The Generation of Power Relationships through the Students' Oral Interaction under the Use of a Task-Based Syllabus

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Social reasons prompted the authors' main purpose: to report on a qualitative research developed throughout one year with tenth graders from a public school in Bogotá, Colombia where a task-based lesson was implemented fostering an environment where oral interaction and the generation of power relationships were analyzed. Four instruments were used, namely, field notes, interviews, transcripts of classroom oral interaction and surveys. The preliminary results showed that relations were marked by the roles students played as they interacted and the use they made of the language in interacting as well as the existence of differences among students.

Key words: Task-based, classroom oral interaction, power relationships

Bases sociales trazan nuestro principal propósito: reportar una investigación cualitativa desarrollada durante un año con estudiantes de décimo grado en una escuela pública en Bogota, Colombia. Allí se implementaron lecciones basadas en tareas, originando un ambiente donde se observó la interacción oral y se analizó la generación de relaciones de poder. Se implementaron cuatro instrumentos de recolección de datos: Notas de campo, entrevistas, transcripciones de interacción oral en el salón de clase y encuestas. Los resultados preliminares mostraron que dichas relaciones están marcadas por los roles que los estudiantes asumen mientras interactúan en las dinámicas de la clase y el uso que ellos hacen del lenguaje, así como por las diferencias entre los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Estructura de trabajo basado en tareas, interacción oral en el salón de clase, relaciones de poder.

The classroom has stopped being a place where knowledge is addressed towards a unique direction from legitimately recognized subjects (teachers) to those whose expertise and perceptions about life are not equally conceived because their roles within the interaction maintained in educational processes are not widely recognized, these subjects respond occasionally to a common noun: students. Regarding this position, Freire (1987) assures that in traditional classrooms teachers indicate ideas but do not change them, topics are never discussed, and the work of the teacher is limited to work over the students but never with them. An order is imposed but it is never shared by the students. These statements exemplify exactly the opposite image of Freire's conception of education. Here the author questions the fact of learning to discuss and debate under a process that is imposed and he states the answer: It is impossible (Freire, 1987).

However, a lot of classrooms have evolved into fairer and reasonable spaces where participation, roles and functions played by its members act complementarily. This perspective dawns in a place where the understanding of the school as a social entity in charge of processes of knowledge and power sharing or distribution is contemplated.

From the authors' perspective, power relationships' generation and maintenance can be observed considering specific issues from the interaction being maintained, the kind of framework implemented for the pedagogical intervention, the roles assumed and played by the members involved, the language used, and the spaces available for interaction.

Theoretical Orientations

Shall we go to The Playground? Task-Based Syllabus

Pedagogical and psycholinguistic publications have justified tasks as their central feature (Nunan, 1994). This research adopted the definition of task given by Willis (1996) when she claims that task is *"a goal, oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome, where the emphasis is on exchanging meaning, not producing specific language forms"*. This author establishes a field where students and teachers adopt singular roles in the classroom.

The purpose of a "playground" where students could move using natural language in the classroom fits with the initial idea regarding the kind of environment proposed for students to interact in. Besides, it gave us the opportunity to recreate situations that were closely related to the students' reality. In this manner, the authors established real-life tasks like applying for a job, going to the cinema or shopping, tasks which were defined also after reading the information given through an informal survey developed at the beginning of the process.

Task-based learning is based on three stages (Willis, 1996). *Pre task* is the moment when the teacher introduces the topic or tasks to be developed during the lesson. He/She also explores with the students the options they can adopt to accomplish it.

The "tasks cycle" is composed by three sub stages: *task, planning and report.* These components are the core of the lesson and a space primarily conceived to communicate students' ideas, feelings and opinions while exploring with their partners the perspectives of their own world represented in the task resolution as long as their choices are most of the time based on their own experiences inside and outside the classroom. Learners perform the task and later prepare a report, which is defined by Willis as "the natural conclusion of the task cycle". This report indicates the process they followed to accomplish the task as well as the conclusions they reached.

