

“Teachers’ personal beliefs and learners’ conversational rights in the L2 classroom: A subjective, causal relationship”

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Main argument

The discursive actions deployed by an L2 teacher while interacting with learners may be determined by specific principles whose ends may be pedagogic or other.



L2 teachers' motivated actions

- What kind of actions does an L2 teacher display while interacting with learners?
- How are these actions displayed? → “packaging” (Ten Have, 1999)
- How do these actions relate to the teacher's acknowledged principles?

L2 learning from the point of view of cognitive SLA

The interaction hypothesis :

Negotiation of meaning



Interlanguage modifications



L2 development

(R. Ellis, 1999: 4)

L2 learning from the point of view of sociocultural SLA

While interacting, the L2 classroom participants negotiate

- Meaning
- Their role relationships
- Their cultural and social identities

(R. Ellis, 1999: 17)

The sociocultural analysis of the classroom participants' discursive roles and identities

The specific discursive actions displayed by the L2 classroom participants go beyond the traditional, limited institutional identities of teacher and learner.

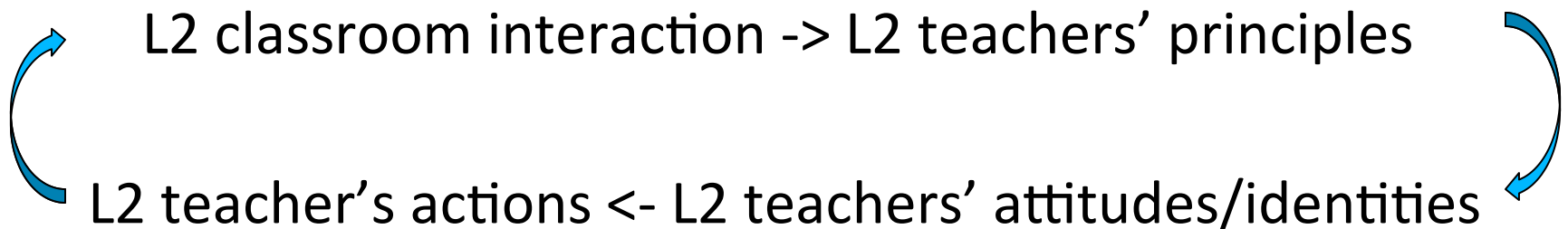


In order to account for the emic perspective of the participants as they display these actions analytical categories need to be broaden.
(Richards, 2006)

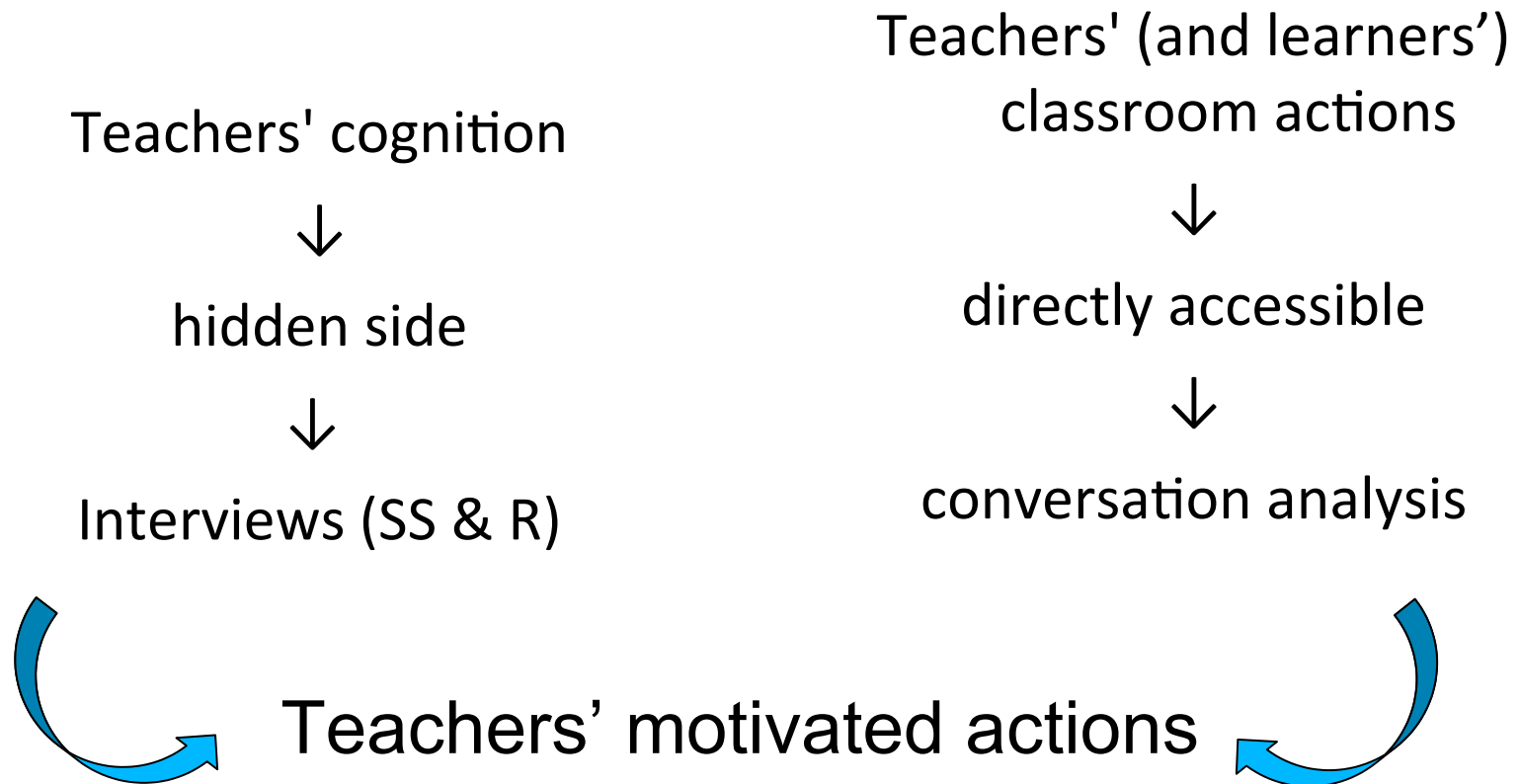
L2 teachers' cognition (Borg, 2009)

