UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL

OBSERVATION DES PRATIQUES PÉDAGOGIQUES QUI FACILITENT LA NÉGOCIATION DU SENS DANS LES CLASSES DE LANGUE SECONDE

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MICHAEL ZUNIGA

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OBSERVING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES THAT FACILITATE NEGOTIATION FOR MEANING IN SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

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MICHAEL ZUNIGA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL	English as a second language
FSL	French as a second language
L2	Second language
NfM	Negotiation for meaning
NNS	Non-native speaker
NS	Native speaker
SCA	Student-centered activity
SLA	Second language acquisition
TCA	Teacher-centered activity

RÉSUMÉ

La recherche dans le domaine de l'interactionnisme démontre que la négociation du sens est une forme de discours propice à l'acquisition d'une langue seconde. Depuis le début des années 1980, plusieurs études portant sur les tâches (e.g. Antón, 1999; Doughty & Pica, 1996; Duff, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1985; Gass, Mackey & Ross-Feldman, 2005) ont révélé que les tâches et les pratiques pédagogiques qui facilitent la négociation du sens sont celles où il y a un échange d'informations requis. Cependant, jusqu'à aujourd'hui, très peu d'études ont examiné l'intégration des ces pratiques dans le milieu scolaire.

Le présent mémoire se veut une étude exploratoire qualitative des pratiques pédagogiques favorables à la négociation du sens. Pour ce faire, nous avons construit un instrument de mesure, soit une grille d'observation, avec des catégories dérivées de la recension des écrits interactionnistes sur la négociation du sens et les pratiques pédagogiques qui la promeuvent. Nous avons ensuite mis en pratique cette grille afin d'observer empiriquement les classes d'enseignement de langues secondes. Nous avons observé 64 heures de temps d'enseignement partagées entre 8 enseignants en anglais langue seconde et en français langue seconde.

Nos résultats démontrent que les enseignants ont consacré 6,6 % de leur enseignement aux tâches considérées comme les plus propices à la négociation du sens. Par contre, ils ont accordé près de la moitié (47,0 %) de leur enseignement à des tâches considérées comme modérément favorables à la négociation du sens. Environ la même proportion (46,4 %) de temps a été consacrée aux tâches générant très peu ou aucune négociation. Nous avons trouvé des différences mineures entre les groupes selon la langue d'enseignement : dans les classes d'anglais, les tâches sont plus interactives. Les résultats obtenus par notre étude suggèrent la nécessité d'intégrer davantage de tâches interactives dans les classes de langue seconde, étant donné l'effet positif cité dans les recherches en acquisition d'une langue seconde.

Mots clefs : acquisition des langues secondes, négociation du sens, entrant, input, output, tâches pédagogiques, pratiques pédagogiques, interaction, interactionnisme, observation en salle de classe.

ABSTRACT

Research conducted through the paradigm of the interactionist school of thought has provided convincing evidence that a form of discourse known as negotiation for meaning facilitates and is perhaps necessary for second language acquisition to occur. Since the early 1980s, several studies on task types (e.g. Antón, 1999; Doughty & Pica, 1986; Duff, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1985; Gass, Mackey & Ross-Feldman, 2005) have revealed that certain tasks and pedagogical practices promote negotiation for meaning more than others. However, few studies have examined the application of such tasks in the classroom setting.

The present thesis is a qualitative exploratory study of classroom practices in view of their facilitative effects on negotiation for meaning. We constructed an observation scheme with categories derived from interactionist literature on negotiation for meaning and the practices that promote it. We subsequently used the observation instrument to code our observations of video recordings of 8 secondary school ESL and FSL teachers in their natural classroom setting for a total of 64 hours. The data from the observation grid was entered into an Excel spread sheet in which we calculated the percentages of time devoted to each type of task.

Our results revealed that the teachers devoted only 6.6% of class time to tasks and pedagogical practices shown to be the most favorable to negotiation. The teachers dedicated an average of 47% of the class time to tasks considered moderately favorable to negotiation and 46.4% to tasks shown to promote little or no negotiation. We found slight differences between the FSL and the ESL groups we observed, with ESL classes being slightly more interactive in nature. These results suggest that there is a need for integration of more interactive tasks into the present day L2 classrooms.

Key words: second language acquisition, negotiation for meaning, input, output, pedagogical tasks, pedagogical practices, interaction, interactionism, classroom observation.

INTRODUCTION

Up until very recently, the following assumption has strongly influenced notions of teaching and learning: "Learning is the process of accumulating bits of information and isolated skills; the teacher's primary responsibility is to transfer knowledge directly to students; the process of learning and teaching focusing on the interactions between the teacher and individual students" (Brown Lankard, 1998, p. 5). This assumption represents the base of traditional approaches to teaching. However, since the 1970s, interactionist theories on second language acquisition, inspired by socioconstructivist and psycholinguistic schools of thought, have significantly influenced the way we understand second language acquisition.

Research in the tradition of interactionism and sociocultural theory, a theory associated with socioconstructivism, has examined the relationship between social interaction and second language acquisition (Ohta, 1995). Many studies (e.g. Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Antón, 1999; Brooks & Donato, 1994; Donato, 2000; Ellis, 2003; Hall, 1998; Lantolf, 1993; Lightbown & Spada, 1998; Norris, & Ortega, 2003; Ohta, 2000; Ohta, 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 1998) have demonstrated that collaborative classroom activities and teacher-student/student-student activities that favor social interaction create an environment that is conducive to second language acquisition (hereafter SLA).

In the early 1980s, these interactionist advances in SLA research gave rise to an interest in quantifying and measuring the communicative nature of classrooms: A communicative classroom facilitates the interaction necessary for acquisition. These observations were regarded as an important step toward identifying and improving the conditions of the L2 learning environment. As part of this movement, researchers at the Modern Language Centre at the Ontario Institute of Education (Allen & Carroll, 1988; Fazio & Lyster, 1998; Frölich, Spada & Allen, 1985) participated in the creation and validation of the COLT scheme, an observation instrument designed to describe essential features of the second language classrooms from various approaches to L2 teaching (Allen & Swain, 1984). Their aim was to

measure the communicative orientation of the L2 classroom: They were working under the assumption that the more a classroom fosters interaction the more conducive it is to SLA. They were generally successful in terms of measuring this communicative orientation. However, some researchers in this vein (e.g., Allen & Carroll, 1988) found that not all activity deemed "communicative" fostered improved student performance on French proficiency tests. A closer look at their data revealed that the quantity of interaction was not the most important factor for improving results; it was rather a question of the quality of the interaction. They found that the presence of interaction which promotes feedback and negotiation for meaning corresponded to improved results on proficiency tests (Allen & Swain, 1984).

Negotiation for meaning (hereafter NfM), a form of discourse shown to facilitate SLA, has been a controversial phenomenon in SLA research since the early 1980s. Some researchers such as Gass, Mackey & Feldman (2005), Gass (1997), Long (1996) and Pica (1996) claim that NfM not only facilitates SLA but is, in fact, necessary for it to occur. Other researchers (e.g. Foster, 1988; Foster & Ohta, 2005) claim that uncoached NfM rarely occurs in the natural classroom setting and that it is not necessary for SLA. With the exception of the Foster (1998) and the Foster & Ohta (2005) studies, a close review of the SLA literature reveals consistent evidence that NfM does exist both in the natural classroom setting and in the laboratory setting, and that it is clearly facilitative of and quite convincingly necessary for SLA (Doughty & Pica, 1986; Duff, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1985; Gass, 2005).

Given the positive evidence supporting the merits of NfM, we raise the following research question: To what extent are the secondary school French and English second language instructors creating, through the choice of tasks and pedagogical practices, an environment favoring second language acquisition through discourse promoting the negotiation for meaning?

The previously mentioned studies on classroom interaction have proven themselves successful in terms of capturing differences in the communicative orientation of the L2 classroom. However, the results from the Allen and Carroll (1988) study suggest that identifying situations which are favorable to NfM might produce a clearer picture of classroom interaction that is favorable to SLA. To the best of our knowledge, a study that

analyzes the interactivity of classrooms through the identification of tasks and pedagogical practices that have been proven to promote NfM does not exist. Thus, in order to find an answer to our research question, we built an observation instrument with categories derived from the literature within the interactionist school of thought on NfM and the pedagogical practices that facilitate it. We used this instrument to analyze 60 hours of filmed observations taken from 8 FSL and ESL classes in the Montreal area. We hope that this descriptive study will contribute to building a better understanding of the interactive nature of Montreal area L2 classrooms.

In the following chapter (I), we consider the nature of interaction and its role in the SLA process. Then, we operationally define NfM, a type of interaction claimed by many interactionists to be necessary for acquisition. This allows us to outline the tasks and pedagogical practices that have been shown to promote NfM. Finally, as a model for our observation scheme, we present three studies that attempted to measure the interactive and communicative orientation of L2 classrooms. In the methodology Chapter (II), we present a detailed outline of the creation of our measurement instrument, data collection and coding procedures. Chapter III offers a systematic presentation of our results followed by a discussion of these results in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER I

THE INTERACTIONIST APPROACH TO SLA:

NfM IN THE L2 CLASSROOM

We position this present study within the interactionist approach to SLA. Interactionists recognize the relationship between social and cognitive processes involved in any act of communication. From such a position, they are able to recognize that learning which occurs within the context of this interplay between social and cognitive processes significantly enhances second language acquisition. In this chapter, we first briefly outline the nature of interaction (1.1) followed by a specific look at its role within SLA (1.2). Secondly, we operationally define negotiation for meaning (1.3) and consider how it fits into the SLA process (1.3.1). Then, we present several studies that illustrate how various types of tasks and pedagogical practices facilitate or hinder NfM (1.4). Finally, our focus moves from studies on the nature of tasks and pedagogical practices to studies that target understanding how they are used in the L2 classroom (1.5). We highlight three studies where the objective was to describe the communicative orientation of various classroom settings.

1.1 Interaction

Even the most cursory look at what seems to be a simple interaction between two speakers begins to reveal the complex interplay between the social and cognitive processes

involved in the acquisition of a second language. For example, speaker A wants to send a message to speaker B. She will begin by assessing the physical, social and psychological context in which the act of communication will take place. Many social and psychological factors will have an effect on the outcome of the message to be formulated: the point of view of the participants involved in the interaction; their value systems; the power dynamics that exist between the participants; and the symbols of cultural capital that are present in the environment (Pekarek-Doehler, 2000, p. 17). Hence, Speaker A will formulate her message differently depending on whether she is speaking with a colleague at work or a friend at the neighborhood pub. Simultaneously, she will put herself into the mind of her interlocutor, taking into consideration his social status (profession, sex, age, origins) in order to determine how to tailor the form and tone of the message so that it will be perceived and interpreted according to the desired outcome (Arditty, 2004). All the while, she will choose words, both grammatical and content in nature, which are associated with referential images from the physical environment. She will instantaneously speak these words in the correct order, respecting morphosyntactic and semantic laws. Speaker B will hear the string of words and, while considering the same contextual factors, simultaneously begin to decode the grammatical elements and references to images from the physical world that correspond to the words he hears in the message. His comprehension of the message is not dependant on a simple understanding of each individual word perceived. Rather, it is a synthesis of all linguistic and environmental elements present in the context of the act of communication. According to Arditty (2004), communication takes place on several levels and in a multi-modal fashion. The message receiver does not need to understand all the words nor their sequence. Instead, he must focus on the intentions behind the act of communication (Arditty, 2004). Bange (2005) underscores the importance of sociological and psychological factors when he asserts that "communication happens not when the message receiver recognizes the linguistic structures, but when he makes, judging from the linguistic structures and his interpretation of the context in which the communication takes place, inferences which allow him to identify what he thinks are the intentions of his interlocutor[1]" (Bange, 2005, p. 22).

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[1] Personal Translation: «La communication fonctionne non quand le récepteur a reconnu la signification des structures linguistiques, mais quand il fait, à partir de ces structures et à partir de son interprétation du contexte de l'énonciation, des inférences qui lui permettent d'identifier ce qu'il pense être l'intention du locuteur.»

Before producing his response, speaker B will repeat the same process of interpretation, inference, and linguistic construction that speaker A did in the preceding utterance. This perspective illustrates the interplay that occurs between social and cognitive processes during an act of communication.

Such an environmental context becomes even more important when acts of communication happen without the use of words. Consider the following scenario: There are two people in a room. The window is open and the room is cold. Person A simply looks at person B and gestures that she is cold while pointing at the window. Person B interprets this non-verbal message in the following way: "Please close the window. I'm cold." This exchange is another example that illustrates Bange's (2005) claim that production of meaning during an act of communication can only be seen as an interactional process, a co-production inseparable from the context in which it takes place. Since there are no words involved in such an exchange, the meaning of the message is derived entirely from the context.

Such simple interactions are phenomenal because they happen instantaneously without much controlled thought. Within SLA, one must learn how to perform these complex tasks simultaneously in order to communicate effectively in a second language. In other words, acquiring a second language is not limited to learning the lexicon and the grammar of a given language. At a certain level, the language learning process must encourage the learner to reorganize his thoughts according to a new semantic and syntactic system (Bange, 2005). And, most importantly, he must learn to become a participant in the social practices of his linguistic environment (Pekarek-Doehler, 2000). From this position, form and meaning are inextricably linked to the social context in which an act of communication takes place. In light of this relationship, one can conclude that language teachers achieve ideal learning conditions for L2 acquisition within the locus of interaction through conversation.

In the following section we present an overview of the Interactionist position on second language acquisition.

1.2 Interactionism in SLA: Three Positions

Interactionists recognize the complex interplay between social and cognitive processes involved in any act of communication (Capocchi-Ribeiro, 2002). Their perspective of social interaction in SLA is multi-faceted. For example, Silver (2000) highlights three orientations within the interactionist perspective: input orientation, output orientation, negotiation orientation. Within the *input orientation*, researchers such as Krashen (1985) assert that *comprehensible input*, input containing forms and structures just beyond the learners current level of competence in the language, is necessary and sufficient for SLA and that output and NfM are not necessary (Silver, 2000). Researchers within the *output orientation* such as Swain and Lapkin (1995) claim that in addition to comprehensible input, output remains beneficial and perhaps even necessary for acquisition (Silver, 2000). They assert that in producing the L2 the learner will occasionally become aware of a linguistic problem. As a result he will modify his output in an attempt to resolve the problem (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). The third orientation posits that "negotiation meets all of the proposed conditions (input, output, and attention to L2 form) in ways that are beneficial for SLA" (Silver, 2000, p. 374). Researchers from this position claim that NfM assists comprehension, brings salience to form-meaning relationships, provides learners with feedback, and brings about morphosyntactic complexity of NS input and learner output (Pica, 1996).