The last stage is a *Language Focus* which is composed of *analysis* and *practice.* The first one (analysis) is thought of as a space for students to reflect on the language features which could be remarked on regarding their use during the lesson. The practice stage is thought of as a moment for repetition and drilling of language used, words, sentences, structures and functions which emerged from the development of the lesson because this language was needed and used by students.

Willis (1996) suggests six main kinds of tasks, which are listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creating. She also mentions some of the advantages in utilizing a task-based framework, claiming that it promotes spaces in the classroom where students' opinions, perceptions, ideas, and feelings are considered as an important part of the process. That was one of the strongest principles to be applied by the authors of this paper regarding pedagogical intervention. Furthermore, it was hoped that the variety of tasks promote interaction in the classroom where students can use everyday language. On the other hand, in some of the lessons observed, the teacher controlled the spaces for interaction; therefore, the opportunities for students to assume and play an interactive role during the lesson development were not clearly seen. In addition, sometimes the structure of the lesson did not allow students to participate actively.

What's going on? Interaction is going on.

At this point, Freire's conception of language acquires special significance. According to this author, the real and legitimate word in the dialogue and the interaction among people is the word which is able to alter reality (Freire, 1970). The reflection on the use of language also helped us look at language in a different perspective.

Language is a tool that can be used to change perceptions and opinions. It is able to organize groups and structures, to preserve and change traditions, to transform discourses and materialize ideas, etc. From this perspective, the use of the language, by those who are recognized as legitimate users of it, can be seen as power (Foucault, 1985) as long as the subjects surrounding the language use give evidence of the language use effects. As a final consideration, power does not necessarily originate from language (Kress, 1989) because it requires a recognition which is supplied by the members of a group. Here, words start to acquire significance because they are reflected in the "outside world", they are not thoughts or ideas anymore, but part of reality.

Now that power is related to interaction...

The power attributed to the processes of interaction is generated from the use of language as a tool used for different purposes in different contexts, carrying at the same time a set of effects on reality. Therefore, interaction does not depend necessarily or uniquely on the language use but the processes itself can be regarded as powerful. One of the main reasons for this is that processes of interaction have influential and reciprocal effects on the others. Medina (1989) poses interaction to be an action of reciprocity and influence which is established among two or more subjects in a defined environment.

The authors also share the image of interaction as being a process that responds to the kind of relationship being maintained among the members of a group. On the other hand, Medina (1989) describes interaction as a process that is able to highlight the emergent features of the relationships the members of a group maintain (He includes a set of relationships marked by specific interactional characteristics in Medina (1989, p. 73). Also, Lynch (1996) explains how the manner in which people interact with others is highly defined by the kind of relationship established with them. This specific view grants to oral interaction the conceived meaning the authors agree on it can be seen as an "insights provider" of the power relationships inside the classroom.

The conceptualization adopted around power relationships is negotiated directly with the negative conception of power. According to Foucault (1985), the power that says "no" is the one that constrains and rejects the individuals and their realities. The authors agree with the statement that power relationships are based on relationships marked by the existence of differences among the individuals maintaining the relationships (Kress, 1989) (Claval, 1982). Some of those differences are sometimes innate to every human being (Iregui, 2002). Sometimes the

environment where an individual develops him/ herself as a community member marks these differences. Finally the institutions people move within accept and reject their members in different ways bearing in mind the different levels at which they can be categorized: (e.g. socially, economically, professionally, etc.) (Cummins, 2000).

Two kinds of power relationships can be proposed in general terms: coercive and collaborative. Cummins (2000) defines collaborative relations of power to be those where the individuals are enabled or empowered to increase achievements and make them more inclusive. "Within collaborative relations of power, power is not a fixed quantity but is generated through interaction with others..." (Cummins, 2000, p. 44).

On the other hand, coercive relationships of power are defined by the same author as a more exclusive relation as long as the execution of power is made only by a dominant individual or group affecting and going against a subordinated individual or group.

Some other relationships of power are remarked by Claval (1982) whose proposal includes the existence of diffused relationships of power and interchanging relationships of power. The first one refers to the authenticity of injustice as a social reality that is approved by the entities of control in charge. Whereas interchanging relationships of power are understood as those relationships where members are associated by mutual interests, "goods" or "benefits", which are the main reason why individuals interact, there is a clear interest in the advantage acquired from the relationship maintained. As its name indicates, this relationship presupposes more or less equal interchange among the members but their interest and goals are individual and different (Claval,1982).

