
| 170 | T: A.f.r.o. You have an af- he has an afro |
| 171 | L: Oh, uh, afro, maybe afro is a word that um, ((turns to partner and hides mouth with right hand)) ◦injeongchabyeol? ◦ ((Korean word meaning racial discrimination)) |
| 172 | T: Especially for black people's hair |
| 173 | R: Racism? |
| 174 | T: No, no |
| 175 | L: Racial [racial discrimination? |
| 176 | T: [Afro is not racist |
| 177 | L: Oh, no? ok |
| 178 | T: No, that's just the name of hairstyle |
| 179 | L: Ah, ok |
| 180 | T: Afro is ok |
| 181 | L: Ok, ok |
| 182 | L: And she- |
| 183 | T: So wait wait, what hair do you have? ((all interactants direct gaze at D)) |
| 184 | D: The hairstyle of her is ponytail ((R and L's gaze breaks from D to pictures)) |
| 185 | L: Ah, ponytail |
| 186 | T: Ponytail, so there we go, there's a difference... |

The following adjacency pair in lines 159 and 160 is interesting because it shows Vygotsky's zone of proximinal development (ZPD) being talked into being. Vygotsky (1978: 86) defines the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers." L produces a grammatical error "She's turn is", and therein displays her actual developmental level. T's question "Her hair is?" is a display of the target phrase and may be seen as "embedded correction/scaffolding/recast" (Seedhouse 2005: 177). The following line is evidence of uptake in that L notices her error and produces the correct target language.

Lines 164-168 are significant as they contain evidence of caretaker language, sometimes termed 'motherese' (Ellis 1997), produced by T. Line 164, for example, contains redundant repetition of the word 'if'. Line 166 is a deliberately unfinished TCU, as evidenced by the fall in tone at the final word and subsequent pause of 0.5 seconds. Finally, line 168 is clearly evidence of reduced grammar and restricted code. It may be argued that T is using such

caretaker language because the topic of discussion involves the potentially contentious issue of race, and T wishes to make discussion of such an issue acceptable within the discourse of the lesson. It is uncertain whether T's use of caretaker language was the driving force for L to initiate discussion about whether the word afro is racially discriminate, however, certainly, both L and R in the turns that follow, feel comfortable enough to raise the issue.

In line 171, L initiates another word search and this time, in doing so, code switches (Ellis 1997) to her mother tongue for the word "injeongchabyeol", which means racial discrimination. During this turn, L's gaze is fixed on the teacher, however, directly before code switching, L breaks her gaze with the teacher, turns to her partner, hides her mouth with her right hand and lowers her tone to that slightly above whisper. In line 173, R offers other repair with what he approximates as the word L was searching for. L self repairs with the full and correct translation in line 175. The manner in which L code switched, suggests that she values the use of L2 over her L1 in this classroom setting, at least when searching for vocabulary, however, in this instance it was beyond her ability to use the L2. This coincides with Ohta's (2001: 236) findings, that in Japanese language courses, "use of L2 by students was highly valued."

In line 183, T again displays his superior interactional rights by cutting off L's turn in line 182. T does this in order to return to the task at hand and re-include D in the task. He does so by shifting his gaze towards D and eliciting D's description of his respective picture, by saying "So wait, wait, what hair do you have?" T's attempt at re-including D is successful because as D gives his description, the gaze of all interactants is directed at him and listening for his answer. This is important because D's answer is critical to the successful completion of the task. The sequence is closed as all students break their gaze from each other, direct it at their respective pictures, and circle the answers.

Also of note is L's "Ok" in line 187 to verbally close the sequence. Here, L's use of "ok" may be defined as a "sequential boundary" (Mori 2004: 536) between the word searches as a side sequence and a return to the spot the difference task. At this point, L assumes the identity of dominant student, as it is she who has been the dominant student speaker during the word search sequence. She uses her turn to display to her fellow interactants that the sequence is

coming to an end, a point which all members of the class are satisfied to acknowledge, R then continues with the task. This is empirical evidence of the power students have to close a sequence, even though it was the teacher who had been controlling the discourse in the sequence to teach vocabulary.