This present study is situated within the "negotiation orientation" of the interactionist approach to SLA. From such a position, we recognize that acquisition occurs through social interaction which acts as a nexus of interplay between social and cognitive processes (Capocchi-Ribeiro, 2002). Certain types of social interaction that favor these processes, such as NfM, facilitate SLA (Gass 1997; Pica, 1994; Pica 1996; Schmidt, 1990; Silver, 2000). Thus, pedagogical practices that generate NfM could be considered as necessary contributions that help create conditions in the classroom for SLA to occur (Antón, 1999; Gass, 1997). Before analyzing these types of classroom activity, we must first operationally define NfM.

1.3 Negotiation for Meaning in SLA

Input, or the language the learner is exposed to in the environment, plays an integral role within all three of the orientations previously outlined. The very nature of social interaction makes it a rich source of this input. In general, when communication flows well, input "goes unnoticed until abnormal cases are encountered of beginners trying to learn from the incomprehensible language samples originally intended for mature speakers" (Long, 1996, p. 414). From an interactionist perspective, these communication interruptions are crucial in the SLA process because they signal to the learner a gap in his linguistic knowledge (Gass, 1997). In other words, they indicate to the learner that there is something to be learned at which point he can bring his attention to the new material. At this critical juncture, communication can either break down, resulting in a failure of acquisition of the new material, or through NfM, the interlocutors can work through the breakdown until the new material has been modified to the point where it is understood by the learner (Gass, 1997). Pica (1994) defines NfM as "the modification of interaction that occurs when learners and their interlocutors anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in message comprehension." Through open questions or modification of previous utterances learners modify input in an effort to render comprehensible the incomprehensible input that interrupted the communication (Pica, 1996). In essence, the interlocutors are negotiating the product of their interaction until that product becomes comprehensible and thus primed for intake, the subset of the input to which the learner paid attention (Van Patten, 1996). This naturally occurring stage of the acquisition process is crucial in that it is the process through which new linguistic knowledge is identified, primed for intake, and integrated into the learner's linguistic system (Gass, 1997).

Gass and Varonis (1985) developed a model of NfM containing four primes: *Trigger, Indicator, Response, and Reaction to Response*. (Gass & Varonis, 1985). The *trigger* stimulates an incomplete understanding on the part of the hearer: "I *have* twenty years." At

this point one of the interlocutors *indicates* through confirmation checks[2], comprehension checks[3] or clarification requests[4] that the understanding was incomplete: "Excuse me?" This can be followed by a *response* where the original speaker attempts to reformulate or correct the misunderstanding: "Oh, uh.... I'm twenty." Finally, the hearer might provide a *reaction to the response*: "Oh, you're twenty! We're the same age!" In this particular case, the non-native speaker (NNS) receives though his output a disconfirmation of his hypothesis about the linguistic form used to speak about one's age. According to the Gass Model (1997), he was able to self-correct, so the new linguistic form "Oh, you're twenty" will likely become intake, be reintegrated into his language system, and retested through output in subsequent interactions.

Some SLA researchers (e.g. Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1996; Schmidt, 1990) claim, for a variety of reasons, that NfM is a necessary condition for acquisition to occur. The most commonly stated reason is that it is the process which makes the linguistic elements necessary for SLA available. These elements may be largely lexical in nature. For example,

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[2] Long (1980) defines *comprehension checks* as "any expression by an NS (native-speaker) designed to establish whether that speaker's preceding utterance(s) had been understood by the interlocutor. These are typically formed by tag questions, by repetitions of all or part of the same speaker's preceding utterance(s) uttered with rising questions intonation, or by utterances like *Do you understand?* Which check comprehension by the interlocutor.

[3] Long (1980) defines *confirmation checks* as "any expression by which the NS immediately following an utterance by the interlocutor had which was designed to elicit confirmation that the utterance had been correctly understood or correctly heard *by the speaker*. Thus *the man* following *Next to the man* by the other speaker is a confirmation check. Confirmation checks are always formed by rising intonation questions, with or without a tag (*the man?* or *the man, right?* They always involve repetition of all or part of the interlocutor's preceding utterance. They are answerable by simple confirmation (*Yes, Mmhm*) in the event that the preceding utterance was correctly understood or heard, and require no new information form the interlocutor."

[4] Long (1980) defines *clarification requests* as "any expression by an NS designed to elicit clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance(s). Clarification requests are mostly formed by questions, but may consist of wh- or yes-no questions (unlike confirmation checks) as well as uninverted intonation and tag questions, for they require that the interlocutor either furnish new information or recode information previously given. Unlike confirmation checks, in other words, there is not presupposition on the speaker's part that he or she has understood or heard the interlocutor's previous utterance. While questions are the most frequent for of clarification request in these data, they are also effected by statements like *I don't understand*, and imperatives such as *Try again*."

while negotiating the meaning of the word "bird," a learner might learn other lexical items such as "flies and eat(s) seeds." However, in addition to making lexical items available to the learner, NfM can also raise learners' awareness of language, and push them to focus on form (Long, 1996). Following the previous example, the learner would learn the various ways of describing objects such as a bird.

Given the previous examples, what are the implications for SLA? Long (1996) claims that both comprehensibility and complexity of input[5] are necessary for SLA. He also claims that, by nature, interactionally modified input preserves semantic richness while input modified outside of interaction tends to dilute semantic richness (Long, 1996). Thus, we assert that NfM is a source of the semantically complex and comprehensible input necessary for SLA. In a similar vein, this negotiated complex and comprehensible input derives its meaning from the social context in which the interaction takes place.

Returning to our discourse about the importance of social factors in interaction, Arditty (2004) and Bange (2005) would likely argue that events of NfM represent some of the richest opportunities for language learning because learners are learning new linguistic elements within the context in which their meaning is derived. For example, a learner might learn from a vocabulary list the meaning of the word *bird*: a small mammal with wings. However, in the context of a conversation he might learn that this word has other meanings. For example, while listening to an individual talk about a recent altercation where somebody "flipped him the bird" he might learn through NfM within this social context that "the bird" can also represent the middle finger that one holds up as a sign of anger and aggression. Acknowledging that NfM provides complex and comprehensible input where meaning is derived within the context of the interaction, this paper considers NfM as the most favorable means through which the language learner fulfills the social and cognitive needs that are essential to SLA.

In the next section we will outline an act of NfM within the context of the acquisition process.

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[5] Input must be comprehensible to the learner but complex enough to advance the development of the learner's L2.

1.3.1 Negotiation within the SLA Process

In her influential interactionist model of second language acquisition, Susan Gass (1997) differentiates between a series of processes (input, intake, integration, output) that play a determinate role in NfM.

According to Schmidt (1990), and to a slightly lesser extent, Gass (1997), before NfM can happen, input that consists of new linguistic knowledge must be noticed (Schmidt, 1990; Gass 1997). *Noticing* refers to the moment when the learner pays attention to a particular linguistic element in the input (Schmidt, 1990). This process of attention is crucial because it permits the learner to notice input that does not figure into his interlanguage (Gass, 1997). Studies on the effect of instruction show that the NfM process serves to promote noticing because the attention that a learner pays to the disjoint between his present knowledge and the new linguistic knowledge during a NfM event renders it more salient (Long, 1996). The incomprehensibility of the noticed input triggers an NfM event between the learner and his interlocutor (Gass, 1997). Once the incomprehensible input has been noticed and comprehended through NfM it is primed for intake and integration into the learner's memory (Gass, 1997). The following excerpt, taken from Gass, Makey and Feldman (2005), illustrates a moment of rich classroom interaction incorporating noticing followed by an NfM event. In this instance, the end result is comprehension of the Spanish word *parejas*. In this particular case, the trigger is followed by a clarification request.

Learner 1: ¿Cuántas personas tienes?
How man people do you have?
Learner 2: (counting) Trece.
Thirteen.
Learner 1: ¿Trece? Tengo uh diecisiete... ¿Cuántos **parejas**?
Thirteen? I have uh seventeen... How many **pairs**?
Learner 2: ¿Parejas de amores? ← clarification request
***Pairs** of lovers?*
Learner 1: ¿Qué es **parejas**?
*What is **parejas**?*

Learner 2: **Pairs**.

Learner 1: Oh. ← confirmation of comprehensible input

The word *parejas* becomes *intake* (the subset of the input that the learners paid attention to) and is thus available for possible integration into the learners' interlanguage at which point she will create hypotheses about the meaning of the new linguistic element (Gass, 1997).

In the last stage of the process the learner produces *output* using the new linguistic element. Swain and Lapkin (1995) show that this output serves two general purposes: Production of output forces the learner to move from semantic processing (common in noticing, NfM and intake) to syntactic processing: The interlocutor's response to the output serves to verify the learner's hypotheses about the form and meaning of the new knowledge (Swain and Lapkin, 1995). A negative response on the part of a speaker's interlocutor concerning the hypotheses could trigger further NfM and more modification of the learner's interlanguage (Gass, 1997).

In summary, NfM can be seen as playing an integral role in the acquisition process. It provides the new incomprehensible input (new linguistic knowledge) which triggers noticing. The new information is negotiated until it becomes comprehensible and prepared for intake into the learner's memory. Finally, NfM provides opportunities for learners to test hypotheses about the newly acquired knowledge through interlocutor response to output. In the next section, we will look at various task types and interactional patterns that have been shown to facilitate NfM within the SLA model we just depicted.

1.4 Pedagogical Practices that Facilitate Negotiation

We established in the previous section that our position is that NfM is a necessary condition for SLA. We also established that NfM is closely linked to the social context in which it takes place. In this section, we will attempt to illustrate how the social context of the classroom can either facilitate or hinder SLA. We will present some studies that demonstrate how pedagogical practices, such as task selection and teacher-centered versus student-

centered activity, can be said to have an impact on NfM thus affecting the conditions of acquisition. An understanding of these aforementioned practices will help us identify actual classroom situations that are conducive to acquisition. Before discussing these tasks and pedagogical practices, let us first define a few key terms.

For the present study the term *pedagogical practices* is a term referring to the most general manner in which a given teacher teaches. For example, choosing to have students do seatwork for an entire class would be considered a pedagogical practice. Pedagogical practices are divided into to two categories: *student-centered* and *teacher-centered activity*. These terms refer to the participant organization of a particular task. *Student-centered* activity refers to individual seat work or tasks were students are working together in pairs or groups. Teacher involvement in the interaction of the task is limited. Conversely, within *teacher-centered activity,* the teacher is the center of the interaction of the task. Finally, for the purposes of the present study we present a very general definition of the notion of a *task*. The term *task* refers to the individual activities that occur in the classroom. Tasks have a beginning and an end and generally are executed in order to achieve a specific goal. This term ranges from representing a situation where students are working in groups on a worksheet or an event where the teacher is explaining a grammatical rule on the blackboard.

1.4.1 Task Types

In this section, we look at various dual-type task classifications: optional exchange versus required exchange tasks, convergent versus divergent tasks, one-way versus two-way tasks. *Required-exchange* and *two-way tasks* necessitate an exchange of information in order to execute the task, while *optional-exchange* and *one-way tasks* do not call for this exchange. *Convergent tasks* are designed so that students must collaborate in order to attain a common goal, while *divergent tasks* create a situation where students work toward independent objectives. The studies outlined in this section generally demonstrate that tasks that require an exchange of information and that require learners to work collaboratively to solve problems generate more NfM.

Gass and Varonis (1985) examined NfM in one-way versus two-way tasks involving NNS-NNS dyads. As briefly mentioned above, within a one-way task all participants hold the

same information, thus an exchange of information among participants is not necessary for the execution of the task. Conversely, within a two-way task each participant possesses necessary information that the other participants do not have. Thus, they must exchange information in order to complete the task. They observed nine NNS, intermediate-level adult ESL students. Surprisingly, they found that one-way tasks produced more NfM. They explain that their counterintuitive results were probably influenced by the types of tasks they used: 1) The one-way task was actually a required information exchange task similar to the two-way task used in the Doughty and Pica study (1986), which will be discussed later; 2) For the two-way task, the participants entered the activity with a shared set of assumptions about the outcome. This situation generated less NfM (Gass and Varonis, 1985). Given this explanation, we maintain that two-way tasks generate more NfM, and are thus conducive to SLA.

In a subsequent study, Duff (1986) studied the effects of divergent and convergent tasks on NNS-NNS dyadic interaction. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, divergent tasks create a situation where each of the interlocutors has an independent goal. Debates and oral presentations are characteristic of this type of task. On the other hand, with convergent tasks interlocutors have a common goal such as solving a problem. Two-way and required-exchange tasks are inherently convergent by nature because students must share information in order to attain the goal of the activity. One-way tasks, on the other hand, can be either convergent or divergent. With one-way convergent tasks, students have all the same information and work together to attain a common goal, such as a writing exercise. With one-way divergent tasks, students have the same information but independent goals. She examined the interactions within four dyads, each one composed of one Chinese speaker and one Japanese Speaker. The students were enrolled in classes at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She found that the two types of tasks produced about the same number of total words during the activity. However, convergent tasks generated about twice as many total turns and subject turns than did divergent tasks. Convergent tasks also generated about twice as many confirmation and collaboration checks, and questions than divergent tasks (Duff, 1986). Their collaborative nature led the author to claim that convergent tasks create more opportunities for NfM and thus are useful vehicles of instruction and language practice in second language classrooms (Duff, 1986).

The same year, Doughty and Pica (1986) compared optional-exchange and required-exchange tasks. They examined the NNS-NNS dyadic interaction of adult students randomly chosen from six intermediate level ESL classes. They found that, during student-centered group work, required-exchange tasks generate an increase of 122% in instances of input modification compared to tasks where there is no information exchange, such as tasks where individuals express their opinion (Doughty and Pica, 1986, p. 321). The required-exchange activities encourage the participation of all students because each student possesses a part of the information needed to complete the entire task (Doughty and Pica, 1986). Long (1996) underlines how the characteristics of the information structure generated by two-way or required-exchange tasks promote NfM:

> It appears that the informational structure of two-way tasks obliges NSs and NNSs to negotiate for meaning, and through the negotiation process, to make what they say comprehensible to their interlocutors. *Negotiation for meaning* is the process in which, in an effort to communicate, learners and competent speakers provide and interpret signals of their own and their interlocutors' perceived comprehension, thus provoking adjustments to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all three, until an acceptable level of understanding is achieved. (Long, 1996. p. 418)

Doughty and Pica's findings corroborated a previous study by Long (1983) where he found more modified input in two-way tasks than one-way tasks.

In a more recent study, Foster (1998) studied the effects of optional and required information exchange tasks in both small group and dyadic situations in a natural classroom setting. She studied twenty-one ESL intermediate level students in a British municipal college. Subjects came from a variety of L1 backgrounds with an average age of 21. All but two were female. The subjects participated in four tasks in both the small group and dyadic situations: two optional-exchange tasks, two required-exchange tasks. The authors found that overall the dyad setting, coupled with the obligation to exchange information, was the best for language production, NfM and modified output (Foster, 1998).