Power relationships: "the school relish"

Foucault sees the school as a space in which the defining patterns of its way of functioning, the activities developed there, and the individual's position and profile, are all well-defined. These elements conform a unity he calls "capacity-communication-power". Foucault (1985) poses this process as a way of acquiring new capacities by moving within regulated communications. (Lessons, questions, answers, orders, coded signs of obedience, revealing differences in the grading of each person and the levels of knowledge they possess).

Another feature from the school that is linked with the generation of power relationships is that it allows processes where truths (Foucault, 1982), symbolic capital (all kinds of capitals, social, cultural, and economic) (Bourdieu, 1999) or

knowledge (Muñoz, 1990) are accumulated, a practice that is based on the fact that power is distributed. This statement allows Muñoz (1990) to propose that if power is distributed, it could be accumulated as a consequence. It is suggested that this accumulation can be done at different levels by different students.

The following three considerations may define the theoretical inclinations adopted: First, the school is clearly a social space (image of the society as whole) where the interactions taking place allow power to be reproduced. Second, the language used during interaction is a powerful tool that is able to define and modify students' perceptions of the world and the reality they face daily. Third, social relationships in school are highly variable (as in the society as a whole) and so the study of them can just be drawn in a specific moment and in a specific space (one of the purposes of this research project).

Research Design

Thirteen lessons (two hours each) were planned as part of a task-based program followed during six months. The lessons followed the task-based framework established by authors like Nunan (1989) and Willis (1996). Real tasks from real-life situations were developed and recreated each lesson. Students were involved in frequent opportunities for language use and expression of their own voices while considering their own experiences in similar situations as part of the knowledge they could take advantage of to achieve them. Criterion for the selection of real tasks and pedagogical tasks was influenced by the teachers' own quest for situations which included language use for meaningful purposes and, at the same time, by the results of an informal survey about the students' likes that was applied at the beginning of the process in an attempt to include their ideas in the lesson planning stages.

Research Questions

1. What does students' oral interaction reveal about the power relationships in the classroom under the use of a task-based syllabus?

2. What does task-based stages reveal about the interaction being maintained among students?

Setting and Population

The population involved was a group of students from a public school in the southeast of Bogotá. Students were tenth graders at the first semester of 2005. Ages range from15 to 18 years. They oscillated between a low and medium

economical status. There were 43 students in the classroom but only ten of them were selected at random for a more detailed observation of the interaction they maintained. Five female students and five male students comprised the group. Most of them had some difficulties in establishing clear relationships with others while the group was mixed and some of them had just met each other. Certainly their differences regarding personalities were very clear and remarkable. Only few and very small groups existed and even these were not completely static as some of their aggressive attitudes led to several serious problems where students ended in extreme behavior like hitting themselves. Most of the students live with their families and they all have brothers and sisters. Even when big families was a kind of common pattern, some of them commented on the fact that they lived with only one of the two parents, most of the times their mother. Some students were given everything they needed to study but others were working at the time to pay their expenses there.

Research Instruments

Field Notes: There were four main segments for organizing the collected information into the format as follows: a)The description of the setting, b) talking about the way students worked and the activities carried out, the description of the attitudes, behaviors and participation of the subjects throughout the lesson development, c) the registration of some of the students' speeches and turns at talking, and, finally, d) a section for the comments of the observer according to his interpretation of the lesson interactions. The authors designed the format after studying a narrower proposal for observing oral interaction (Nunan,1989).

Interviews: Written and recorded interviews were applied providing different results and reactions from students. Questions were based on the situational interview type. These were carried out during three different stages: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the process. This instrument was mainly used to verify or contradict the "probable commonalities" obtained from the rest of the instruments.

Transcripts of oral interaction: Direct students' speech was recorded during the complete lesson development. Two tape recorders were placed at different places every lesson.