### 4.3 L's Initiation of a Word Search (Line 190) and Subsequent Discourse

Excerpt 5 begins at line 190 as L is describing the third person in her picture. She searches, but cannot find the word 'bracelet'. In the following turn, R initiates other repair with the word "necklace", however, he instantly recognizes that his offer of repair is wrong and admits as such. In line 192, L further negates R's suggestion and continues to search for the correct lexical item. Prior to the 1.0 second pause in L's turn in line 192, L's gaze is directed first at T, whose own gaze is directed down at his paper, then to D, who at first shares gaze with L, but upon realizing that he cannot supply the answer, breaks his gaze with L and directs it towards his paper. The 1.0 second pause represents all students' realization that none of them can produce the answer. At line 192, L directs her gaze at T and asks "Uh, how we can say this?" In the following turn, D also expresses his desire to T that he wishes to know the answer. Although T had previously stated he was to take part in the activity as a 'student', his reticence and his disconnected gaze until L's latter question suggest he has withdrawn from his role as student in an attempt to let students negotiate the task amongst themselves. The 1.0 second pause and L's latter question combine to draw T into the role of teacher/expert, as well to embody L's identity as L2 learner/novice.

**Table 5 Excerpt 5**

| | |
|---|---|
| 190 | L: ...And she wear a um (0.3) um she wear um |
| 191 | R: Necklace? Ah, no, no, no, no, no. |
| 192 | L: No, no, not necklace, this (0.3) arm necklace? Ha:::h. ((L directs gaze to T who is looking at paper, then to D who shares gaze with L, then breaks and directs gaze at paper. L then directs gaze to T)) (1.0) Uh, how we can say this? |
| 193 | D:Yeah. |
| 194 | T: Yes, she's wearing- (0.2) no not arm necklace, no, no |
| 195 | L: H::h (02) |

| | |
|---|---|
| 196 | T: We call it |
| 197 | D: Ah |
| 198 | T: B, it begins with b, bu bu- |
| 199 | D: She's wearing |
| 200 | L: B? |
| 201 | T: B, it begins with (.) b- |
| 202 | D: Yeah. |
| 203 | T: Bracelet |
| 204 | D: Ah. |
| 205 | R: Ah bracelet |
| 206 | L: Ah yes, yes, yes, I know bracelet! |
| 207 | T: But, I think you both have bracelets, so it's not- |
| 208 | L: ah yes |
| 209 | T: But yes, it's called bracelet. Keep going, keep going... |

In T's turns in lines 194, 198 and 201, he displays incomplete turn construction units (TCU). Rather than simply giving students the answer, incomplete TCU's may represent the teachers attempt to "create and present an opportunity for the students to partake in the formulation of the learning material, thereby assigning some authorship (and thus ownership) to the students" (He 2004: 571). In fact, T goes as far as offering the first letter of the word, i.e. lines 198 and 201, but on this occasion it is not enough to stir in the students the correct lexical item and T eventually succumbs to the students need for the answer. It would seem as though L did, in fact, know the word as she claims as such in line 206. Interestingly, in line 207, T declares "But, I think you both have bracelets, so it's not-". As T has knowledge of both pictures, he is aware that the woman in both pictures is wearing an identical bracelet. However, only after completing a significantly long word search/repair sequence, does T point this out to the students. This may be viewed as empirical evidence of the importance T places on such word search/repair sequences, that despite the fact that it is not relevant to the outcome of the task, he is willing to pursue the sequence as a possible learning opportunity.

### 4.4 T's Initiation of Other Repair (Line 257) and Subsequent Discourse

Excerpt 6 begins at line 251, as D directs his gaze at R and asks "and this man has hair on his head, right?" It is at this turn that D has picked up on a potential difference. The pause of 0.2 seconds between the end of D's turn and the beginning of T's suggests that T also realizes that D has spotted a difference. T's turn seems to confirm this in his unfinished TCU, as he asks "yeah, so-", encouraging D to verbalize his deductions, which he does in line 253. In line 257, T orients to his role as teacher as he decides that the preceding descriptions of the man in picture B, as "no hair" by L and "shaved head" by D, are inadequate and initiates other repair. He does this in a similar manner to the previous excerpt, in the form of an incomplete TCU in line 257, offering the first letter of the desired lexical item, but withholding the full answer. R then produces the correct word "bald", to complete the repair to T's satisfaction.