The results of Foster (1998) must be considered with caution because the dyad setting appeared to be a stronger independent variable than task type. Evidence of NfM did not significantly differ between the two types of tasks in the small group setting. Foster explains

that while in the dyad setting, both parties are forced to participate in the task, the researchers found that the group setting made it easier for more timid students to remain silent or contribute very little. In addition, after studying her participants in a natural classroom setting, Foster (1998) claims that the previous studies' experimental settings may have been more formal causing participants to pay more attention to form and meaning, thus negotiate more. Thus, the low numbers of NfM events in her study might be due to the classroom setting where the mood is more informal, and where too many attempts to negotiate might be seen as frustrating and slowing down the process of the task. In this light, students might adopt a "pretend and hope" strategy, in which case they wait to see if the misunderstanding will be cleared up in subsequent exchanges. In summary, while Foster's study did not observe more NfM in the small group setting, she noted that the dyadic setting where there was a need to exchange information significantly stimulated NfM.

Foster and Otha (2005) conducted a subsequent study aiming to measure the effect of tasks on NfM. They studied two groups of L2 learners: 20 intermediate ESL students from a variety of L1 backgrounds at an adult college in London; 19 American college students studying Japanese at an American university. Two similar information exchange tasks were used requiring students to interview one another using a list of prompt questions. Again, Foster & Ohta concluded that they "scarcely see any evidence at all of learners interrupting the flow of the interaction to see what their conversation is about" (Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 424). They observed however "learners repairing and rewording their own utterances, and assisting each other to both find the right form and to express meaning" (Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 424). In light of these observations, the researchers claim that NfM is not a central part of SLA, but a subset of a larger category of conversational moves that learners use in the process of interacting with other students during interactive tasks.

In response to the Foster (1998) and Foster & Ohta (2005), Gass, Mackey & Ross-Fieldman (2005) conducted a study to counter claims that NfM is scarcely observed during one-way and two-way task execution, and that studies conducted in a laboratory setting are not providing a clear picture of what is happening in the L2 classroom. They studied 55 women and 19 men with an average age of 19.2. The students were enrolled in third semester Spanish classes. They wanted to see how task-based interaction in the classroom compared to task-based interaction in the laboratory setting. They also wanted to find out how different

tasks influence interaction in classrooms and laboratories. They used one optional information exchange task and two required information exchange task. The researchers coded for NfM and Language Related Moves[6] (LRE). They discovered that in fact there were very few differences in the laboratory and classrooms setting for the interactional features they examined. The also found that task type did indeed influence the frequency of NfM events. Two-way tasks produced significantly more NfM. Gass, Mackey & Ross-Fieldman (2005) conclude that according to their data and the data of other researchers, negotiation and other forms of interaction are "alive and well" in L2 classrooms.

Tasks are only one component of the pedagogical practices that shape classroom interaction. The manner in which language teachers interact with the class or lead classroom discussions can also either hinder or foster NfM. In the following section we will discuss teacher-centered interactional patterns that have been shown to generate more NfM thus facilitating SLA.

1.4.2 Teacher-Centered Interactive Patterns

It is a non-disputed fact in the SLA literature that group work generates more NfM than teacher-centered interaction. As Doughty and Pica (1986) put it, "individual students produce more input and have more input directed toward them in group than in teacher-fronted interaction" (p. 316). However, Antón (1999) highlighted that, in fact, in language classes, a significant amount of time can be devoted to teacher-fronted presentations of new material. Given this reality, in an effort to determine what types of teacher-centered classroom discourse are most favorable to NfM, Antón compared the teacher-learner discourse in two types of classroom interaction situations: teacher-centered and student-centered. In her study, Antón (1999) looked at traditional and proleptic instructional approaches to presenting grammar, corrective feedback and turn allocation. Antón defines *proleptic instruction* as instruction through 'responsive dialogue' that assists students in hypothesis construction.

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[6] Swain and Lapkin (1998) define an LRE as "any part of a dialogue in which students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or other- or self-correct"(p. 70).

Within this approach, teachers "integrate given explanations with demonstration while placing a central role in the learner's participation in the instructional activity" (Antón, 1999, p. 308). She highlights the approaches that generate the most NfM. She found that proleptic instruction facilitates significantly more NfM than traditional teacher-fronted instruction.

1.4.2.1 Teacher-Centered and Student-Centered Interaction

Antón (1999) found that in traditional classes, where the teacher acts as the disseminator of information to passive students, there was very little NfM. On the other hand, she illustrates how proleptic or dialogic teaching can generate NfM. In her analysis of the classroom discourse she used a typology of six scaffolding functions developed by Wood, Brunner, & Ross (1976) to help identify events of NfM:

1. Recruitment: enlisting the learner's interest in the task
2. Reduction in degrees of freedom: simplification of the task
3. Direction maintenance: Keeping the learner motivated and in pursuit of the goal
4. Marking critical features: highlighting certain relevant features and pointing out discrepancies between what has been produced and the ideal solution
5. Frustration control: reducing stress and frustration during problem solving
6. Demonstration: modeling an idealized form of the act to be performed by completing the act to be performed or by explicating the learner's partial solution (Wood et al., 1976 p. 98)

In what follows is a summary of two episodes that illustrate interactional dynamics in both the proleptic and traditional instructional settings.

The following is an outline of an episode of proleptic instruction illustrated in the Antón (1999) study. In an effort to teach the agreement of the past participle in a passé composé construction the instructor wrote several examples on the board. She then asked the student "what they noticed?" about the sentences. The nature of this question invited the entire class to participate (scaffolding function 1). As students provided their observations the instructor maintained their involvement confirming the observations while continuing to push the learners' reflection (scaffolding functions 3 and 4): "Yes, the verb *être* is used. But, what else

do you notice?" The instructor supported the students until one student noticed the 's' at the end of the past participle and deduced that it agreed with the plural subject (scaffolding function 3). At this point the instructor explains, as confirmation of the hypothesis that was negotiated by the students, the grammatical rule concerning the use of *être* and the agreement of the participle (scaffolding function 6). In this particular episode the teacher guided the students using questions that promote problem solving while they collectively negotiated the new grammatical rule. The interactional patterns in this episode, which can be characterized as NfM, stand in sharp contrast to her observations of an Italian class where the teacher used a traditional approach to grammar instruction.

In the second episode, the instructor presented the rules for the use of possessive adjectives in Italian. He only asked translation questions for two words that he used to illustrate the grammar rule. In this situation where "the role of the learner is that of a passive receptacle of knowledge imparted by the teacher," Antón noted little or no evidence of NfM (Antón, 1999, p. 309). The questions did not stimulate interaction as they did in the previous episode.

These examples illustrate how, during teacher-fronted grammatical presentations, language teachers can create conditions that either hinder or facilitate a type of collective NfM. Along these same lines, teachers can have an impact on the creation of these conditions during events of corrective feedback.

In this chapter, we have thus far outlined pedagogical practices that have been shown to generate NfM, a form of discourse thought by many researchers to be necessary for SLA. For the present study we are interested in the presence of these pedagogical practices in secondary school L2 classrooms. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no previous descriptive classroom studies of this nature. Thus, we propose to create our own observation scheme with categories derived from the present literature review. In order to find a model for our instrument we now turn to some empirical and descriptive studies that were designed to measure the communicative or analytical nature of second language classrooms (e.g. Allen & Carroll, 1988; Fazio & Lyster, 1998; Frölich, Spada & Allen, 1985). We chose these specific studies because they were conducted with the COLT, a scheme designed to measure the communicative orientation of L2 classrooms: Similarly, our scheme to measure

favorableness to NfM focuses on the interactive nature of classroom environments. In the following section, we will briefly outline these studies.

1.5 Descriptive Studies of Classroom Practices

In this section we cite three studies of classroom practices (e.g. Allen & Carroll, 1988; Fazio & Lyster, 1998; Frölich, Spada & Allen, 1985) that were performed using the observation instrument known as the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) (Allen, Frölich & Spada, 1984). This instrument was designed to describe essential features of the second language classroom which vary according to different L2 teaching methods ranging from communicative to traditional (Allen & Swain, 1984). Its categories were derived from the literature on the communicative approach and acted as indicators of communication. The instrument was divided into two principal sections. The macro section collected information on the types of activities that were employed in the classroom: interactive organization of the participants[7], modality,[8] activity content[9], and support materials[10]. The micro section of the observation grid analyzed classroom activities at the level of verbal interaction. For the purposes of this study, we will focus on results obtained from the macro section of the instrument. The COLT developers hoped that their instrument would help establish the communicative orientation of specific classrooms (Allen & Swain, 1984).

Soon after its conception, Frölich, Spada and Allen (1985) conducted a pilot study of the COLT observation scheme. They did not intend to evaluate L2 classes with the instrument. They simply wanted to determine if it would be capable of capturing differences in the communicative orientation of various L2 classrooms. Thus, they selected 13 grade 7 classes from four different second language programs in Ontario, Canada: Core French, Extended

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[7] *Participant organization* refers to the interactive dynamics: individual work, group work, class work, etc.

[8] *Modality* refers to the targeted language features: reading, writing, speaking, listening.

[9] The activity content category was designed to gather information of the nature of the teaching content: authentic materials versus decontextualized materials.

[10] *Support materials* refers to the materials used to executes a given activity: texts, audio-visual, etc.

French, French Immersion, and ESL. They had pre-established ideas about the communicative nature of each one of these programs, French Immersion being the most communicative and ESL being the least communicative. Each class was observed twice ranging form 30 to 100 minutes. Simultaneously, two observers coded the macro section (the section on class activities) of the observation grid in real time. The class was tape-recorded, and the coder subsequently coded the micro section of the grid in a laboratory. Their results did indeed correspond to their expectations. For example, 43.02% of the ESL classes were characterized by individual seat work compared to 19.05% of the Immersion classes. On the other hand, 60.90% of the Immersion classes were occupied by the teacher interacting with individual students or the entire class compared to 21.28% of the ESL class. The researchers believed that these types of results validated their instrument because, for example, individual seat work is inherently less communicative than teacher interaction with individual students or the entire class. The remainder of their results followed the same current.

In a subsequent study, Allen and Carroll (1988) selected 8 core French classes at the 11th grade level across the Toronto metropolitan area. The classes were selected with the help of school board personnel so as to have a wide range of teaching practices. Prior to observations, the researchers administered a series of pre-tests of French proficiency. Secondly, in an effort to rank each class on a continuum from *experiential* to *analytic,*[11] each class was observed at four points throughout the school year for periods of 40 to 70 minutes using the COLT scheme. As predicted, the classes fell at different places along the continuum. They observed that while the classes were spread out across the continuum, there were no classes that could be considered exclusively experiential or analytical. Finally, the teachers responded to a questionnaire at the end of the observations. They were asked to identify, from a list of different activities ranging from communicative to analytical, the types of activities they commonly used in their classes. The researchers found that the responses from the questionnaire corresponded to their findings from the COLT observations.

At the end of the Allen and Carroll (1988) study, while analyzing the results from the French proficiency post-test, they surprisingly found that there were no significant differences between the experiential and the analytical classes. However, they did find that

[11] *Experiential* is more communicative in nature while *analytic* is more traditional in nature.

the group that made the most progress and the group that made the least progress throughout the year were both experiential classes. To explain these counterintuitive results they cite Ellis (1984): "Communicatively rich interaction which affords opportunities for the negotiation of meaning may aid development, where more structured forms of interaction do not" (Allen & Carroll, 1988, p. 61). In their class profiles they noted that the classes that made the most progress engaged in much communicatively rich interaction involving feedback and negotiation for meaning, while the low-scoring class worked on more activities involving less spontaneous discourse (Allen & Carroll, 1988). These findings directly concern the present study. They suggest that an analysis of classroom activity favorable to NfM might be more effective in terms of identifying communicative and perhaps acquisition rich learning environments.

Finally, in more a recent study, Fazio and Lyster (1998) observed nearly 60 hours of both French submersion (28.4 hours) and French immersion (30.5) classes in the Montreal area using the COLT scheme. Their aim was to determine the similarities and differences in the type of language arts instruction received by L2 learners of French in both the submersion context of the French-language schools and the immersion context of the English language-schools" (Fazio & Lyster, 1998). They did indeed find clear differences between the two programs. As predicted, the immersion context was significantly more experiential than the submersion context.

These studies using the COLT scheme were undeniably successful in terms of capturing differences in the communicative orientation of the L2 classroom. Their success indicates that it is possible to quantify and measure the extent to which a given classroom environment facilitates or hinders certain types of interaction. As we established in this literature review, NfM is the type of interaction that we consider to be the most facilitative of the SLA process. This assertion was corroborated by the Allen and Carroll study (1988). When examining their field notes, they found that among the experiential classes it was the classes where there was the most evidence of feedback and NfM that made the most progress between the pre- and post-proficiency tests. While the COLT scheme successfully identified interaction-rich environments, it did not highlight interaction characterized by feedback and NfM. We thus propose to build an observation scheme where the categories are derived from the literature on NfM in order to analyze our data from the Montreal area schools.

In the following section we will outline the creation of our observation grid followed by a detailed description of our method of collecting, organizing and analyzing the data.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Let us return to our research question: To what extent are the French and English second language instructors in public and private secondary school systems creating, through the choice of tasks and pedagogical practices, an environment favoring discourse favorable to NfM? As established in the theoretical framework, NfM is considered by many researchers as important, and perhaps necessary, for second language acquisition to occur (Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1996). We highlighted certain types of tasks along with certain participant organization situations that have been shown to promote NfM. For example, two-way tasks executed in pairs and small groups and convergent one-way tasks executed in pairs generate the most NfM while divergent one-way tasks and individual tasks generate the least NfM. In addition to considering task types, we examined different types of teacher-fronted activity with regard to NfM. Antón (1999) demonstrated that interactive teacher-centered activity generated more NfM than what she considered traditional teaching. Given the results of the aforementioned studies, we naturally deduce that a maximum use of two-way tasks, convergent one-way tasks executed in pairs, and interactive instruction in the classroom where the majority of instruction is in the L2 would create favorable conditions for language acquisition.

We attempted to find a response to our research question through the direct observation of English as a second language (ESL) and French as a second language (FSL) classes. These observations came from the Simard & Jean corpus (2007) composed of approximately 8 hours of videotaped observation of each of 8 teachers totaling 63.8 hours of observation time. The filmed observations were subsequently analyzed using an observation grid. Details of

the participant selection (2.1), the measurement instrument (observation grid) (2.2), data collection (2.3), coding procedures (2.4), coding and interrater agreement (2.5) and analysis (2.6) will be outlined in the following sections.

2.1 Participants Selection and Place of Observation

The Simard & Jean corpus (2007), targeting various school districts on and around the Island of Montreal, Quebec, was created from January of 2006 to May of 2007. Once the approvals for each district were obtained, researchers and research assistants began following leads and making cold calls to schools in the region in an effort to find 8 second language teachers willing to participate in 8 hours of in-class observation. These calls were also part of a drive to find 4000 students willing to participate in a questionnaire designed to gather information on their opinions about learning grammar. The research assistants most frequently had to rely on school secretaries and pedagogical advisors to transmit messages to the targeted teachers: Given the nature of their work, teachers are often not available by telephone, and many teachers did not regularly respond to email correspondence.