Surveys: Punctual features of the students' interaction were analyzed, verifying or discarding the issues found through the observation that was carried out in the middle of the data collection process.

Analysis of the Data

The data gathered were recorded during thirteen lessons of 120 minutes each during the first semester of 2005 through the implementation of the instruments mentioned above. Field notes and recordings had mainly a "propositive role" as long as the information they provided was taken as a revealing factor or as issues towards which the analysis was directed and focused. Surveys and interview information were used most of the time as means for verification or discarding purposes towards the observed issues with the other two instruments. After reading and looking for provable meanings of the emergent features by observing what was behind the uttered words, the data were labelled and indexed. Triangulation took place at the last stage of the analysis; pieces of data referring to common situations were joined together in an attempt to reach a clear image of them, then the authors compared the common patterns each had found in the data gathered and reached an agreement regarding their probable meanings. Then the definition and naming of categories became possible by observing the data again. Sometimes the names of those categories are pieces of it. These categories condense all the information recorded in concrete but general units at the same time.

Categorization

1. Word Power: Defining Roles by Using Language.

As one of the statements that capitalize most of the data found regarding the kind of relationships being maintained, the dynamics of those relationships, and the patterns they followed, it can be proposed. that power relationships were established among members or individuals whose defined roles within each relationship maintained gave specific insights into the rapport among students. The definition of those roles was attributed directly to the uses of language students made regarding the activeness or passiveness of such use and the specific purposes the language produced were addressed to. As posed by Cummins (2000) and Claval (1982), each type of power relationship is marked by a set of features in the subjects' manners of acting and interacting; this means a set of acts, behaviours or speeches the participants are meant to perform for the power relationship to exist. These are the features that determine a role in the classroom according with the authors' conception.

There is a set of statements that reinforces this position. Medina (1982) conceives the social relationships maintained in the classroom as a phenomenon that is partly defined by the roles students and the teacher adopt and play during the development of the lessons. He also contemplates one of the main students'

roles to be social relationship stimulators (1989). Here the authors propose a direct connection among roles established and social relationships maintained. The path followed by the authors to arrive at power relationship maintenance is connected with one of the features. Foucault (1985) remarks that power relationships are intrinsic to some other types of relations (like production or family relationships).

This statement complements the sequence role: social relationship - power relationship, exemplifying for the reader the manner the authors have conceived the phenomenon. This category enphasizes the fact that the process observed was the oral interaction recorded in the classroom. The use of language, as a consequence, presupposes a set of effects and purposes that transform the use of language into a powerful tool in the students' hands.

From Foucault's perspective, language or the use of the word is seen as a fundamental operation of power that declares laws and creates a discourse around what is forbidden. Language power is also understood under Freire's conception of the term when he assures that humankind transforms the world when humankind pronounces it, and the dialogue imposes itself as the path through which men gain significance as humans" (Freire, 1970, p. 98). Also, Johnson (1993) refers to having voice in the classroom as an act that not only represents the students' desires to take part in the classroom dynamics but also the consciousness that their thoughts are important to wit:

"Voice is power –power to express ideas and convictions power to direct an individual life towards a productive and positive fulfillment for self, family, community, nation and the world" (Johnson, 1993, p. 86).

Even when samples of data are varied and, at different levels, representative of the statement of this category, the following as one of the gaudy ones was included. Here the student's speech is not only used for a specific purpose (giving a order to his partner), but also the language is configuring the other person's acts and reactions. These reactions were not exemplified just once, but behaviors and speeches became frequent in the classroom interaction defining the individuals' roles involved, through their use of language.

1. **T:** "Angélica..."
2. **Paola:** "Pero que...si estoy callada..."
3. (S4): "Ahhhh que se calle..."
4. **Esteban:** "Uaaggcchhh"
5. (S4): **"Ola...boba que se calle..."**
6. **T:** "Ya ya ya..."

7. **Paola:** Ayyyy no sea sapo...*** ***lambón"
8. **Eric:** "Ayyy se regó...se regó..."
(Recording 7 / May 19, 2005)

The S4 words are insulting: "Shut up! fool..." and Paola's reaction is similar: "Don't be a frog...mind your business!"