**Table 6 Excerpt 6**

| | |
|---|---|
| 251 | D: ...And this man has hair on his head, right? (02) ((directs gaze at T)) |
| 252 | T: Yeah, so- |
| 253 | D: So, the man in the picture is no hair |
| 254 | L: No hair |
| 255 | D: Sh- shaved head |
| 256 | L: Ah aj- |
| 257 | T: We call that b- b- b- b- (0.2) |
| 258 | R: Bald? |
| 259 | T: Bald, yes. |
| 260 | L: [°Bald° |
| 261 | T: [So you have short hair, your guy is bald |
| 262 | L: Uh how we can spell it, bald? |
| 263 | D: b.a.l.d? |
| 264 | L: b.o.a.l.d.? |
| 265 | T: b.o.l.d. |
| 266 | L: b.o.l.d. |
| 267 | T: No bald, b.a.l.d (0.4) No sorry (0.3) b.a., bald |
| 268 | L: Bald |
| 269 | T: Bald, yeah |
| 270 | R: Bold is not skin head, same? |

| | |
|---|---|
| 271 | T: No, bold means brave actually, so that's different. Bold is different |
| 272 | D: The man in the picture is shaved, there is no, I mean there is any hair in this one |
| 273 | T: Yeah, so he's bald |
| 274 | D: Yeah right |
| 275 | T: Bald |
| 276 | D: Sometimes we find some people who has less hair than other people, such as this style |
| 277 | T: Uh huh |
| 278 | D: I mean less hair |
| 279 | T: Less hair? Less |
| 280 | D: It's a kind of disease actually |
| 281 | T: Yeah, we say he's going bald |
| 282 | R: Going bald |
| 283 | L: Going bald ha:::::h |
| 284 | T: He's becoming bald or he's going bald, yes h::h |
| 285 | L: Uh it's really sad |
| 286 | T: Yeah |
| 287 | L: Yeah, because woman, there's no many occasion when woman to become, um (0.1) bald |
| 288 | T: Right |
| 289 | L: However, [many men can be a bald |
| 290 | T: [Yes |
| 291 | T: We call it, it's also called male pattern baldness |
| 292 | L: Male pattern [baldness |
| 293 | T: [Yeah |
| 294 | L: Ha::::h |
| 295 | T: We um, (0.5) we can say |
| 296 | L: You guys have to be careful if your grandparents uh grandfather is [bald |
| 297 | T: [Yes |
| 298 | D: Yeah |
| 299 | L: You have to be careful |
| 300 | L: Oh, you? |
| 301 | R: Ha:::h |
| 302 | L: You? |
| 303 | D: No, I don't see with my father... |

At line 260, L quietly repeats the target lexical item, while her gaze is directed at her book. This would suggest an attempt by L to internalize the word. Subsequently, in line 262, L asks T for the correct spelling of the word. Although we cannot be sure that L does not have previous knowledge of the word, these two turns would suggest that L is attempting to

understand and learn the word, or at least re-learn it. In the discourse that follows, L attempts to use the word in its immediate local context of the word search, for example line 268. What is more interesting, however, is L's attempts to break away from the word search and task and use the word in a separate context as she initiates discussion about baldness as hereditary and the sadness of male baldness. It may be argued that in this instance, L is demonstrating her own "agency in expanding the assigned task while maintaining [her] orientation towards the presumed object of learning" (Mori and Hasegawa 2009: 89). In other words, while L is continuing to orient toward use of the word bald, she is going above and beyond the limits of its use within the task and constructing an entirely new context in which to use the word.

Furthermore, there is juxtaposition between L's willingness to internalize and then use the word bald and D's unwillingness to demonstrate uptake and express output. Aside from one attempt by D to guess at a possible spelling of the lexical item in line 263, D does not use the word at all, despite T's attempts to provide opportunity for uptake in lines 273 and 275. Instead, D displays the communicative strategy of circumlocution (Gass and Selinker 2001), that is, he avoids his lexical deficit by using other similar words or phrases, for example, "no hair" in line 253, "shaved" and (incorrectly) "there is any hair" in line 272 and finally "has less hair" in line 276.