Once initial contact was made, the research assistants set up a meeting with each individual teacher before the filming to explain the procedure. The researchers identified themselves as university researchers interested in pedagogical practices in the classroom. They however took great care to not divulge information alluding to what they were intending to measure or observe. Only practical details were given: how the filming would happen, where the camera would be positioned, which classes would be filmed, how frequently the classes would be filmed. During this initial meeting, attempts were made to schedule the first observations.

8 teachers were selected: 4 teachers of English as a second language (ESL) and 4 teachers of French as a second language (FSL). Seven were women. Equally among our principle

criteria was finding teachers of both regular[12] and enriched[13] classes. Among the teachers, 2 taught regular classes, 4 taught enriched and one taught one class of each. Unfortunately, since the teacher questionnaire collected at the end of the observations was anonymous, we do not have any information on their individual educational backgrounds, teaching experience, nor opinions about teaching.

Due to the length of the class periods some of the teachers were observed for slightly more than 8 hours. We did not want to cut our observations in the middle of a class period because this would have given a false depiction of the balance of activities during a typical period: Classes frequently end with a short period of teacher-centered class-business activity. On the other hand, there were three teachers observed for less than 8 hours. This was due to the poor sound quality of the recordings. See Table 2.1 for details on our sample population.

[12] Core/regular classes are part of the regular language program where the aim is to help students learn to communicate in their second language in order to meet their needs and pursue their interest in a rapidly evolving society (Ministère de l'éducation, 2003).

[13] The enriched program is designed for students who are equipped to go beyond the core/regular program. Students in this program have generally completed an intensive program in elementary school or have had other enriching language experiences. The elementary school intensive program offers students 300 hours per year of language instruction as opposed to 30 hours per year in the regular program (Ministère de l'éducation, 2003).

Table 2.1

Breakdown of Teachers and Classes Observed[14]

Teacher's Name	Time observed	Sex	Language	Level
J	7.5 hours	F	FSL	4R
L	6.3 hours	F	FSL	1E
C	8.75 hours	F	FSL	2E
P	8.75 hours	F	FSL	2E
B	8.75 hours	F	ESL	1E
D	3.75 hours	F	ESL	3E
D	5 hours	F	ESL	3R
S	7.5 hours	F	ESL	2R
F	7.5 hours	M	ESL	3R
Total Hours	63.8 hours			

In the following section we turn to a detailed description of the measurement instrument designed to facilitate the content analysis of our observations.

2.2 The Measurement Instrument: The Observation Grid

In the following sub-sections, we will outline the creation and the piloting of the observation grid, followed by a detailed illustration of each category of the final grid. A copy of the final grid can be found in Annex 3.

[14] The Quebec secondary school system goes from Secondary 1 to Secondary 5. Secondary 1 is the equivalent of 7th grade in the standard American system where students are on average 12 to 13 years old. After each academic year, students move up to the next level finishing at Secondary 5, the equivalent of 11th grade in the American system, where students range in general from 16 to 17 years old.

2.2.1 Creation of the Original Version of the Observation Grid

In order to paint a rigorous portrait of the interactive dynamics facilitated by all types of activity, both teacher-centered and student-centered, that are presently being used in Montreal classrooms, we judged that it was necessary to create an observation grid that would permit us to systematically code the qualitative data contained in our filmed observations. The categories of the observation grid are derived from the information presented in the literature review, and the process we used to construct the grid is based on the recommended formulas in Cone and Foster (2006) and in Quivy & Campenhoudt (1988). As suggested by these authors the creation of an observation grid should include the establishment of the pertinent parts of the grill, followed by a pilot period, and an interrater validation. These steps will be described in the following section

In the initial version of our grid (Annex 1), we created three mutually exclusive categories for coding tasks that fell under student-centered activity. Each of these tasks was either coded as an individual task, a one-way task or a two-way task. These task types are mutually exclusive because they are either individual or collective; and among the collective tasks, they either do or do not require an exchange of information.

As outlined in the literature review, certain variables influence the level of interactivity of a given task. In accordance with the Foster study (1998), we created two subcategories to code the participant organization of one-way and two-way tasks: pairs, small groups. Foster (1998) found that paired activities were better generators of language production, NfM and modified output than group activities. This is quite simply because within group activities, it is easier for shy students to remain silent than within paired activities. The other variable in question was whether or not a student could ask questions during an individual task: Individual activities where students are able to ask questions facilitate more NfM than those activities where students cannot speak (Foster, 1998). Thus, on the observation grid we created a subcategory for individual tasks to account for this variable.

The second major part of the initial observation grid was designed to code teacher-centered activity. In keeping with the findings of Antón (1999), we created the traditional teaching and proleptic teaching categories, the latter generating the most NfM among the

two. From our personal experience as language teachers, we realized that not all teacher-centered activity is directly related to teaching. To account for these events we created two categories associated with class management: class business, introduction and recap of tasks. We deduced that unless these events manifest instances of the Wood et al. (1976) scaffolding functions they are to be considered poor generators of NfM.

Finally, we wanted to collect supplementary data that would help us better analyze both student and teacher-centered activity. We judged that knowing the task duration would help us weigh the value of each task in proportion to the total time of observation. We also included codes for L1 and L2 language usage: A two-way task executed primarily in the L1 cannot be considered a good generator of L2 NfM. Finally, we were interested in seeing which skills were being exercised by each task. Thus we included codes for reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

In the following section, we describe how we piloted the original grid and modified it to its final form.

2.2.2 Piloting of the Original Grid and Coding Protocol

In an effort to pilot the original grid, the researcher coded the first three hours of observation for each teacher. At the beginning of the piloting, we knew that we wanted to create a repertory of the specific types of student-centered and teacher-centered tasks that were commonly used. Thus, during the piloting period, we progressively created this task list along with the observations. After identifying a given task as individual, one-way, two-way, or a given teacher-centered activity traditional or proleptic, we tried to identify more specifically its type. Once the list was generated, each task was accorded a number for coding purposes on the final grid. See table 2.2 for a list of the tasks.

Table 2.2

List of Tasks

1. Sentence Reconstruction	Students reconstruct decomposed sentences.
2. Reading Comprehension	Exercises designed to improve reading comprehension
3. Listening Comprehension	Exercises designed to improve listening comprehension
4. Structured Discussion	Structured discussion among groups of students
5. Teacher Led Discussion	Discussion led by the teacher
6. Correction	Student or teacher-centered activity correction
7. Brainstorming	Student or teacher-centered brainstorming
8. Cloze	Fill-in-the-blank exercises
9. Text Analysis	Text grammar
10. Sentence Diagramming	Sentence grammar
11. Written Production	Structured and unstructured writing exercises
12. Oral Presentation	Presentation in front of a small group or the entire class
13. Grammar Exercises	Traditional Grammar Exercises
14. Dictation	Dictation, Dictogloss
15. Game	All sorts of Games
16. Pronunciation	Pronunciation activities
17. Syntactic Manipulations	i.e. creating questions out of declarative sentences
18. Interview/Role Play	Interview or Role Play in pairs or groups
19. Object Construction	Making collages, models, games, etc.

The previous list of tasks applies to both teacher and student-centered activity. However, there are certain tasks that are specific to teacher-centered activity. We also compiled this list progressively throughout the piloting period. Table 2.3 provides a list of those tasks.

Table 2.3

Teacher-Centered Activities

Teacher-Centered Activities
Presentation of a New Linguistic Element
Teacher-led Class Discussion
Reading Comprehension
Listening Comprehension
Correction of an Activity

After the initial piloting, a task column was added to the beginning of the modified grid. Once a given task has been identified as individual, one-way or two-way, coders enter the number that corresponds to the specific task type in the task column. Equally, five columns were added to the teaching section of the grid: one for each of the aforementioned teacher-centered task. Annex 2 presents a copy of the second version of the grid.

The final part of the piloting period involved gathering important input from a graduate student colleague with training in the interactionist school of thought. In preparation for coding, the second observer underwent a one hour training session with the researcher outlining all of the details on the second version of the observation grid. Annexes 4 and 5 are copies of the protocol used for the training session. Following the training session, the researcher and the second observer coded two classes together. This was done to insure that she clearly understood the details of the grid. The second observer brought a clear outside perspective to the grid; thus, subsequent to the initial mutual viewings, she was able to suggest several modifications. She thought it necessary to add the category 'other' to account for some teacher-centered and student-centered tasks that did not fit into any of the other categories. She also suggested that the grid contain a gradation of 5 levels of L2 language use: exclusively L1, mostly L1, equal L1 and L2, mostly L2, exclusively L2. In addition, the second observer suggested a modification to the layout of the grid in order to render the subcategories 'traditional' and 'proleptic' more visually salient as a subset of the 'teaching'

category. These modifications were made to the grid before beginning codification of the 63.8 hours of filmed data. See annex 3 for the final version of the grid.

2.3 The Data Collection

In this section we will describe our observation equipment followed by an outline of our observation procedures and observer protocols.

2.3.1 The Equipment

All observations were recorded with a Sony® Handicam DCR-DVD301, a tripod and Sennheiser Mikroport®-System 2015 discreet microphone transmitters worn by the teachers and connected to the camera. One modification was made after the filming of the third teacher. We were initially using, in conjunction with the microphone transmitter, a Sennheiser® M36 external microphone placed on a desk at the back of the classroom. We quickly realized that the external microphone created too much background noise during group activities making it, at times, impossible to hear interactions between the instructor and individual students. This problem was resolved once the external microphone was removed: All subsequent interactions between the teacher and students became clearly audible.

2.3.2 Observation Procedures

In order to avoid a repetition of class material, observations for each class were made on an average of one week intervals. However, due to end of semester time constraints, this was not always possible. Observations were made back to back on one occasion for both teachers D and L. Observations of each class were filmed from a discreet position in the rear of the classroom. In order to have the best sound quality of teacher-student interaction, especially

during noisy group and paired activities, the instructors wore microphone transmitters connected directly to the camera.

In the next section we will outline how all of the filmed data was organized.

2.4 Coding Procedures

Initially, the coder must identify the task type on the Task List (see table 2.2) that best fits the nature of each observed task and mark the corresponding number in the activity-type box. This information is collected so as to generate a repertory of the types of individual, one-way and two-way tasks that were most commonly used during the observations. Once the nature of the task has been determined, the coder notes its duration. Given that there is generally a transition period between tasks that can last up to several minutes, the start and finish times are rounded to the nearest minute. Secondly, the targeted skills, reading, listening, speaking and writing, are accordingly coded for each task. Listening and speaking skills are automatically checked for student-centered collective activity and teacher-centered interactive activity since these skills are inherent to these activities. Additionally, when class-management is exclusively in the L2, listening skills are checked. For all other activities, the principal skill is marked. For example, a dictation targets listening and writing skills. Reading comprehension exercises often target reading and writing skills. If class-management events are characterized by many questions or dialogue between the students and the teacher, this event is coded as a facilitated discussion and thus the interactive, speaking and listening categories are coded. Next, the coder must indicate the language usage of each event: exclusively L1, mostly L1, equal L1 and L2, mostly L2, exclusively L2. See Figure 2.1, the final version of the observation grid, for a visual representation of these categories. Finally, the observer is asked to write a brief description of each task at the bottom of the coding sheet.

These descriptions serve as field notes. In the following sections we will look more closely at how we identified the different types of activities.

Date:_____ Periode: _____Duration: _____ Class _____ESL/FSL: _____
Teacher_____Observer_____

Observation Grid for Classroom Interactive Patterns	Activity Code	Timing			Targeted Skills				Student-Centered Activity								Teacher-Centered Activty										Language				
									Individual		Collective Task						Teaching								Mgnt							
											One-way Tasks			Two-way Tasks			Dynamics															
		Start	Finish	Duration	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening	Individual Task	Questions Not Allowed	Pairs	Small Groups	Entire Class	Pairs	Small Groups	Entire Class	Traditional	Interactive	Presentation of a ling. element	Facilitated Discussion	Reading Comprehension	Oral Comprehension	Activity Correction	Other	Introduction or Recap of Activity	Class Business	L1	Mostly L1	Equal L1 and L2	Mostly L2	L2

Figure 2.1 Final Version of the Observation Grid

2.4.1 Student-Centered Activity

Once the coder has determined that a given task is student-centered, he or she must indicate whether it is individual, one-way or two-way. Based on our literature review, we place each of these tasks types at various places on an interactive continuum. We will present the task types in order from the least interactive to the most interactive.

Individual Tasks

For these tasks, students work independently. There is little or no verbal interaction. In some cases, such as a graded dictation, there is no verbal interaction as students cannot ask questions, while in other cases verbal interaction is limited to students asking the instructor individual questions. Here is a list of some of the most common types of tasks that fit into this category: reading comprehension, grammar exercises (worksheets), writing exercises, listening comprehension exercises, dictations.

One-way Tasks

As outlined in Chapter I, one-way tasks create a situation where an exchange of information is not necessary (Gass & Varonis, 1985). Students work in pairs or in groups, and each student possesses all the information necessary for the execution of the task. Tasks of this nature would include but not be limited to debates, expressing opinions, giving instructions, describing events, giving a summary of a written text, structured discussions, worksheets, text analysis, etc. By their very nature, one-way tasks are more interactive than individual tasks: Students work with a partner or in groups to execute a task.

Once the coder determines that a given task is one-way, he or she must identify on the observation grid the targeted skills, the language usage, and whether the task is executed in pairs, in small groups or as an entire class. Again, work in pairs has been shown to generate

more NfM for all involved parties than group work (Foster, 1998). One-way tasks executed in small groups can allow shy students to remain silent, while, on the other hand, all students are obliged to participate when the activity is executed in pairs (Foster, 1998). Finally, the coder must indicate whether the activity is convergent or divergent in nature. Convergent tasks create a situation where students work together in order to attain a common goal, while divergent task create a situation where students have independent goals. Duff (1985) demonstrated that convergent tasks are better generators of negation than divergent task. Table 2.4 presents a list of common one-way divergent and convergent tasks. It is important, however, for the coder to consider the nature of each individual task because some tasks can be either convergent or divergent depending on the specific details of the task. For example, an oral presentation is generally divergent because each presenter has his or her own personal goal. However, if the group listening to the presentation were obliged to create a common list of questions for each presenter the task would then become convergent in nature.

Table 2.4

One-Way Convergent and Divergent Tasks

Typical One-Way Task	Convergent/Divergent
Oral Presentation	Divergent
Game among individuals	Divergent
Structured Discussion	Divergent
Game in teams	Convergent
Reading Comprehension	Convergent
Written Production	Convergent
Sentence Reconstruction	Convergent
Brainstorming	Convergent
Object Creation/Building	Convergent
Interview/Role Play	Convergent
Correction	Convergent
Cloze Activity	Convergent
Text Analysis	Convergent

Two-way Tasks

As illustrated in the literature review, two-way tasks are the most interactive (Gass, 2005). Thus, we place them on the opposite end of the interactive continuum from individual tasks. Often called information-gap tasks, these tasks are group activities which create a situation where each individual possesses a piece or several pieces of information that their partners do not have. They must share information in order to attain their goal. The required giving and taking of information stimulates NfM simply because a non-understanding event must be corrected if the task is going to be completed. Based on previous studies (Duff, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1985) we consider this type of task to be the most interactive, thus the most favorable to NfM.