L2 teachers' actions are determined by their beliefs and personal theories about

- The nature of the L2
- The way the L2 is taught/learned
- The roles that the teacher and the learners play as they interact



Research object and methodology



A brief case study: *Richard*

EFL teacher at Glasgow University

16-year teaching experience (as of April 2007)

IELTS level 4 group

Semi-structured interview (SS-Int) and recall-interview (R-int)

Richard's principles: "The struggle to communicate"

"I think, I try to be a facilitator, I try to, eh, I try to involve as many students as possible, in the lesson, and I try, I mean I, I kind of believe in task-based learning, I kind of believe in, the struggle, the struggle to communicate, for a specific purpose, helps students to learn, I think it's, not only, about product, it's about the process, the process of learning the task".

Teacher as facilitator



Communication with/among/by learners



Opportunities for learning

Richard's principles: "The struggle to communicate"

"I try not to, eh, emphasize any power, really, particular relationships, although of course, I try to maintain the atmosphere of the class"

"I kind of try to take {a kind of an easier approach} with the students, I try to make classroom not, I don't mean a fun place, but a non threatening place"

"I try to, maintain a, level of motivation myself (.) which, I hope, students can maintain"

"if the students dislike, their teacher, {it's} difficult for them to remain motivated"

Teacher as a facilitator and a participant



Maintain the group motivated, maintain the atmosphere of the class



Students' motivation and their attitude towards the teacher may affect their L2 learning

Richard's principles: "The struggle to communicate"

Some of Richard's principles
(SS-Int)

("the struggle to communicate",
"the atmosphere of the class")



SLA interaction hypothesis

(negotiation of meaning,
participants' rights and roles)

Richard's actions while
interacting (CA)



Specific, situated enactment of
principles (pedagogic and other)

- Atmosphere
- Motivation
- Communication

“Sleepwalkers”

“Sleepwalkers”

→ 1 KR: what about walksleap
2 (0.6)
3 R: a-HA:
4 KR: yeah
5 (0.3)
6 R: WALKSLEEPING↑=
7 KR: =sleeping walk=
8 R: =[sleep + #sleep# walking=
9 AM2: [{sleeping walk}
10 AM2: =sleep walking=
11 AM3: =sleep
12 walking
13 {AM}: (.) ((chuckles))
14 {R}: ((board, 2.9)) sleep walking (0.7)
→ 15 can you explain what THAT is (0.2) you're going to say walk in your sleep
16 {aren't you}
17 KR: ((chuckles))
18 AS: ((laugh))
19 (0.6)
20 KR: ehm:
→ 21 SU: nobody {know} (0.2) nobody knows + eh: (0.2)
22 he-{either} he is-ehm {sleeping + walking}
23 R: hmm
24 (0.7)
25 SU: {so}
26 (0.4)



“Sleepwalkers”