Until now, analysis has presented word searches and their aftermath as 'opportunities' for learning, rather than evidence of learning itself. This is because, as Markee (2000: 129) notes, "finding evidence for learning in data that are transcribed from a single lesson is difficult because learning is not necessarily always public and usually occurs over extended periods of time." Furthermore, Hatch (1978) states that new vocabulary may only be called forth to serve the immediate conversational context.

**Table 7 Excerpt 7 (Post Task)**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | T: ...And Toby Young, is he happy? |
| 2 | L: No |
| 3 | R: No, no |
| 4 | T: No, maybe, why not? |
| 5 | L: Uh, because, her photo have a lot of hair |
| 6 | R: His photo |

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 | L: Ah, his photo |
| 8 | D: Yeah |
| 9 | T: Is it= |
| 10 | L: =However, he (0.2) is bald h::h ((gaze directed at T throughout turn)) |
| 11 | T: Now, he's bald, yeah |
| 12 | L: Ha::h... |

Excerpt 7, however, may be considered as empirical evidence that L has, indeed, learnt the word 'bald', at least in the short term. The excerpt is taken from a latter part of the lesson, approximately 40 minutes into the recording, and 24 minutes after the word was first brought up in the lesson. The participants are discussing a reading article in the text book, in which a man named Toby Young has hair in his passport photo but is now bald. The reading is accompanied by pictures of Toby and his passport photo. L correctly defines Toby as unhappy because he is bald. This excerpt would suggest, therefore, that L has learned and is able to use the word 'bald', at least in the short term.

Furthermore, the manner in which L displays her knowledge of the word 'bald' is interesting. In line 10, L is able to use the word in the correct context, in a grammatically correct sentence and with some confidence. The 0.2 second pause in this turn may be described as deliberate and intended for dramatic effect, as throughout the turn, L directs her gaze at T and at the end of the turn, she laughs confidently. Because of the clear and confident manner in which L expresses her turn, it may then be argued that L is displaying the answer to T's question, while simultaneously displaying, for the benefit of the teacher and her classmates, language as "knowledge that is valued in institutional contexts" (Markee 2000: 132). In other words, L is using her turn as a demonstration of the language intended to be learned in the lesson. In this excerpt, then, L is constructing her identity as a language learner displaying her knowledge of the word bald to the members of the class, but also to promote the classroom context as a place for learning.

### 4.5 R's Initiation of a Word Search (Line 343) and Subsequent Discourse

Excerpt 8 is an example of negotiation for meaning and collaboration between students and teacher within the spot the difference task. One of the many examples a word search within the task is this time initiated by R, who, in line 343, has the first half of the word 'turtleneck', but cannot complete it. D then offers the word necklace, which is close to the target language necessary for the repair, but, nevertheless, incorrect. L then correctly completes the word with "neck". Finally, in line 346, T offers the entire and correct version of the target word, "Turtleneck." Although it is T who gives the final and correct answer, meaning is negotiated among the students beforehand and achieving the answer is clearly a collaborative process. Furthermore, in this instance, input is modified in order to make it comprehensible, which, in Long's (1985) terms, has promoted acquisition of the word.

**Table 8 Excerpt 8**

| | |
|---|---|
| 343 | R: ...And tu- tu- turtle, uh |
| 344 | D: Necklace |
| 345 | L: Neck |
| 346 | T: Turtle neck |
| 347 | L: [[Ah]] |
| 348 | D: [[Ah]] |
| 349 | R: [[Ah]] |
| 348 | D: Turtleneck? ((gaze directed at T during turn)) |
| 349 | T: Good |
| 350 | D: Yeah... |