1.1. Role Defined, Role Recognized and Role Maintained: "The Word Holders"

As a complementary statement for the importance attributed to role definition in the power relationships maintenance, this subcategory takes us to another resolution originated from the data analysed. Through this subcategory, it is stated that roles established in classroom interaction conserve a high level of consistency. This means that the changeability of the roles observed was void, at least during the period of observation and data registration. This static nature of the roles leads us to the statements authors like Medina (1989) have proposed around a complete set of roles defined by the functions students are meant to develop most of the times. He conceives learners to be assimilators of culture, norms makers, helpers in determining the goals, social relationship stimulators and experimenters, among others.

Also, according to each approach, researchers have established a set of functions or acts which students "always do" (Richards and Rodgers in Nunan, 1989) distinguished among oral, situational, audio-lingual and communicative approaches, among others, as defining frameworks for the students' roles in the classroom. Johnson (1972) goes even further with his statements. He believes that at school, teachers and students are inscribed within a prescription around their behaviours and manners of acting with the other members of the academic community. He also states that coordination among the teachers' and students' behaviours is supposed to be maintained at school so that objectives can be completed, those behaviours have to be truthful and, in certain ways, consistent. The consistency of roles is also a relevant feature of the interaction process since there is most of the time a construction around what can be expected from each role, this means that the functions associated with a role become to be inherent features of it, and the manners in which a person behaves or expresses are part of the expectations others have around that established role.

One clear insight offered by the statements proposed above is that students can be in a certain level "labelled" regarding the functions that an "average student" always accomplishes. Referring to this specific case (roles defined by the use or

disuse of the language), the statement of the category addresses directly the fact that those using the language were always the same, a fact that not only defined their roles in the classroom but also posed them in "powerful positions" by using the language and causing effects in their environments. Among the data available for supporting this affirmation was a portion of interview selected to exemplify the point of this category. Here the student shows a clear belief regarding the few possibilities that students have to alter or modify what they always do.

1. T: "Ehhh usted cree que digamos si...asignaran a otra persona... que dijeran
2. "no...no no el de siempre sino otro"... que pase ¿esa persona aceptaría?"
3. (S3): "Quien sabe...**no creo otra persona no creo...si ya siempre en el**
4. grupo se hace el mismo que habla y habla...ya después el otro no
5. acepta... "no que siga hablando el...que el siempre habla"...entonces...
6. T: "Y..."(S3):(**H. Iny.**) "**Además la gente se acostumbra a que habla**
7. **él**...entonces habla otra persona entonces ahí si le ponen cuidado...entonces
8. ahí si paila...uno pierde el año..."
9. T: "¿Por qué? ¿Por qué?"
10. (S3): "Porque no ve que a Carroloco digamos...ya de tanto que habla ya no
11. le ponen cuidado... entonces si uno saca a hablar a otra persona entonces
12. ahí si le ponen cuidado...entonces ahí si paila...o se le burlan o algo..."
(Interview 13 / June 9, 2005)

Being the one talking carries certain responsibilities for the students because they are being heard by all the classroom community. Moreover, this student claims: "I don't think... another person... no...I don't think...if he is always the one that speaks in the group and ....speaks and speaks ...so later on the other one doesn't accept...besides people get accustomed to the fact that he is always talking..."

1.2. *Interaction and the Existence of Difference. "Am I not like them? Are they not like me?"*

Power relationships are based most of the time on relationships marked by the existence of differences among those immersed in it, as has already been mentioned (Kress, 1989) (Claval, 1982).

On the other hand, but contributing to this same statement, Johnson (1972) contemplates the classroom to be framed by a "rewards system" to which the learners are meant to become adapted; this system is established by the classroom dynamics in each specific case. The differences present in the classroom are from the authors'

perspective defined by this "system" because the domains students have in different fields are meant to be contemplated differently -praising some attitudes, behaviors or opinions and undervaluing others. This way, students are "ranked" in different positions that sometimes define how often their attitudes and opinions are taken into account by others.