Let us consider a classic two-way information-gap task. Each student has nearly the same picture. However, there are several differences on each picture. The students must ask questions in order to render all the pictures the same. In this situation, the task cannot be executed without information sharing. Here are some other two-way activities: interviews between students, riddles and guessing games, games where one student has the correct response (hangman and word up), role playing where each student has different information.

Once the task has been identified as two-way, the coder indicates the duration, the targeted skills, the language usage and whether the activity was executed in pairs, small groups or by the entire class.

In the next section we will outline how teacher-centered activities are coded.

2.4.2 Teacher-Centered Activity

Teacher-centered activities are coded when the teacher is at the center of most, if not all, interaction. Students are not working in pairs or in groups, and their attention is largely focused on the teacher. We distinguish between two general types of teacher-centered activity: Teaching and Class Management.

Teaching

Teaching events are teacher-centered activities where the focus is on learning new material, more specifically, new linguistic elements. In order to have an idea of the types of teacher-centered activities we identified progressively, through the observation process, five categories of activity: the presentation of a new rule or linguistic element, class discussion led by the teacher, writing and listening comprehension tasks, and exercise correction. The coder must code each teaching event according to the activity type that best describes the event. There is an 'other' category for those activities that do not fit into the 5 categories. In keeping with the other tasks, each event is coded for duration, targeted skills and language usage.

Finally, the coder must determine whether the activity is traditional or proleptic in nature. The criteria we used to identify an activity as traditional or proleptic are based on the Wood et al. (1976) scaffolding function used in the Anton study (1999). These criteria will be outlined in the following sections.

Traditional Teaching

In the traditional classroom, the teacher acts as the disseminator of information. In this situation, "the role of the learner is that of a passive receptacle of knowledge imparted by the teacher" (Antón, 1999). Grammar and other class material are presented explicitly. Additionally, questions and negative feedback stimulate little or no interaction. This situation generates little or no NfM.

Proleptic Teaching

In the interactive classroom, the teacher, through 'responsive dialogue,' assists the students in hypothesis construction. This approach can be identified by the existence of considerable dialogue between the teacher and the student (Refer to page 18 for a specific example of proleptic teaching). By nature, this approach places the learner in a central role in the instructional activity. In her study, Antón (1999) observed that this teaching approach led to significantly more NfM than the traditional approach. In order to operationalize the proleptic teacher-centered activities we followed the Antón (1999) study, which used the scaffolding functions presented by Wood et al (1976):

1. *Recruitment*
2. *Reduction in degrees of freedom*
3. *Direction maintenance*
4. *Marking critical features*
5. *Frustration Control*
6. *Demonstration*

Definitions for these terms can be found on page 17.

Class Management

Class management events are activities such as taking attendance, discussing upcoming tests or projects, or explaining or recapping an activity. Based on the Anton study (1999), these types of activities are generally less interactive than teaching events unless they take the form of a teacher led discussion, a situation characterized by considerable dialogue between the teacher and the students. Class Management activities are also coded for their duration, language usage and targeted skills. If the teacher is doing most or all of the speaking, listening should be checked as a targeted skill. If, however, the event resembles a facilitated discussion, both listening and speaking should be checked.

In this section, we outlined the coding procedures. Following the coding, a certain percentage of observations must pass through a process of interrater agreement. The following section (2.5) describes this procedure.

2.5 Coding and Interrater Agreement

Cone and Foster (2006) suggest that researchers should double score 20% of the total filmed data through a process of interrater agreement. If differences arise they should be resolved before continuing. Oftentimes these differences are simply a question of agreement on a specific definition. After a brief training session, the researcher and a graduate student colleague analyzed the first 20% of filmed observations for each teacher through the use of the final version of the observation grid (Annex 3). The first two classes of each individual teacher were viewed and coded separately and then coded through a process of consensus between the two observers. By the fourth class the coders worked out most of their differences concerning definitions. Subsequent interrater agreement was around 95% for the remaining double scored classes. Once the inter-rater agreement was finished, the researcher coded the remaining 6 hours of observation himself.

2.6 Analysis

The 63.8 hours of filmed observation were coded according to the aforementioned criteria on the final observation grid (Annex 3). All the coded observations were subsequently entered into one single Excel spreadsheet for analysis of the results. This exercise allowed us to organize and compile our data for frequency analysis. In order to respond to our research question, we calculated the percentages of time accorded to each activity and task. In the following section we present our results.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The research question was the following: To what extent are the secondary school French and English second language instructors creating, through the choice of tasks and pedagogical practices, an environment favoring second language acquisition through discourse favorable to NfM? In the literature review we identified tasks that facilitate NfM to various degrees. In this section, we start with a presentation of a global portrait of the classroom activity observed in the Simard & Jean corpus (2007), determining how much time was dedicated to the most general categories, student-centered and teacher-centered activity (3.1). Then, we present a breakdown of the use of individual, one-way and two-way tasks within all the student-centered activity categories followed by a breakdown of teaching types and class business time used within teacher-centered activity (3.2). In an effort to create an even more detailed portrait, we present the specific types of tasks that were used within both student-centered and teacher-centered activity (3.2.1). In the following section, in order to synthesize our results, we present a distribution of all classroom activity in four different categories according to its favorableness to NfM: Most Favorable, Moderately Favorable, Not Very Favorable, Not Favorable (3.3). This allowed us to develop an index which could be used to compare groups. Finally, we produced the same distribution and index for both ESL classes and FSL classes in order to see if there are any differences in classroom activity.

3.1 Global Distribution of Class Time

The total filmed class time (3823 minutes/63.8 hours), was almost equally divided between student-centered (44%/28 hours) and teacher-centered (45%/28.8 hours) activity. A considerable amount of class time (11%/6.8 hours) was lost to down time. A large majority of class time (83.5%) was conducted either exclusively or mostly in the L2. This is time at the beginning and end of class and between activities, which cannot be considered directly pedagogical in nature. We consider this 11% of down time to be a non-generator of NfM. See figure 3.1 for a global distribution of class time. In order to have a better idea of how favorable to NfM the 91% of active class time was, let us turn to a detailed breakdown of both the student-centered and teacher-centered activity.

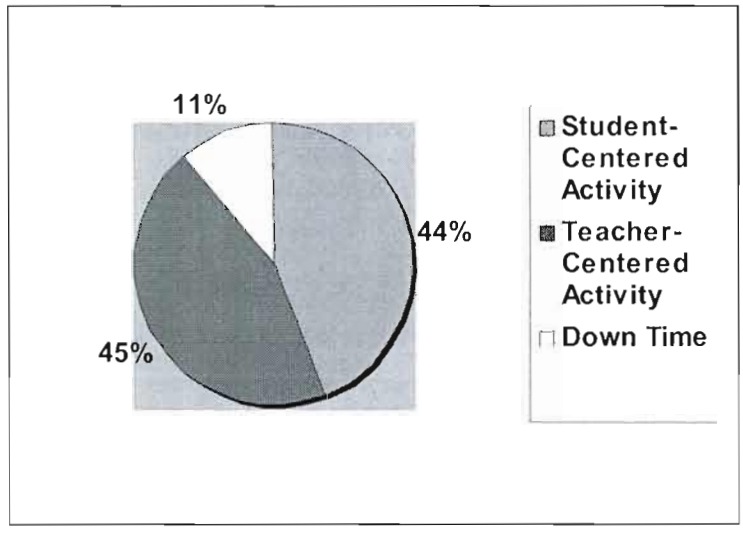

Figure 3.1 Global Distribution of Class Time Usage

3.2 Distribution of class-time according to the types of activity

In this section, we first present a detailed distribution of how teachers used class-time dedicated to student-centered activity (3.2.1) followed by a description of teacher-centered activity time (3.2.2).

3.2.1 Student-Centered Activity

Student-centered activity occupied nearly half of all active class-time (45%). During our observations, we collected information on the general tasks that compose this type of activity: two-way, one-way, and individual tasks. We maintain that two-way tasks executed in pairs create the situation that generates the most NfM among students (Gass & Varonis, 1985; Doughty & Pica, 1986; Long, 1983). However, teachers used two-way tasks in general for only 8% of the Student-Centered activity (SCA) time (2.2 hours). Of the time dedicated to those two-way tasks, students executed about a third (33%) in pairs. Globally, teachers dedicated only 0.8% (37 minutes) of the total class time to this most favorable task situation regarding NfM. Our observations showed that all interaction (100%) was in the L2 during two-way tasks. One-way tasks, the most commonly used task type, occupied 58% of the total SCA time. We observed less L2 talk in these activities. Only 71.5% of these activities were either mostly or exclusively in the L2. While less favorable than two-way tasks, this type of task is potentially a good generator of NfM, especially when executed in pairs or when convergent in nature. Once again, paired work was a clear minority. Students executed only a small proportion (13%) of the one-way task time in pairs. However, teachers dedicated a majority (74%) of the one-way task time to convergent tasks. Let us remember that these types of tasks are good generators of NfM (Duff, 1985). Finally, our observations show that teachers dedicated about one third (34%) of the SCA time to individual tasks. Individual tasks were conducted entirely (100%) in the L2. However, due to their low interactive nature, such tasks generate the least NfM. Figure 3.2 is a distribution of student-centered activity time usage.

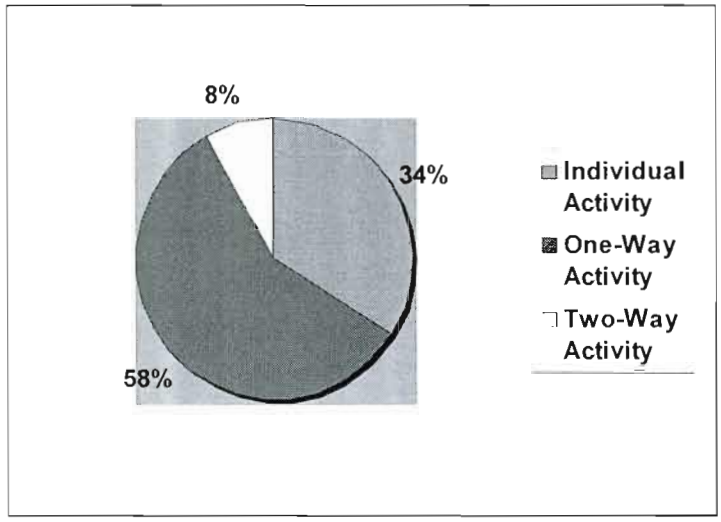

Figure 3.2 Distribution of Time Usage for Student-Centered Activity

In order to have a clearer picture of classroom activity, we also compiled of list of the most commonly used tasks for each task type. They are presented in the next section.

3.2.1.1 Types of Student-Centered Activities

In this section we present the most frequently used tasks for each task type and consider their interactive nature. Figure 3.3 offers a distribution of all of the activities tasks observed in the Simard & Jean corpus (2007). We sorted them into the three established task type categories.

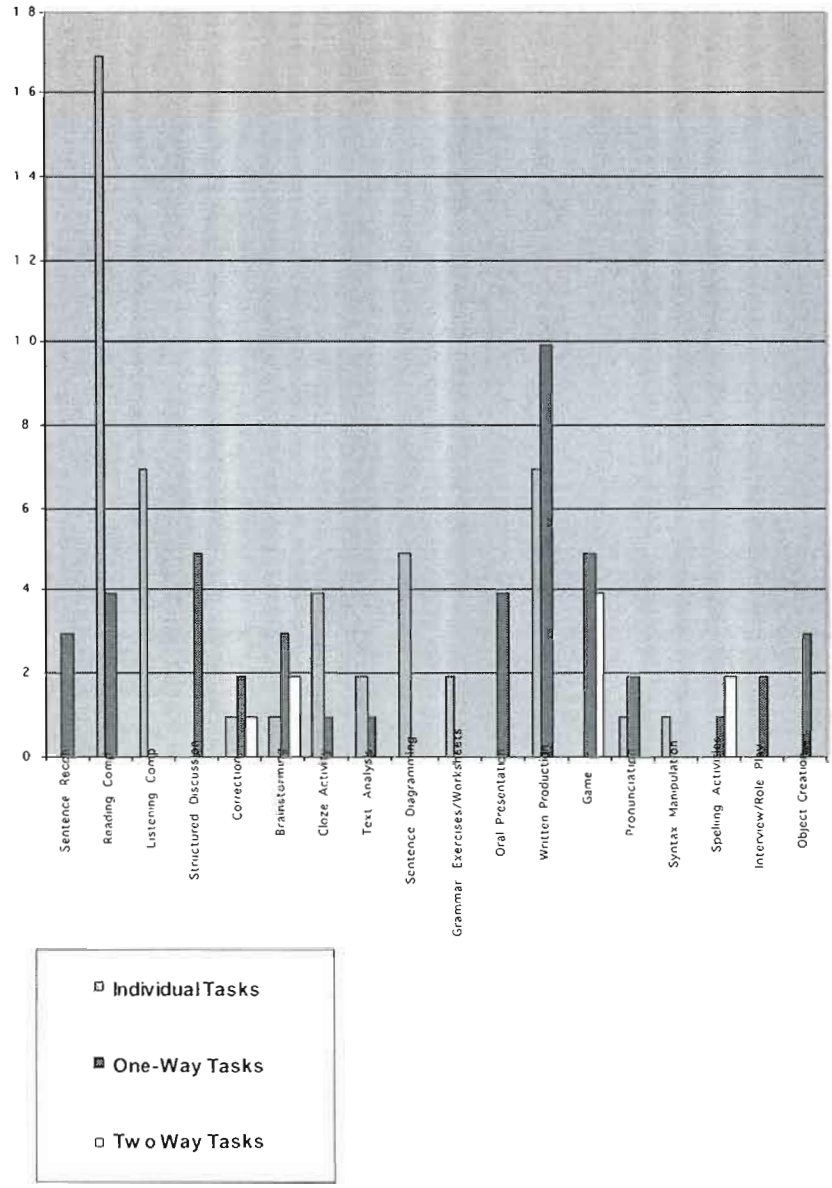

Figure 3.3: Distribution of All Tasks According to Task Type

As we can see from Figure 3.3, reading comprehension, listening comprehension and written production tasks dominated individual task frequencies. Among the one-way tasks, teachers most often used written production tasks, student discussions and games. Finally, games were clearly the most common two-way task. In what follows we will look more closely at the nature of these various tasks.