Moreover, while the word search shown in excerpt 8 provides evidence of how students co-construct meaning, as discussed above, it also displays the teacher's and students' identities as they are talked into being. In the first example, in line 346, T talks his identity as teacher/resource into being by giving students the word they were searching for. Then, when focusing on the adjacency pair in lines 348-9, as a confirmation check (e.g. Ellis 1997), D directs his gaze to T and raises his intonation at the end of his single word turn "Turtleneck?" In the following turn, T offers "Good" to D, which, according to Wong and Waring (2010), is an example of explicit positive assessment (EPA). EPAs are multi-functioning in that they (a) typically close a sequence, (b) validate the accuracy of the learner's previous turn and (c)

praise the learner's previous turn. Wong and Waring (2010: 274) warn that EPA's have potentially negative consequences, as the simultaneous act of closing the sequence and rewarding the learner as accurate "deprive[s] the learners of any interactional space for questioning, exploring, or simply lingering on any specific pedagogical point." Thus, in line 349, T embodies his role as motivator/assessor and displays his interactional rights as teacher to close the sequence, but potentially loses an opportunity for further interaction, and by extension, a potential opportunity for learning. At the same time it should be noted that, in line 348, D is embodying his identity as a student using the task as an opportunity to learn new vocabulary.

### 4.6 T's Initiation of a Display Question/Answer Adjacency Pair (Line 437) and Subsequent Discourse

The final sequence presented for analysis is Excerpt 9, which is a side sequence that begins at line 435, as T leads students towards the final difference in the task. Having both pictures, T is aware of the difference between the fifth man in pictures A and B; that in one of the pictures, the man is thin and in the other he is well built. T's display question turn in line 437 is dynamic because it is serving a dual purpose of leading the students towards completion of part of the task and at the same time teaching new vocabulary. T is unsure whether students know the word 'physique' that he is introducing, so he uses his turn to initiate a display question/answer adjacency pair to check their understanding of the word. Lines 438-432 represent two insert expansions, the first initiated by R, the second by D, both in order to clarify the first pair part of the original adjacency pair (Wong and Waring 2010), in other words, to clarify the new vocabulary word. R's insert expansion was successful as, in line 443, he correctly notices that in his picture, the man is thin, and in doing so closes the original adjacency pair. At this point, by describing the body shape of the man in his picture, R also implicitly demonstrates understanding of the word 'physique'. On the other hand, D's insert expansion was unsuccessful because he notices that his man is smiling, something unrelated to the concept of physique. It is possible that T notices that D does, in fact, understand the word 'physique' because, in line 445, he simply repeats the word with emphasis, without offering a definition. The reason why T does not offer a definition at this point may be to

allow opportunity for D to formulate his own definition and thereby become an agent of his own learning.

**Table 9 Excerpt 9**

| | |
|---|---|
| 435 | T: ...So there's one, there's one more difference, in this man |
| 436 | R: This man? |
| 437 | T: Think about his, do you know what I mean by physique? (0.3) |
| 438 | R: Physique? |
| 439 | T: Physique |
| 440 | D: Physique? |
| 441 | R: Physique |
| 442 | T: Physique |
| 443 | R: Ah he ah, he's thin |
| 444 | D: He's smiling, right? |
| 445 | T: No, his physique (0.2) |
| 446 | R: Physique, u:h, he has a thin, he is thin |
| 447 | T: Thin? |
| 448 | R: Thin body shape |
| 449 | T: How about= |
| 450 | R: =How about you? |
| 451 | D: It is a little hard to judge, he's fat or thin |
| 452 | R: Thin? |
| 453 | T: He's, what do we say? (1.0) If you have a lot of muscles? (0.2) |
| 454 | D: He's [strong |
| 455 | R: [Muscle guy? |
| 456 | D: Strong |
| 457 | T: Muscle guy. What do we say? |
| 458 | R: Ah, don't remember that words |
| 459 | D: His shoulder is very wide |
| 460 | T: Yeah. Your guy's thin, your guy has a lot of muscles. What do we say if you're |
| 461 | R: A::h |
| 462 | T: You're what do we say? |
| 463 | L: Good boy ha::h |
| 464 | D: Good boy ha:::h |
| 465 | L: Good man |
| 466 | T: You are well built, we would say |
| 467 | L: Ahh, well built. Ok wow |
| 468 | R: But he is thin, and your guys a well built |

| | |
|---|---|
| 469 | T: Well built |
| 470 | T: Yes |
| 471 | R: Yeah |
| 472 | T: Ok. I think we can say, D, yours is well built |
| 473 | L: Mm. |
| 474 | T: And yours is quite thin |
| 475 | D: How do you spell this, sorry |
| 476 | T: Well built? |
| 477 | D: Yeah |
| 478 | T: Well, w.e.l.l. |
| 479 | D: Built, b.u.i.l.t., right |
| 480 | T: Built. Built, yes. Two words |
| 481 | R: Ok. Ok thank you |
| 482 | L: Uh, we don't need slash, in the middle |
| 483 | T: No, I don't think so, no, no |
| 484 | D: No slash, so, uh, there's two differences left... |

Seedhouse (2005: 178) notes that classroom language in general operates on a number of levels.