However, this placement of students at different levels is not only the result of the management they have of different domains and the "rewards system". Most of the conditions under which the interaction among students occurs are likely to modify the levels of importance and benefits derived from the students' acts and ideas, so according to the situation, the ideas or behaviors from a specific student can be considered as highly valuable. Nonetheless, another situation might cause the same behaviors or opinions to be irrelevant or dysfunctional (Johnson, 1972) (Ovejero, 1988). Here the task-based lessons acquire special significance because it is the environment that determined most of the conditions and situations lived in the classroom during the experience as well as the "rewards system" Johnson referred to. The authors address the different ways task-based lessons and the management students had of different domains, which contributed to the generation of differences among students by presenting some of the extracts from the data collected.

In the next sample students are discussing expressions of art. Some of them consider music is art and some others contradicted this position and asserted that music is not art. The teacher leads the discussion. One of the students was sure the others understand nothing about the matter and so justified their silence when he was giving his opinion. The management students have in expressing their own position seems absent here, maybe because they were not assertive enough with their own ideas.

1. T: "Quienes dicen que si"... "who say yes..."
2. (E): "Yes..."
3. T: "One two three four and five"... "and who say not"... "the rest of the
4. people say
5. that the music is not art?"
6. (S4): "Es que no entienden que es eso..."
7. (Teacher Laughs)
8. (S4): "O sea..."
9. T: "Quien?" ... "Por que dicen ustedes que la música no es arte?..."

(Recording 2 / March 31, 2005)

"They don't understand anything about that..." are the words pronounced by S4 comment that is mainly heard by the teacher but that represents S4's perceptions about his partners. Again, this kind of statement not only caused clear effects on students' reaction –provoking discussions and fights- but established differentiations among them, differentiations which were, in several cases, accepted by most of the students.

2. That's my opportunity; let's do it: Tasks offer new chances

The point of departure for this category is found in the recent tendencies of second language teaching methodologies in which the recognition of interaction as one of the most important elements in second language teaching (Seedhouse, 1999, p. 149) is made. Task-based framework does not except its guidelines from this perspective. The data collected provided the author with evidence of an atmosphere in which students felt comfortable to interact freely with their partners as well as the teacher; learners found a space that allowed them to count on (Willis,1996) "...chances to open and close conversations, to interact naturally, to interrupt and change, to ask people to do things and to check what they have done".

In addition, the analysis of the information revealed that students obtained advantages from the opportunities that task-based lessons provided. This event was mainly caused by familiarity with the topics and tasks, causing at the same time an increase in students' participation regarding the observed students' intervention in the lesson when task-based lessons had not been implemented.

At this point Murphy (2003, p. 353) presents a study that considers the relationship between task and learners. He mentions that if learners see the task as something unfamiliar or something that does not have any relation with their "needs", they will have no interest in doing the task; rather, they will adopt a position where the task is just a duty of the class. On the other hand, if students sense that the task has a clear relation with their world, they are likely to discover easily the reasons to take part in the activity and, as a consequence, put forth their best effort to perform it.

The next lines are part of a recording and its transcription. The real task of the lesson was *"Going camping"* and students were working in the first stage of the task cycle; it was an *Ordering and sorting* task where the students had to rank, according to their own criteria the five most useful supplies when camping as well as the five least useful.

497. Angélica: "Y toca hacer la frase..."
498. (S6): "**Yo pongo...ayyy ¿qué pongo?**"
499. Nx3: "El más importante son...ehhh... ¿el agua?..."
500. (S6): "**Qué pongo? ¿ustedes que pusieron en actividades?**"
501. Cindy: "**Yo puse "talk"...**"
502. (S6): "Y yo ¿qué pongo?"
503. Nx3: "¿Qué es ***?"
504. (S6): "Las menos importantes..."
505. (S6): "¿Qué es...*** ***"
506. Jennifer: "¿Cómo va a llevar papel higiénico?..."
507. (S6): "**Y ahí ¿Qué es? de "food" ¿qué es?" "¿Qué es...es...allá después**
508. **la cuarta...**"