Individual Tasks

Table 3.1 presents the frequencies for individual tasks

Table 3.1

Frequencies for Individual Tasks

Task	Number of occurrences	Percentage of Individual Tasks*	Percentage of all Tasks*
Reading Comprehension	17	35	17
Listening Comprehension	7	15	7
Structure Written Production	7	15	7
Sentence Diagramming	5	10	5
Cloze Activity	4	8	4
Text Analysis	2	4	2
Grammar Exercises/Worksheets	2	4	2
Correction	1	2	1
Individual Brainstorming	1	2	1
Pronunciation	1	2	1
Syntactic Manipulations	1	2	1
Number of Individual Activities	48	100	48

*Figures in this table are rounded to the nearest percentage.

Individual Tasks were clearly dominated by reading comprehension tasks (17 occurrences). These activities were closely followed by Listening Comprehension (7 occurrences), Written Production (7 occurrences), Sentence Diagramming (5 occurrences) and Cloze Tasks (4 occurrences).

One-Way Task

We now turn our attention to one-way task usage. Table 3.2 presents the frequencies for these types of tasks.

Table 3.2

Frequencies for One-Way Tasks

Activity	Tendency: Convergent/ Divergent	Number of Occurrences	Percentage of all One-Way Tasks*	Percentage of all Tasks*
Written Production	Convergent	10	21	10
Game	Divergent	5	10	5
Structured Discussion	Divergent	5	10	5
Brainstorming	Convergent	5	10	5
Reading Comprehension	Divergent	4	8	4
Oral Presentation	Convergent	4	8	4
Sentence Reconstruction	Convergent	3	6	3
Object Creation/Building	Convergent	3	6	3
Interview/Role Play	Convergent	2	4	2
Pronunciation	Convergent	2	4	2
Correction	Convergent	2	4	2
Cloze Activity	Convergent	1	2	2
Text Analysis	Convergent	1	2	2
Spelling	Convergent	1	2	2
Number of Individual Activities		48	97	48

*Figures in this table are rounded to the nearest %.

One-Way tasks are in the middle of the interactive continuum. They can vary from being good to poor generators of NfM. As outlined in the previous section, One-Way tasks executed in pairs favor more NfM than those executed in groups (Foster, 1998). Additionally, the convergent or divergent nature of a given activity can also influence its interactivity, convergent tasks being more interactive (Duff, 1985). Only 13% of one-way tasks were executed in pairs. However, convergent tasks clearly dominated the one-way task category. 71% of all one-way tasks observed in the corpus were convergent. Among the One-Way tasks, written production (10/46 occurrences), games (5/46 occurrences) and structured discussion (5/46 occurrences) were the most common activities observed in the corpus. For the written production activities, all students had the same information, but they were nonetheless working together to attain a common goal: the production of a text. The nature of this type of activity likens it to a convergent task. Therefore we place this activity, when executed in pairs, into the Most Favorable category. The next most common One-Way tasks were games and structured discussion. Neither of these activities required an exchange of information, and each student was working to achieve their own individual goal: to win the game or to express their opinion. Given their divergent nature, we consider these activities moderately favorable to NfM. All the remaining tasks observed, except the four oral presentation events, were convergent in nature.

To summarize, while one-way tasks are not as favorable to NfM as two-way tasks, when they are convergent in nature and executed in pairs, studies show them to be good generators of NfM. Of the total class time dedicated to one-way tasks (1007 minutes), 12% (120 minutes) was both convergent and conducted in pairs. Thus, 12% of one-way task time is considered most favorable to NfM while 88% is considered moderately favorable. See Table 3.2 for a complete breakdown of one-way tasks.

Two-Way Tasks

Finally, we will look at the types of two-way tasks observed in our data. Table 3.3 presents a breakdown of these tasks.

Table 3.3

Frequencies for Two-Way Tasks

Activity	Number of occurrences	Percentage of all Individual Tasks*	Percentage of all tasks*
Game	6	75	6
Interview	1	13	1
Correction	1	13	1
Number of Individual Activities	8	100	7

*Figures in this table are rounded to the nearest %

Despite their qualities, two-way tasks were by far the least frequently observed type of task in the corpus: 8% of student-centered activity and 3% of total class time were devoted to this type of task in general. Two-way tasks executed in pairs were even more uncommon: 33% of SCA time, or 0.8% of total class time, was occupied by this most effective language learning situation. Among the Two-Way tasks, all but two activities were games. Games, especially guessing games, appear to lend themselves to creating a situation which demands an exchange of information between students. For example, students played the classic game Hangman, a game where one student knows the word in question, and the other students must guess letters of the word or expression until they have enough information to guess the entire word or expression. This must be done in a limited number of turns. In another case, one student possessed a card with the image of an object. The remaining students had to take turns asking yes/no questions until they were able to guess the object. In yet another example, the students played Word Up, a board game where one student possesses information about a vocabulary word. Using the given information or clues, the other student must guess the word in order to move his or her token around the board to the finish line. Finally, we observed two spelling games where one student was in possession of a word that the other student had to spell. The remaining two-way activities included an interview conducted in a paired setting

and the correction of an activity where students had to share each other's answers to compile a final graded copy for the dyad.

3.2.2 Teacher-Centered Activity

Teacher-Centered activity occupied a significant amount of class-time (43%). Teachers dedicated approximately two thirds (64%) of this activity to actual teaching and one third (36%) to class business. The content analysis procedures instructed coders to code highly interactive class business as interactive. However, we were not able to code any class business events as interactive. Thus, we must conclude that the 9.8 hours of class time dedicated to class business in the Simard and Jean corpus (2007) is not favorable to NfM.

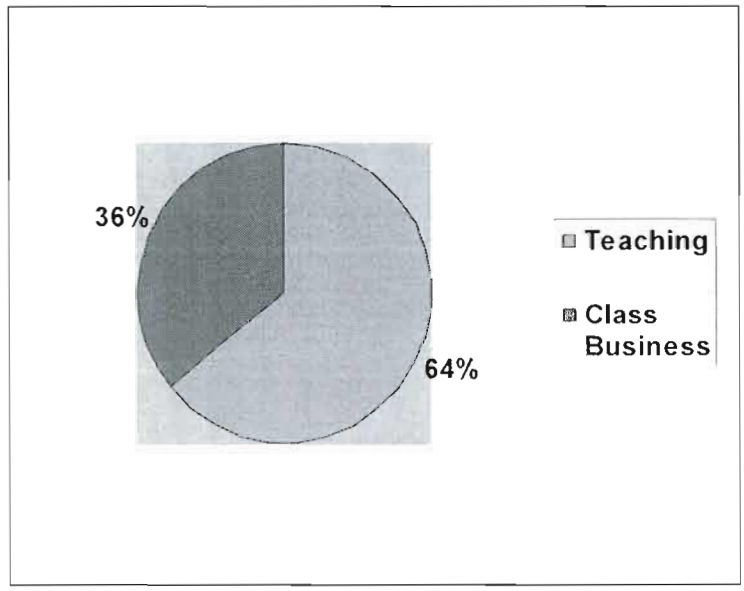

Figure 3.3 Distribution of Time Usage for Teacher Centered Activity

As can be seen in figure 3.3, time dedicated to teaching was nearly double that dedicated to class business. In the next sections, we will look more specifically at how both teaching and class-business time were used in terms of their favorableness to NfM.

3.2.2.1 Distribution of Teaching Time

As illustrated in the literature review, proleptic teaching methods facilitate more NfM than do traditional methods. Figure 3.4 presents the proportion of traditional to proleptic teaching observed in our data.

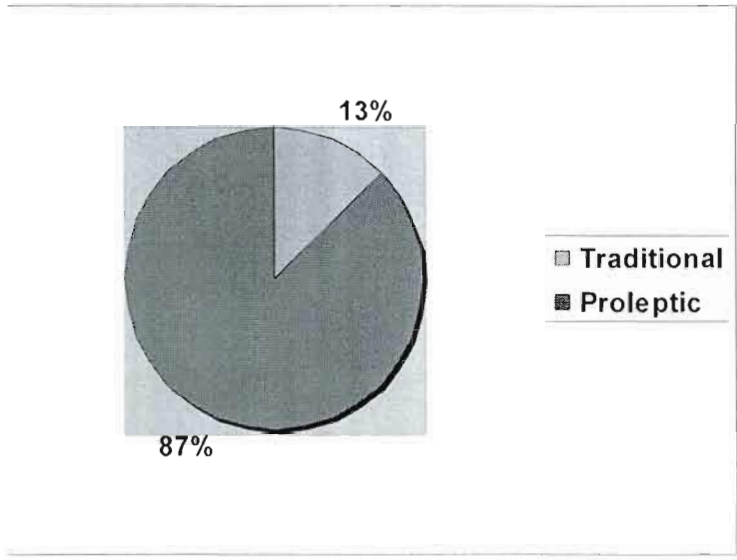

Figure 3.4 Proportion of Proleptic to Traditional Teaching

According to our observations, proleptic teaching is alive and well. Teachers dedicated a large majority of their teacher-centered activity time (hereafter TCA time) (87%) to this interactive teaching style. Nearly all proleptic teaching (96.4%) was conducted either mostly or exclusively in the L2. Only a small portion of TCA (13%) was characterized as traditional teaching. We also observed that the L2 was used considerably less frequently (59.7%) during these traditional teaching events. Let us look more specifically at how each teaching style

was used. Table 3.4 presents a distribution of time spent on the five established teacher-centered tasks for both proleptic and traditional teaching.

Table 3.4

Distribution of Time Dedicated to Proleptic and Traditional Teaching Activity

Activity	Percentage* of total Proleptic T-C Activity	Percentage* of total Traditional T-C Activity
Activity Correction	22	42
Presentation of Linguistic Element	32	31
Oral Comprehension	7	20
Reading Comprehension	6	7
Facilitated Discussion	33	0
Total	100%	100%

*Figures in the table are rounded to the nearest percentage.

Proleptic Teaching

The teachers we observed spent roughly equal amounts of time facilitating class discussions (33% of TCA time) as presenting new linguistic elements (32% of TCA time). When conducted in a proleptic manner, we consider both of these types of activities as good facilitators of NfM. Activity correction was the next most common teacher-centered task (22% of TCA time). In the proleptic classroom, teachers guide students through an activity correction keeping them largely involved in the process. This creates a positive situation for NfM. The teachers used oral comprehension exercises (7% of TCA time) and reading comprehension (6% of TCA time). These types of activities can be a good source of input, but they leave students without much opportunity to interact. However, in some cases during our observations, students were engaged in dialogue with the teacher and fellow students during such tasks. This led the coder to consider these events proleptic, thus moderately

facilitative of NfM. In the following section we look at these task types in the traditional teaching situations.

Traditional Teaching

Contrary to the proleptic teaching setting, facilitated discussions were non-existent in the traditional setting: activity correction (42% of TCA time) was the dominant activity. These cases were rated traditional because the instructor simply provided the responses without engaging the students. The next most common activity was the presentation of linguistic elements (31% of TCA time). We coded these activities as traditional because they were characterized by the dissemination of information with little or no student interaction. The remaining activities, oral comprehension (20% of TCA time) and reading comprehension (7% of TCA time) were used the least frequently in traditional teaching. The one-way flow of information that is characteristic of these activities makes them traditional in nature.

In an attempt to create a snapshot image of our classroom observations, we present a synthesis of our results in the final section of this chapter.

3.3 Synthesis

In accordance with our interpretation of the literature review we were able to divide all of the data collected on each type of task observed in the Simard and Jean corpus (2007) into four different categories depending on their favorableness to NfM. The categories range from level 4 (Most Favorable to NfM) to level 1 (Not Favorable to NfM). Table 3.5 presents each category and its corresponding task types as well as the percentage of time dedicated to each.

Table 3.5

Percentage of Class Time Dedicate to Tasks According to their General Favorableness to NfM

Negotiation Category	Task Types	Minutes	Percentage of class-time
4	Most Favorable: *Two-Way in Pairs and Small Groups; Convergent One-Way in Pairs*	231	6.6
3	Moderately Favorable: *Two-Way Class; Convergent One-way in Small Groups and Class; Proleptic Teaching*	1640	47
2	Not Very Favorable: *Divergent One-Way; Individual Task with the possibility to ask questions*	836	23.9
1	Not Favorable: *Class Business: Traditional Teaching: Individual tasks with no questions*	784	22.5
Negotiation Index: **2.38**			

This table allows us to gain an overall picture of how class time is used in accordance with its favorableness to NfM. While nearly half of all class time (47%) is occupied by tasks and activities that are Moderately Favorable to NfM, only a small portion of this class time (7%) can be considered Most Favorable. The remaining half of the class time is almost equally divided between Not Very Favorable (24%) and Not Favorable (22%). We determined that the weighted average Negotiation Category of our total observations was 2.38 on a scale of 1 to 4. We refer to this figure as the Negotiation Index.

Finally, in order to see if there were significant differences between FSL and ESL classes, we created a task breakdown and an Negotiation Index for each group. Table 3.6 shows a breakdown of time dedicated to the various task types for both ESL and FSL classes.

Table 3.6

Minutes and Percentages of Task-Time Dedicated to Each Task Type in Both ESL and FSL Classes*

Category and Task Type		Minutes and Percentages: ESL		Minutes and Percentages: FSL	
4	Two-way in pairs	28	1.56	0	0
	Two-way in small groups	62	3.46	21	1
	One-way convergent in pairs	93	5.19	27	2
	Total	183	10.2	48	3
3	Two-way as a class	35	2	0	0
	One-way convergent in small groups or class	422	23.6	177	10.4
	Interactive teaching	351	19.6	655	38.5
	Total	808	45.1	832	48.9
2	Divergent one-way	106	5.9	160	9.4
	Individual with questions permitted	221	12.3	349	20.5
	Total	327	18.3	509	29.9
1	Introduction, recap and class business	350	19.5	258	15.2
	Traditional teaching	84	4.7	53	3.1
	Individual with questions not permitted	39	2.1	0	0
	Total	473	26.4	311	18.3
	Grand Total	1791	100	1700	100

* Figures are rounded to the nearest percentage.

As we can see from Table 3.6 the ESL classes favored two-way and convergent tasks 176% more than FSL classes. The FSL classes, on the other hand, offered 95% more interactive teaching time than ESL classes. Likewise, FSL clearly dominated ESL by 66% in both Category 2 tasks (Divergent one-way and Individual tasks with questions permitted).

Finally, while ESL provided more Category 4 tasks (Most Favorable) it also offered 44% more Category 1 tasks (Not Favorable) than FSL classes. Table 3.7 offers a synthesis of these results including the Negotiation Index for both ESL and FSL classes.

Table 3.7

Negotiation Index for ESL and FLS Classes

Negotiation Category	Task Types	ESL Percentage of Task Time	FSL Percentage of Task Time
4	Most Favorable	10.2 (183 minutes)	2.8 (48 minutes)
3	Moderately Favorable	45.1 (808 minutes)	48.9 (832 minutes)
2	Not Very Favorable	18.3 (327 minutes)	29.9 (509 minutes)
1	Not Favorable	26.4 (473 minutes)	18.3 (311 minutes)
Negotiation Index		**2.39**	**2.36**

The Negotiation Indexes in Table 3.7 indicate that while the distribution of time dedicated to each task type is different for both ESL and FSL classes, they are both equal in terms of creating an overall learning situation favorable to NfM. FSL classes appear to be more concentrated in the two middle categories (Moderately Favorable and Not Very Favorable) while ESL classes, in comparison, tend to spread out more to the extreme categories (Most Favorable and Not Favorable).