> "The utterance is a display of the learner's analysis of the prior utterance of an interactant; it performs a social action in response and it positions the learner in a social system. It displays an understanding of the current context (sequential, social and L2 classroom context) and also renews it."

Lines 446 and 448 are further evidence of such dynamic classroom interaction, because in these two turns, R is keen to display, and does display, (a) his understanding of a powerful (in terms of use within the task) new target language lexical item 'physique' to the members of the class, (b) his new found ability to complete the next piece of the task and (c) at the same time help D in his understanding of the task and thus move the task along.

Subsequently, though, the task itself becomes complex because the difference between the two men is not simply a case of opposites or clear differences. Instead the difference is somewhat opaque; between a thin man and a well built man. This causes D some trouble as, in line 451, he explains that "it is a little hard to judge, he's fat or thin". This prompts T to initiate other repair in line 453, by saying "he's, what do we say? (1.0) If you have a lot of

muscles? (0.2).” In initiating other repair with a question, T offers responsibility of repair back to the students, which in Markeee’s (2004) terms is a delegation strategy. However, as we will see in the following turns, he maintains control of the repair until the phrase ‘well built’, that he intends as the repair, has been displayed. The delegation strategy, was initially aimed at L and R, but acts as a catalyst for negotiation for meaning among all three students, which takes place in an attempt to find and display the correct answer, for example, “strong” in line 454, “muscle guy” in line 455, “his shoulder is very wide” in line 459, and “good boy” in line 463. However, none are satisfactory to T, who eventually completes the repair himself in line 466, by saying “You are well built.” This scaffolding by T prompts L to display understanding as, in line 467, she exclaims “ahh, well built. Ok wow.” Next, in line 468, R seizes on the foundations laid by T’s scaffolding to return to the task and display the answer “but he is thin, and your guys a well built.” In line 472, T checks D’s understanding of the task by directing his gaze towards D and saying “I think we can say, D, yours is well built.” This turn by T is yet another example of the dynamic nature of classroom interaction because it is serving the dual purpose of checking D’s understanding of the phrase well built as well as checking his understanding of what is necessary to complete the task. T, therefore, has displayed his analysis that D is, perhaps, struggling with the task and in doing so, renews the discourse, giving D opportunity to comprehend the section of the task. It is possible to conclude, then, that T’s turn in line 472 is an example, not only of the manner in which a turn may simultaneously “balance multiple…demands” (Seedhouse 2004: 62), but also of how the discourse is locally managed, turn-by-turn. CA has, therefore, been used in this research to point out *how* language classroom discourse within a task is dynamic in its attempt to promote language learning opportunities.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND COCLUSION

This research has used CA methodology to analyze EFL classroom discourse during a spot the difference exercise, the following is a summary of the main findings. The analysis has displayed how the talk-in-interaction that occurred during the task was collaborative in nature. Special attention was paid to word searches and side sequences within the task and analysis showed that participants both weave such phenomena into the fabric of the task to aid its progression, and use them as sources of productive interaction and therefore, opportunities for language learning. The analysis has also shown how participants orient towards certain roles and identities, especially the teacher/student, expert/novice dichotomies and talk them into being during interaction to facilitate language learning, the object of language classes such as analyzed here. In essence, the analysis has shown how a teacher does being a teacher, and language learners do being language learners.