Translation

497. Angélica: "And we have to make a phrase?..."
498. (S6): "**What should I write?.... what?** "
499. Nx3: "The most important...."ehhh....water?"
500. (S6): "**What should I write?.... what did you write?...in activities?**"
501. Cindy: "**I wrote "talk...**"
502. (S6): "And me.... What should I write?
503. Nx3: "What's... ***?"
504. (S6): "The least important... ***"
505. (S6): "What's...*** ***"
506. Jennifer: "How could you include...toilet paper?"
507. (S6): "**There... what's? "food" ¿what is that?**" " **¿What's ...there**
508. **after the fourth...**"

(Recording May 19, 2005)

The lines above show the most common characteristic of interaction in the task-based lessons observed during the collection of the data. They illustrate how three students are talking with each other in order to accomplish the goal of the task. It is noteworthy how *Cindy* is sharing her answer while *S6,* who is one of the subjects of this research, and *Nx3* are asking for information. This point of view regarding the interaction in a task-based classroom is supported by Seedhouse (1999) when he reports interaction characteristics based on approximately 330 second language lessons or fragments of lessons from 14 different countries. He assures: "The learners must communicate with each other in order to accomplish a task,

and the pedagogical and interactional focus is on the accomplishment of the task rather than on the language use".

Findings and Implications for Further Research

By following the statements proposed in the categories stated above, the main findings of the study constitute the following affirmations:

1. Power relationships were the result of the establishment of roles students play during the classroom dynamics according to the use and disuse they make of the language.

2. Roles defined during classroom interaction were recognized to be consistent because students had the opportunity to reinforce their roles through their actions and the effects caused with the language used.

3. Power relationships were preceded by the existence of differences and similarities among students, ruled by the environment tasks-based lessons provided and the management students had of specific domains, like speaking, knowledge, friends, support, etc.

4. The development of activities during classroom interaction revealed the existence of differences and similarities among students, ruled by the environment tasks-based lessons provided and the management students had over different domains.

5. Students' interaction in the classroom was marked by the opportunities and tools which were made available to them for interacting during each of the stages of the task-based lesson. In this regard, task-based lesson offered a set of new opportunities students were not familiar with.

6. The role the teacher played during the task-based lessons development influenced the way the "rewards system" is established. According to each one's criteria, students were priced or undervalued because of their actions and ideas and, as a consequence, students were posed at different "levels" during the classroom interaction, making some ideas more relevant or functional than others.

Pedagogical Practice

1. The space existing among the chairs, the arrangement of the places, and the partners sitting near others were variables that could have implications on how the interaction was being maintained. This means that not only the kinds of relationships maintained revealed the type of interaction, but spatial features could contribute as well.

2. English Language was sometimes seen as a restrictive code: The knowledge of it might be interpreted as interactional abilities. When its use was required students could not interact freely if they did not manage the language properly.

3. The general landscape of the relationships studied allowed us to see that there were evidently some leaders (of different kinds) and some other students whose acting and speech were ruled in certain points by those leaders.

4. Leaders were not only defined by individual features. The lesson conditions, other students' acting and the teacher's role, also helped in defining and shaping the existing leaders.

5. Students were aware most of the time of the differences existing among them, among the treatment received by the teacher and their partners, and among the opportunities that the acceptance and rejection of what they did and said originated.

Implications for further research

1. The apprehension and practices for the distribution of knowledge have been understood as a component of the power existence as long as humankind achieves the appropriation of the surrounding universe thorough several apprehension fields (Muñoz in Diaz et al.: 1990). This way, knowledge distribution was a practice that facilitated the management of some of the domains we have referred to; however, this was not our main focus and could be explored broadly.

2. Students with similar characteristics were likely to be immersed with each other, with those they have more things in common with regarding likes, experiences, preferences, and hobbies, features that flourished because of the characteristics of the task-based framework.

3. Students managed different levels of authority. Some of them were able to give orders to their partners and even challenge the teacher against being a traditional authoritarian figure. This reaction could not be attributed to any reason within the focus of our research.

4. Students' positions inside the classroom were defined by several aspects; nonetheless, it seemed very common for our students that the support offered by some of them to their partners had special meaning for the position they occupy as long as it was part of the recognition of it, and this event was revealed during the oral interaction.

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