If we consider that NfM is important and perhaps necessary for second language acquisition, our results suggest that there is certainly room for improvement in terms of how class time is used by FSL and ESL teachers with regard to task and activity selection. This raises some important questions concerning teachers' awareness of NfM and the task and activity types that promote it. These questions will be addressed in the discussion section of the present study.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

At the outset of this study we were interested in learning to what extent secondary school French and English second language instructors were creating, through the choice of tasks and pedagogical practices, an environme nt favoring second language acquisition through discourse promoting negotiation for meaning. In order to shed light on this subject we created an observation scheme with categories derived from the literature on NfM and the pedagogical practices that promote it. This instrument allowed us to create both a general and a detailed portrait of how this type of interactive discourse was being integrated into the present day L2 classrooms in the Montreal area. In the following sections of this discussion we begin with a brief review of the research context (4.1). We then discuss our results in relation to previous observational studies of the L2 classroom (4.2). In closing, we consider the implications of our findings (4.3), the limitations of our study (4.4) and ideas for future research (4.5).

4.1 Review of the Research Context

The ensemble of evidence provided by research in SLA supports that an interactive environment favors L2 acquisition. Within this context, studies on the interactive nature of classroom environments have successfully been able to measure and rank classes according to their communicative orientation. Researchers conducted these studies in an effort to better understand how research on communicative approaches to second language teaching was being applied to the classroom. As a result of these studies, some researchers (e.g., Allen &

Carroll, 1988) confirmed that, in fact, not all types of interaction are equally favorable to SLA: Affording more opportunities for NfM than structured forms of interaction, communicatively rich interaction promotes SLA (Ellis, 1984). Since the mid 1980s, negotiation for meaning has been widely recognized in research circles (Gass, 1997; Pica, 1996; Long, 1996) as being facilitative of and necessary for SLA. These researchers, among others (e.g. Anton 1999; Duff 1985; Gass & Varonis 1985; Long, 1996), have executed research projects confirming certain pedagogical practices as favorable to this type of discourse. Studies on the application of these practices, however, are much rarer. It was in this vein that this research project was developed. At the outset, in an effort to better understand the interactive nature of FSL and ESL secondary school classes, we aimed to create a descriptive picture of how these practices that foster L2 acquisition were being applied in the schools.

4.2 Discussion of Obtained Results

We begin this section with a discussion of our global results (4.2.1). These results led us to create what we call the Negotiation Index. This index is the weighted average of the four negotiation categories: Most Favorable, Moderately Favorable, Not Very Favorable, Not Favorable. It allows us to place a particular learning environment on a continuum of 1 to 4 according to its favorableness to NfM. In the case of the present study, it permitted us to compare results from both the ESL and FSL classes. Following the general results, we discuss the results we obtained from the various tasks that make up each category (4.2.2).

4.2.1 The Negotiation Index

Through the analysis of our observations we ranked the ensemble of the classes we observed at 2.38/4 on the Negotiation Index. Globally, this figure suggests that the classes we observed are situated the middle of the not very favorable category. At first glance, it appears that there is much room for improvement in terms of the interactivity of the classes. However, it is important to keep in mind that an extreme score of 1 or 4 would be quite

unlikely. A score of 4 would suggest that there was no time dedicated to classroom management or activity explanation, an unlikely situation. Conversely, a score of 1 would imply that the classes are composed solidly of traditional teaching and individual activities where students were not permitted to ask questions. Our results corroborate those found in the Frölich, Spada & Allen (1985) study. They found that most of the classes they observed fell into the middle of their experiential/analytical continuum. No classes were at the extremes.

In order to verify if our observation scheme could detect variation between ESL and FSL classes we calculated the results for each group. We found that there was only a slight difference. ESL classes ranked 2.39 on the scale while FSL fell slightly lower at 2.36. These results seem to correspond with those found in the Frölich, Spada & Allen study (1998). Observing schools in the Toronto area, they found that teachers of ESL, the dominant language outside the classroom, offered fewer of the most highly interactive learning situations. They reasoned that ESL teachers might focus more on form in the classroom because students have ample opportunity to be in a richly communicative environment outside the classroom. In the case of our observations, French is the dominant language outside the classroom. For the same reasons, this might suggest that FSL teachers tend to focus more on language code in the classroom than ESL teachers. However, this small variation must be regarded with caution. Given the small number of hours of observation, these results might be skewed by one ESL teacher in particular who used significantly more two-way natured games than her homologues. A look at the break down of the distribution of activity composing each category offers a more descriptive picture.

4.2.2 Distribution of Activity

Among the 63.8 hours of observation in the present study, slightly more time was dedicated to teacher-centered activity (45%) than to student-centered activity (44%) with 11% of the total time lost to down time. Teacher-centered activity offers fewer opportunities than student-centered activity for each individual student to interact (Antón, 1999). Thus, it affords fewer opportunities for NfM. In comparison with previous studies, it appears that

more time is being devoted to student-centered work than in the past. In Fazio & Lyster (1998), 78% of French Submersion classes and 62% of French Immersion classes were characterized by teacher-centered activity. This suggests that knowledge about the merits of student-centered activity in terms of producing interaction is progressively integrating itself into the teacher community. Next, let us look each of the four negotiation categories.

Most Favorable

In general, the teachers we observed rarely used tasks which require an exchange of information: Only 3% of the observed class time was devoted to this type of activity. We subsequently looked for the presence of one-way convergent tasks executed in pairs, another highly interactive task. Again, these tasks appeared rarely. Only 7% of the active class time was devoted to the two types of tasks in the *most favorable* category (two-way tasks in pairs and small groups, and convergent tasks in pairs). We observed notable differences when we examined the FSL and the ESL groups individually. The ESL group benefited from *most favorable* tasks 10% of the active class time while the FSL group was exposed to these tasks only 3% of the class time. Similar to Frölich, Spada & Allen (1998), we found that teachers of FSL, the dominant language outside the classroom, offered fewer of the most highly interactive tasks. Again, they speculated that since these students were afforded more opportunity for interaction outside the classroom the FSL teachers may have felt that the language code was the appropriate focus for the classroom.

In most instances, the two-way tasks we observed were guessing games where students had to gather clues through questions in order to execute the task. They were dissimilar to the picture difference tasks that one frequently finds in studies on two-way tasks. Given the limits of our data, it is of course impossible to know with certainty, but the nature of the tasks observed suggests that they might have been created without conscious thought about their one-way or two-way information exchange nature.

In the same vein, while most one-way tasks observed were convergent in nature, only 13% were executed in pairs: Most tasks were executed in groups. Work in pairs affords each student more opportunities to participate in the execution of the task (Foster, 1998). The

small percentage of paired work could indicate that teachers are either unaware of its benefits or it could be a result of the nature of the one-way tasks used. The most common one-way task was written production. This type of tasks lends it self well to pair work. However, among the five next most common one-way tasks one finds games, structured discussions, brainstorming and oral presentations. The nature of these tasks makes them better suited to execution in groups larger than two.

Moderately Favorable

Teachers devoted the majority of class time (47%) to moderately favorable tasks. The large presence of proleptic teaching appears to have influenced the dominance of this category. This interactive teaching style occupied two-thirds of this category. It is interesting to note that teacher-centered activity in general is largely dominated by this proleptic approach. Only 10% of the teacher-centered activity that we observed could be characterized as traditional. Similar to the increase in student-centered activity that we observed in comparison to the Allen and Carroll study (1988), the dominance of proleptic teaching appears, once again, to underscore the integration of interactive approaches into current pedagogical practices.

The remaining third of the moderately favorable category was almost exclusively occupied by convergent one-way tasks executed in small groups and as a class. Again, these convergent tasks are good generators of NfM, but they have the potential to promote more communicatively rich interaction when executed in pairs. However, structured discussions, games and oral presentation are among the most common convergent one-way tasks, and the nature of these tasks would seem to make them more suitable for group work.

Both ESL and FSL classes spent about the same proportion (45.1% and 48.9% respectively) of active class time on moderately favorable tasks. The differences between the groups appear in the distribution of time devoted to the various types of tasks. ESL classes spent nearly twice as much time as FSL classes on student-centered convergent one-way tasks, and conversely FSL classes spent more than double the time on teacher-centered proleptic teaching than ESL classes. While we rated both these tasks as moderately favorable

to NfM, the FSL concentration on teacher-centered activity seems to support the trend, underscored by Frölich, Spada & Allen (1998), that dominant language classes tend to be slightly less experiential.

Not Very Favorable

Nearly a quarter of the observed class time (24%) was devoted to tasks ranked not very favorable to NfM. On average FSL classes devoted 63% more time to not very favorable tasks than ESL classes. However, this result does not indicate that the FSL classes we observed are less favorable to NfM, because as we shall see in the following section, ESL classes dominated FSL classes by 44% in the *not favorable* category.

The majority of the not very favorable tasks (69%) were individual tasks with the possibility to ask questions. By their very nature, individual tasks, such as silent reading or written production, find themselves at the far end of the continuum representing little or no interaction. While many individual tasks are good input providers, the low level of interaction stimulated by these types of tasks makes them poor generators of NfM. Of the total class time, teachers devoted 16% to individual activities. In a previous study, Fazio & Lyster (1998) found similar results. Their observation revealed between 14% and 17% of class time dedicated to Individual tasks. More specifically, FSL teachers tended to favor individual tasks over ESL teachers: they devoted 40% more time than their ESL homologues. Again, this finding appears to support Frölich, Spada & Allen's (1998) reasoning that dominant language classes tend to focus more on language code.

Not Favorable

Slightly less imposing than the last category, not favorable tasks represent 22.5% of the total observed class time. These tasks include traditional teaching, class business and presentation/recap of activities. As mentioned above, traditional teaching only represented 10% of total teaching time. The majority of time (78%) in this category was devoted to Class

business and activity presentation. These activities were not dialogic in nature, thus they engendered little or no interaction. It is however important to note that during our observations, class business would occasionally segue into a class discussion. In such cases, these events were coded as facilitated discussion from the moment they became dialogic. In the present study, time dedicated to *class* management appears to significantly surpass that of previous studies (e.g. Fazio & Lyster, 1998; Frölich, Spada & Allen, 1985) where this category ranged from 1% to 11%. However, their definitions were more restricted as they limit class management to procedural directives and disciplinary statements (Allen & Carroll, 1998). We, on the other hand, included all activity that was not directly pedagogical in nature in addition to the introduction and recap of tasks. This perhaps explains our differing results. Finally, our results show that ESL students were exposed to somewhat more traditional teaching and individual tasks without the possibility to ask questions.

Summary

When examining the pedagogical practices of the entire corpus, we found that the majority of the observed tasks fell into the moderately favorable category: the most favorable tasks were a clear minority. An analysis of ESL and FSL individually revealed slight differences in their global results, with ESL classes registering faintly more favorable to NfM. As we scratched below the surface, we noted that within negotiation categories 2, 3 and 4, FSL classes tend to lean more toward analytical type tasks, often by a significant margin. In category 1, ESL classes provided more two-way tasks. In category two, ESL teachers devoted more time to student-centered tasks while FSL teachers relied more on teacher-centered activity. In category 3, FLS teachers spent significantly more time on individual tasks than ESL classes. Finally, the ESL dominance in category 1 seems to be largely a result of the time spent of class business. The general trend is that ESL classes promote slightly more NfM than FSL classes.

Figure 4.1 offers a visual representation of the summary of our results.

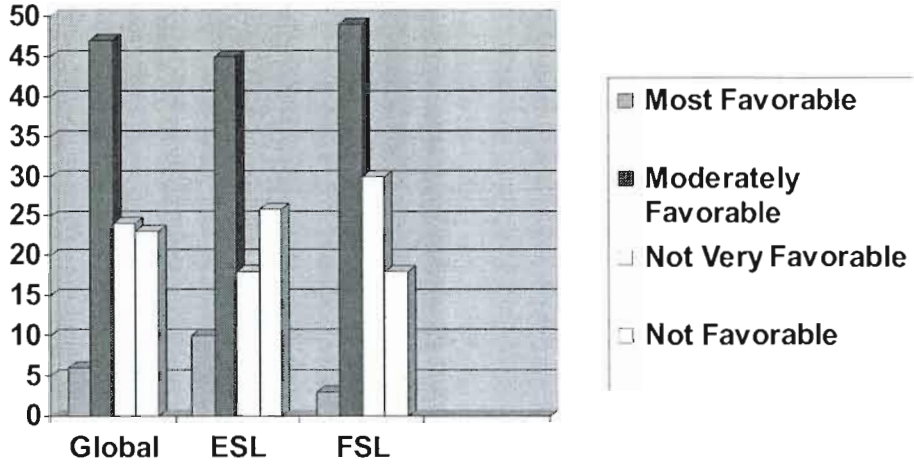

Figure 4.1 Distribution of Percentage of Time Devoted to Each Negotiation Category for Global Class, ESL and FLS Results

Figure 4.1 shows us that the majority of classroom activity is concentrated in the center. The tendency for both groups resembles a bell curve that is lighter at the Most Favorable end of the scale and heavier at the Not Favorable end. Among the two languages, ESL has more of a tendency to spread out to the extremes: while there were more occurrences of most favorable tasks there were also more not favorable tasks.

4.3 Implications of the findings

This study was conceived within the context of research exposing the merits of NfM and the pedagogical practices that promote it. In light of the positive impact that NfM has on second language acquisition, previous descriptive studies on classroom communicative orientation have suggested that a consideration of NfM might give a clearer picture of what is happening in the language classrooms. Findings in the present study concerning the distribution of time accorded to various tasks appear to have corroborated previous studies. Thus, we are inclined

to conclude that it is possible to measure and quantify the extent to which a class environment promotes NfM by examining task usage. With the increase in student-centered activity and proleptic teaching that we observed in comparison with previous studies, our observations suggest that classrooms are becoming more interactive. Nonetheless, there appears to be room for improvement. The ensemble of our results suggests that there is certainly room for the integration of more two-way tasks and convergent one-way tasks into the L2 classrooms we observed. Perhaps, 1) class management routines could become more efficient so as to free up more time for interactive task work, 2) less importance could placed on individual tasks and divergent one-way tasks, 4) and more time could be devoted to paired work. These results might also suggest that teachers and developers of pedagogical material should experiment with ways to modify one-way tasks so that they require an exchange of information.

To the best of our knowledge there is not another descriptive study that measured pedagogical practices in light of their favorableness to NfM. This renders a direct comparison of our results with those of the previous studies using the COLT scheme somewhat difficult. Thus, we still must regard these results with caution.