Specifically, the analysis has shown that when the teacher was included in the task and students were searching for words, there was a tendency for the teacher to orient towards the role of expert and students to the role of novice, and that the teacher displayed various facets of his identity such as resource, motivator, assessor etc, and employed practices such as scaffolding, display questions and caretaker talk to aid the progression of the task, as well as language learning. However, while the teacher may have superior interactional rights, he may also delegate responsibility to students and use strategies such as unfinished TCU's to assign authorship, and therefore, ownership of learning to students. Indeed, it was shown to be within the power of students to become agents of their own learning; to expand and exploit the task for their own learning purposes, but also to use communicative strategies such as circumlocution, when unsure of, or unwilling to use a lexical item. The analysis has also shown that as students worked collaboratively and assisted each other within the task, in doing so, they achieved more than would have been possible individually. Furthermore, CA of the discourse showed that when the spot the difference task was combined with other work in the lesson designed to invoke similar language, students were given the opportunity to display their learning of vocabulary generated in the task and did so for their own benefit, the benefit of other participants and to promote the classroom as a place of learning, incidentally, also a place where L2 is valued over the L1, at least when searching for vocabulary. Finally, through the emic nature of CA, this research has shown that classroom discourse is more

complex than has been previously suggested, for example, in the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model, and that turns may be dynamic in nature and simultaneously balance multiple demands.

### 5.1 Pedagogic Implications

CA research within the field of SLA has had "promising applications for language teachers and methodologists" (Huth 2011: 306), and a number pedagogical implications have surfaced. Such implications are summarized in Huth (2011), Seedhouse (2004 and 2005) and Wong and Waring (2010). However, this discussion will consider three pedagogical implications pertinent to this study, namely (a) how CA notions of repair can enhance SLA notions of corrective feedback, (b) how CA can inform the "format and interactional design" (Huth 2011: 306) of language classroom tasks, and (c) how CA can inform teachers' interactional practices.

Wong and Waring (2010) suggest that CA notions of repair can inform and enhance SLA notions of corrective feedback by suggesting that, as a result of CA-SLA research, teacher training may now be able to go beyond simply suggesting corrective feedback strategies, to offering teachers CA informed insight into the "sequential nature" (ibid: 276) of such feedback. It may be particularly insightful, for example, to incorporate awareness of self and other initiation and completion of repair, and emphasize the roles that learners, as well as teachers, can take in repair. One example, related to spot the difference tasks such as analyzed in this research, may be to point out that learners have a tendency to self-initiate repair by means of word searches during the task, as shown in Excerpts 2, 4, 5 and 8.

In terms of CA informing language classroom task design, CA of various tasks during "task-in-process" (Seedhouse 2004: 93), or during what actually happens as the task unfolds, may highlight the "sequential resources" (Wong and Waring 2010: 277) that learners need to complete such tasks. These sequential resources may otherwise have been ignored during task creation, and may positively influence future task design. One example relevant to this research may be to pre-teach question/answer adjacency pair sequences relevant to asking for

and giving information on differences within the task and by extension, make learners aware of preference within the answer slot, which may facilitate smoother flow of the task. Furthermore, as analysis in this research has shown, much opportunity for learning during tasks occurs 'off task', in other words, when not explicitly interacting to complete the task, for example, during word searches. This would suggest more careful consideration should be given not only to allowing off task talk during tasks, but also to, perhaps, incorporating off task talk into the design of future tasks (ibid).

This research has also shown that a teachers interactional practices may influence learner participation within a task, therefore, CA informed teacher reflection of such practices may improve opportunity for learning. Three examples from this research are, firstly, that a teacher's counter questioning techniques, as highlighted in Excerpt 2 lines 114 – 117, have the potentially negative consequence of causing teacher and student challenges. While this proved not to be the case in the example in Excerpt 2, teachers should be aware of the potential pitfalls of such sequences. Secondly, a teacher's unfinished turn constructional units facilitate student participation within the discourse, and therefore allow them to become agents in the learning process. Such practice is highlighted in Excerpt 5, lines 194, 198 and 201 and Excerpt 6, line 257. Finally, explicit positive assessment potentially negates learning opportunity by closing down sequences, as shown in Excerpt 8, line 349, and teachers, therefore, should be aware of employing such practice. Ultimately this discussion suggests that CA is able to show how interactional practices do or do not provide opportunity for learning and in doing so, "enhance our overall sensitivity to the complexities of classroom talk" (Wong and Waring 2010: 251).