→ 27 KR: eh: (0.4)
28 yeah but-ehm-just-MY QUESTION about-ehm + sleep walking if-eh: somebody eh:
29 (0.2) walks eh:: + when he sleep and: eh: (0.4)
30 does he eh: (0.3) eh-DREAM on this eh:
31 R: YEAH [XXX
32 KR: [XXX about=
→ 33 R: =I think your question is
34 what STAGE of <sleeping> is this=
35 KR: =a-[ha
36 R: [is it-
37 is it REM sleep↑=
38 KR: =yeah=
39 R: =ye[ah
40 AF: [°XX[X°
41 {KR}: [XXX=
→ 42 R: ={:>does anybody know<} °XXX°
43 (0.3)
→ 44 AV: I think they-they can=
45 R: =XXX↑=
46 AV: =speak when they walk=
47 R: =REALLY↑=
48 AV: ={:because}
49 I know {someone}=
50 AF: =hmm=
51 R: =that you know=
52 AF: =[((chuckles)) =
53 R: =in-in your home country +
54 in Saudi Arabia + yeah↑=



“Sleepwalkers”

55 {AV}: =XXX=
 → 56 R: =what [do-what + [what do they DØ=
 57 {AV}: [{she-} [{she-} =she's MY
 58 cousin
 → 59 R: your [cousin + what does she do-what does she [dØ-{°does she°}
 60 AF: [((chuckles))
 61 AV: [she {walk}
 62 she walk + and I have to look for {her}
 63 R: ((chuckles))=
 64 AV: =XXX {I have to look} #XXX#=
 65 R: =SHE WALKS OUT
 66 AV: {°hmm°}
 → 67 R: and where does she-where does she GO;
 68 (0.2)
 69 {AF}: {hmm}=
 70 AV: =I don't know
 71 (0.7)
 72 R: {°yeah:°} +
 73 probably {go on straight [walking °or something°
 74 AV: [and she speak and she [{speak}=
 75 AF: [((laughs))
 76 R: =what=-
 77 AV: =while she
 78 walk=
 → 79 R: =what type of things does she say
 80 (0.7)



“Sleepwalkers”

81 AV: XXX {to} anyone and XXX like that XXX {some people}
→ 82 R: ((deep hollow voice)) ohhhh:
83 AV: and-[eh-{I}
84 R: [{deep}-{deep psychological}
85 AM: ((laughs))
86 {R}: {((chuckles))}
87 (0.3)
88 AV: and I think-ehm other people scared
89 (0.2)
90 R: yeah OF COURSE °XX[X°
91 {AF}: [((chu[ckles))
92 AV: [for me I'm scared + I just take her and
93 (0.2)
94 AS: ((lau[gh))
→ 95 R: [XXX {you've seen [her very finest
96 {AF}: [XXX
97 {AV}: #yeah#=
98 R: =°yeah°=
99 {AF}: ={((chuckles))}
100 R: #I under[stand#
101 {AF}: [{((chuckles))} (0.4)
102 [XXX
→ 103 KR: [XXX-it's a dangerous situation because:=
104 R: =yeah:=
105 KR: =maybe they:'ll-eh: go out
106 and-eh for-maybe for-eh CARS=
107 R: =YEAH [{°of course°}
108 KR: [{or on the streets}
109 R: {°of course°} (0.8)



“Sleepwalkers”

→ 110 R: WHEN I was younger I used to SPEAK in my SLEEP (0.4)
111 I used to TALK + in my sleep (0.5)
112 {>°it° was<} QUITE-ehm: (1.6)
113 maybe quite dangerous too (0.5)
114 ((burst of [laughter])) #XXX# +
115 {AM}: [XXX
116 R: people would ask me questions and I would answer (.) (l[au]ghs) #(.)# +
117 {AS}: [{{{(laugh)}}}
118 R: #ok#-does ANYONE ELSE {sleep} in XXX-in their sleep-eh: +
119 speak in their sleep or sleepwalk (0.5)



Suggested analysis

Richard's discursive actions:

- Fostered negotiation of meaning with and among learners
(“walksleep” vs. “sleepwalk”)
- Helped to scaffold specific learners' discourse
(learner KR's question about sleepwalking, learner AV's account of her sleepwalking cousin)
- Contributed to create a conversational space where participants constructed meaning collaboratively
 - Specific learners self-selected as next speakers
 - Laughter was legitimised as a valid interactional resource
 - Participants' self disclosure was encouraged as well as oriented to by the teacher

Temporary conclusions

- Richard's discursive actions left traces of the way he oriented to a facilitative conversational task
- These traces may be related to Richard's acknowledged pedagogical (and other) principles
- These links may shed light on the way Richard makes sense of his discursive roles and tasks, as well as of those of learners'

Limits of the study and clues for future research

- These observations can hardly be applied to the analysis of another teacher's discursive actions (only the method can be re-applied)
- Classroom observations were not of a longitudinal nature
 - No conclusions may be drawn about the possible influence of Richard's "style" on the learners' L2 development
- Analysing teachers' conversational style
 - May help characterise the kind of input learners are exposed to as they interact with the teacher
 - May shed light on the way teachers come to terms with the double task of communicating with learners and having learners communicate in an L2 classroom

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Thank you