4.4 Limitations

Throughout the course of this study we became aware of some of its limitation. The first limitation directly concerns our data. While we were able to successfully create a portrait of pedagogical practices that are being used in present day L2 classes, our data does not allow us to explain why teachers choose certain tasks or practices. Are they aware of the qualities of negotiation for meaning? If so, are they aware that two-way tasks, convergent one-way tasks, and paired work promote it? These are questions that we might have been able to ask had we had the opportunity to circulate a questionnaire among our participants[15]. This limitation indicates possibilities for future studies on NfM.

[15] The questionnaire that was circulated at the end of the observations was anonymous. Thus, we did not have access to this information.

The following limitations concern our data collection. The researchers and research assistants experienced difficulty establishing communication with the teachers being solicited to participate in the development of the Simard & Jean corpus (2007). We think it is important to note that the teachers that took the time to return our calls and to establish observation schedules are different than those who did not. Equally, teachers willing to be filmed in their classrooms are different than those who are not. Thus, given these characteristics and the small number of participants in our sample, we cannot say that our participants are necessarily representative of the population of school teachers in the Montreal area.

Finally, it is challenging to collect data while disrupting the environment being observed as little as possible. On this note, we must acknowledge the effect of the camera on the development of the corpus. The research assistants became aware this problem after hearing comments from one teacher concerning her anxiety about being filmed. At the beginning of the third observation, teacher L admitted that she felt rather ill at ease in front of the camera during the first two observations. The observer then assured the teacher of the confidentiality of the observations which were to be viewed exclusively by the researchers. It was then reaffirmed that the observations were in no way an evaluation. The teacher reported feeling much more relaxed for the subsequent observations.

The effect of the camera does not always manifest itself as anxiety on the part of the observed. Even in cases where the teacher was completely at ease in front of the camera, we saw some evidence of its effect. Teacher S mentioned before the first observation that she had planned some good lessons for the classes that were to be filmed. The research assistants explained that they were really interested in observing normal everyday classes. They reiterated that, for reasons of validity, teachers should not modify their lesson plans for the observations.

In accordance with our observations, previous studies (e.g. Mehan, 1982) have shown that the effect of the camera dissipates with time. In both the case of the teacher who felt stress and the teacher who wanted to perform superb lessons in front of the camera, we noticed that the effect of the camera became less apparent as the observations continued. In most cases, by the third observation the teachers and students appeared to start to forget about

the presence of the camera and the observer. In light of these observations, in subsequent direct observation studies of classroom dynamics, it might be a good idea to do a mock filming of the first two classes. Or, another suggestion might be to tell the teacher and the students that sometime they will be filmed and sometime not. This might reduce the effect of the camera on the overall validity of the data.

4.5 Future Directions

While a good deal of research has been conducted on NfM and its relationship with various tasks types, there is very little research on the application of these tasks in the classroom. There is a need for more descriptive research of this nature. In future classroom observation studies, we suggest that instruments similar to the one used for this study be used in conjunction with an instrument similar to the COLT along with a participant questionnaire. While the COLT would provide a global picture of the interactive and communicative nature of a particular environment, our instrument would act as an indicator of the environment's favorableness to NfM. Finally, the use of a questionnaire would allow the researchers to gather information on the participant's knowledge of NfM and the pedagogical practices that promote it. It would be equally interesting to give such a questionnaire to developers of pedagogical material. It is possible that many teachers, especially those who have been out of school for some time, are not aware of the qualities of NfM. Finally, a longitudinal study on language outcomes resulting from tasks known to be favourable to NfM would be equally important. In other words, what do we know about the quality of learner's retention and production? In order to make recommendations to teachers, we need to be able to articulate what we mean by desired language learning outcomes and then examine longitudinally whether and how these outcomes may be achieved in particular classrooms, through particular tasks. Such and inquiry would clarify the contribution of both NfM and non-NfM tasks chosen by teachers.

CONCLUSION

Within the context of research on classroom interaction and SLA, we designed the present study to measure the extent to which classes were promoting NfM through pedagogical practices and task usage. Research on NfM has led many researchers to claim that it not only promotes, but is actually necessary for SLA. In light of this quality, studies have revealed the types of tasks and pedagogical practices that facilitate NfM. These findings led us to deduce that quantifying and measuring the use of these favourable practices would produce an indication of how conducive a particular environment is to SLA.

Previous observational studies on interaction in the classroom have succeeded in measuring the communicative orientation of specific environments. However, Allen and Carroll (1988) found that it was not enough to just consider the quantity of interaction in a particular setting, but that it was necessary to understand the quality of this interaction. These researchers found that it was the presence of discourse characterized by NfM that corresponded to improvement on a French proficiency post-test. In this perspective, we created an observation scheme, with categories derived from literature on NfM and the practices that promote it, designed to measure a particular environment's favorableness to this type of discourse. We ranked each category on the observation grid into one of four categories depending on its place on an interactive continuum: (4) *Most Favorable,* (3) *Moderately Favorable,* (2) *Not Very Favorable,* (1) *Not Favorable.* Calculation of the weighted average of these categories allowed us to create a Negotiation Index. This index offers a snap shot of the favorableness of a particular setting thus making is possible to easily compare groups.

We used the measurement instrument to code 64 hours of filmed observations of 8 secondary school teachers. We found that on average, the environments that we observed were situated in the middle of the *Not Very Favorable* category. While the majority of class

time was devoted to moderately favorable practices, the final results were skewed by the rare presence of practices considered most favorable. The result from the ESL and FSL groups were quite similar to one another, with ESL being placed slightly higher on the index. This was largely a result of the presence of significantly more of the most favorable tasks within the ESL group.

The ensemble of our results suggests that there is certainly room for the integration of more two-way tasks and convergent one-way tasks into the L2 classrooms we observed. Our observations point toward four general suggestions: 1) class management routines could become more efficient so as to liberate more time for interactive task work, 2) less importance could be placed on individual tasks and divergent one-way tasks, 3) more importance could be placed on paired work during student-centered activity. Finally, 4) teacher and developers of pedagogical material could experiment with ways to modify one-way tasks so that they require an exchange of information. We hope that this study will stimulate some interest in future studies on teachers' understanding and awareness of NfM and the application of pedagogical practices that stimulate the interaction that favors it.

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ANNEX 1

ORIGNIAL VERSION OF THE OBSERVATION GRID

Date:_____ Periode:_____ Duration_____ Class _____ Teacher _____ Observer _____

Observation Grid for Classroom Interactive Patterns	Timing			Targeted Skills				Student-Centered Activity						Teacher-Centered Activity				Language	
								Individual Tasks		One-way Tasks		Two-way Tasks		Teacher-Centered Activity					
	Start	Finish	Duration	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening	Questions Not Allowed	Questions Allowed	Pairs	Small Groups	Pairs	Small Groups	Traditional	Proleptic	Class Business	Introduction and Recap of Task	L1	L2

ANNEX 2

VERSION 2 OF THE OBSERVATION GRID

VERSION 2 OF THE OBSERVATION GRID

Date:_____ Periode: _____ Duration of Period: _____ Class: _____ Teacher _____ Observer _____

Observation Grid for Classroom Interactive Patterns	Timing				Targeted Skills				Student-Centered Activity						Teacher-Centered Activity									Language	
									Individual		One-way Task		Two-Way Task												
	Activity Code	Start	Finish	Duration	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening	Questions Not Allowed	Questions Allowed	Pairs	Small Groups	Pairs	Small Groups	Traditional	Proleptic	Presentation of linguistic element	Teacher-led Class Discussion	Listening Comprehension	Reading Comprehension	Activity Correction	Class Business	Introduction and Recap of Task	L1	L2

ANNEX 3

FINAL VERSION OF THE OBSERVATION GRID

FINAL VERSION OF THE OBSERVATION GRID

Date:_____ Periode: _____Duration: _____ Class _____ESL/FSL: _____
Teacher_____Observer_____

Observation Grid for Classroom Interactive Patterns	Activity Code	Timing			Targeted Skills				Student-Centered Activity								Teacher-Centered Activty										Language				
									Individual		Collective Task						Teaching								Mgnt							
											One-way Tasks			Two-way Tasks			Dynamics															
		Start	Finish	Duration	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening	Individual Task	Questions Not Allowed	Pairs	Small Groups	Entire Class	Pairs	Small Groups	Entire Class	Traditional	Interactive	Presentation of a ling. element	Facilitated Discussion	Reading Comprehension	Oral Comprehension	Activity Correction	Other	Introduction or Recap of Activity	Class Business	L1	Mostly L1	Equal L1 and L2	Mostly L2	L2

ANNEX 4

OBSERVER PROTOCOL FOR THE OBSERVATION GRID

Protocol: Observation Grid for Classroom Interactional Patterns

1. Please note the duration in minutes of each activity
2. Please note the principal targeted skills

I. **Student-centered activity** : This section represents activities where the majority of interaction is between students. In this section, there are three types of activity.

II.

1. **Individual Tasks** : For these tasks, students work independently. Here is a list of some possible types of tasks that fit into this category.
   - *Reading comprehension*
   - *Worksheets*
   - *Written production*

2. **One-way tasks** : For these tasks, an exchange of information is not necessary. Each student possesses all the information necessary for the execution of the task. Please indicate the interactional dynamics for each activity: Pairs, Small Groups, Entire Class. Here are some examples of one-way tasks.
   - *Reading comprehension*
   - *Worksheets*
   - *Written productions*
   - *Structured discussions*
   - *Student presentations*
   - *Analyses de texts*

3. **Two-way tasks** : For these tasks, an exchange of information is necessary. Students A possesses information that student B does not have, and vice-versa. Students must interaction in order to have all the information necessary to execute the task. Please note the interactional dynamics for each task. Here are some examples:
   - *Interviews between students*
   - *Riddles and guessing games*
   - *Games where one students has the correct response (hangman and word up)*
   - *Role playing where each student has different information*

III. **Teacher-centered activities**: This section represents activity where the majority of interaction is between the teacher and the students. Please note, when applicable, whether each activity is executed in a traditional or interactional manner.
   1. *Traditional*: In these situations, the teacher does most of the speaking. He or she asks the students few or no questions. He or she plays the role of the disseminator of information. This situation offers little of no opportunities for negotiation for meaning.
   2. *Interactional*: In these situations, through questions, the teacher invites the students to speak and thus participate in their learning. These types of situations offer more opportunities for negotiation for meaning.

Here are some examples of teacher-centered activity:

1. *Presentation of a grammatical element*
2. *Discussion led by the teacher*:
    - The teacher speaks with the students about their weekend, or about up coming events in the future
    - The teacher speaks with the student about their thoughts of feelings concerning a particular activity.
3. *Oral comprehension activities*
    - Dictation
    - Recorded comprehension activities
4. *Task introduction or recap*: in this situation, the teacher explains the task or homework assignment, or he or she briefly recapitulates briefly a task at its closing.
5. *Correction of an activity including homework*: In this case, the teacher corrects an activity with the class. Please do not forget to note whether the teacher interacts with the class in a traditional or interactional manner.
6. *Cl*ass business: In this situation, the teacher takes role or speaks to the class about up coming events.
7. *Other*: Any activity that not fit in the previous situations

IV. Finally, please note whether the activities are in L1 or L2, or if they are primarily in L1 or L2 or equal. Please note that you can check *Listening* as a targeted skill if the teacher leads the activities in primarily in the L1. If he or she asks many questions you can also check *speaking* as a targeted skill.

ANNEX 5

FRENCH VERSION OF THE OBSERVER PROTOCOL FOR THE OBSERVATION GRID

Légende pour la grille d'observation sur les dynamiques interactionnelles

3. Veuillez marquer la durée de chaque tâche
4. Veuillez cocher les savoirs principaux visés pour chacune des tâches

V. **Activité centrée sur l'élève** : Cette section représente les activités où la majorité des interactions se passe entre les élèves. Dans cette section, il y a trois types d'activités.

4. **Les tâches individuelles** : Pour ces tâches, les élèves travaillent de façon indépendante. Voici une liste de tâches possibles pour cette catégorie :

   - *Compréhension de lecture*
   - *Feuilles d'exercices*
   - *Production écrite*

5. **Pas d'échange d'info** : Pour ces tâches, un échange d'information n'est pas requis. Tous les élèves détiennent toutes les informations nécessaires pour l'exécution de la tâche. Veuillez indiquer les dynamiques interactionnelles pour chacune des activités : à deux, petits groupes, classe entière. Voici quelques exemples :

   - *Compréhension de lecture*
   - *Feuilles d'exercices*
   - *Productions écrites*
   - *Discussions structurés*
   - *Présentations/exposés*
   - *Analyses de textes*

6. **Échange d'info requis** : Pour ces tâches, un échange d'informations est requis pour son exécution. Élève A détient des informations que Élève B ne possède pas, et vis-à-versa. Ils doivent interagir pour avoir toutes les informations nécessaires pour exécuter la tâche. Veuillez indiquer les dynamiques interactionnelles. Voici quelques exemples :
   - *Entrevues entre élèves*
   - *Devinettes*
   - *Jeux ou un élève possède la bonne réponse (le bonhomme pendu, word up)*
   - *Jeux de rôles où chacun des élèves possède des informations différentes*

VI. **Interaction centrée sur l'enseignant** : Cette section représente les activités où la majorité des interactions se passe entre l'enseignant et les élèves. Veuillez d'abord noter si chacune des activités est de nature traditionnelle où interactionnelle.

3. *Traditionnelles* : dans ces situations, l'enseignant parle majoritairement; il pose très peu ou pas de questions aux élèves. Il joue le rôle de disséminateur

d'informations. Cette situation offre très peu d'occasions de négociation du sens aux élèves.

4. *Interactionnelles* : dans ces situations, en employant des questions, l'enseignant invite les élèves à parler. Ils participent donc à leur apprentissage. Elle est plus propice à la négociation.

Voici des exemples de chaque type d'interaction centré sur l'enseignant :

8. *Présentation d'un élément de grammaire*
9. *Discussion menée par l'enseignant* :
    - L'enseignant parle avec les élèves à propos de leur fin de semaine ou bien leurs projets pour l'avenir
    - L'enseignant parle avec les élèves à propos de ce qu'ils pensent d'une certaine activité
10. *Exercices de compréhension orale*
    - Dictée
    - Exercices de compréhension orale enregistrée
11. *Introduction ou fermeture de tâche* : ici, l'enseignant explique la tâche ou les devoirs ou revient brièvement pour en parler à la fin de la tâche.
12. *Correction d'une activité ou des devoirs* : ici, l'enseignant corrige un exercice avec la classe. N'oubliez pas de noter si l'enseignant l'exécute d'une manière traditionnelle ou interactionnelle
13. *Gestion de classe* : ici, l'enseignant prend la présence ou parle des activités, telles les examens ou les projets, à venir.
14. *Autre* : Toute activité qui ne se range pas dans les autres catégories

VII. Finalement, veuillez noter si les activités se passent majoritairement dans la L1 ou la L2. Il est à noter que si l'enseignant mène les activités dans la L1 vous pouvez cocher *Écouter* comme savoir visé. S'il pose beaucoup de questions vous pouvez également cocher *Parler* comme savoir visé.

Merci de votre collaboration!