## 5.2 CA Contributions to the Field of SLA

While CA is in no way a theory of learning and is not equipped to analyze SLA over time (He 2004), as this research has demonstrated, CA is a qualitative, empirical research method, which uses fine grained transcriptions to analyze talk in real terms, from the participants' perspective and not in terms predetermined by the method of analysis. As this research has used CA to analyze classroom interaction and opportunities for learning in a typical L2

classroom task, it is therefore necessary to discuss the "role of social context" (Markee 2004: 593), in other words, the role of interaction in language learning and by extension, how CA can and cannot benefit understanding of SLA. Before discussing the merits of CA for SLA, it is first important to accept that SLA requires "both interaction and introspection" (He 2004: 578). Learning strategies (Ellis 1997; Gass and Selinker 2001), that is to say, the introspective aspects of SLA, are important as they allow the learner space to individually reflect on learning, help the learner to navigate the optimal learning route and importantly to this discussion, generally manifest as unspoken thoughts and ideas. In this area of SLA, CA is not useful because such aspects of the SLA process are beyond its purview. Furthermore, when emphasis is placed on SLA as occurring in the mind of the individual and, therefore, as an individualistic enterprise, language use and acquisition are distinguished separately, also negating CA.

Alternatively, when SLA is seen as a sociolinguistic endeavor, language learning may be seen as socially constructed and socially distributed. In this respect, interaction, with an emphasis on modified input and negotiation for meaning, takes a central role in SLA and learning is conceived as collaboratively achieved by members of the language learning community. From this viewpoint, language acquisition and use are inextricably linked, and the use of CA becomes apparent. This research has offered empirical evidence in support of such a view of language learning, and therefore, in support of the interaction hypothesis.

While this research has presented language classroom discourse, especially word searches and learning oriented side sequences within a spot the difference task, as providing opportunity for language learning, it is important to note that use of lexical items within these sequences does not necessarily equate to long term acquisition of the words. However, CA can aid in the better understanding of what actually happens during classroom interaction and in doing so, aid our understanding of the processes involved in language acquisition.

# APPENDIX I

## Spot the Difference Task

3 B Communicative **Spot the difference**

American English File 3 Teacher's Book
Photocopiable © Oxford University Press 2008

**A**

Describe your picture to **B**. Find ten differences. Mark the differences on your picture.

**B**

Describe your picture to **A**. Find ten differences. Mark the differences on your picture.

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## APPENDIX II

**Participants in the Research**

| Participants | Age | Gender | Country of Origin | Level of Study | L1 | Major |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T (teacher) | 32 | M | England | | English | |
| L (student) | 20 | F | Korea | Second Year Undergraduate | Korean | Math Education |
| S (student) | 25 | M | Korea | Final Year Undergraduate | Korean | Biology Studies |
| D (student) | 25 | M | China | Fist Year Post Graduate | Chinese | Business Studies |
| R (student) | 27 | M | Korea | Final Year Undergraduate | Korean | Chemistry |
| S (student) | 25 | M | Korea | Final Year Undergraduate | Korean | Biology Studies |
| H (student) | 22 | F | Korea | Fourth Year Undergraduate | Korean | Veterinary Medicine |

## APPENDIX III

**Transcription Conventions (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984)**

| | |
|---|---|
| [[ ]] | Indicates simultaneous utterances |
| [ ] | Indicates overlapping utterances |
| = | Indicates contiguous utterances |
| (0.4) | Indicates tenths of a second between utterances |
| (.) | Indicates a micropause of up to one tenth of a second |
| : | Indicates sound extension of a word with more colons representing longer extensions |
| . | Indicates a fall in tone, not necessarily a sentence ending |
| , | Indicates continuing intonation |
| - | Indicates a sharp stop in articulation |
| ? | Indicates rising inflection, not necessarily in the form of a question |
| __ | Indicates emphasis of the underlined word |
| ↑ ↓ | Indicates rising or falling intonation occurring post utterance |
| ◦ ◦ | Indicates quiet talk occurring between signs |
| hhh | Indicates aspirations |
| ·hhh | Indicates inhalations |
| .hh. | Indicates laughter within a word |
| >> | Indicates fast talk occurring between signs |
| << | Indicates slow talk occurring between signs |
| (( )) | Indicates analyst's notes |

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