

Researching Classroom Discourse

Discourse Analysis

Defining Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis has been variously defined but typically attention is given to the discourse context of interactions. McCarthy (1991), for example, maintains that “discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used” (p. 5). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) define it as “the study of language in use that extends beyond sentence boundaries” (p. 4).

Discourse analysis developed in the 1960s and 1970s from work in various fields and tended to include two parallel interests: “text linguistics, which focused on written texts from a variety of fields and genres, and discourse analysis, which entailed a more cognitive and social perspective on language use and communication exchanges and which included spoken as well as written discourse” (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 4). For our purposes, we will focus on the latter area with an emphasis on spoken discourse.

Conversation Analysis. As Lazaraton (2002) points out, the majority of L2 discourse analysis studies typically employ one of two qualitative research methodologies: *conversation analysis* (CA) or *ethnography of communication*. Conversation analysis involves an examination of naturally occurring talk in order to determine what is being accomplished for the speakers involved. For those doing CA and “trying to understand a bit of talk, the key question about any of its aspects is—*why that now?* . . . What is getting done by virtue of that bit of conduct, done that way, in just that place?” (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002, p. 5).

CA does not deal exclusively with conversations in the sense of interactions for sociability. Rather it can deal with a variety of interactions such as medical consultations or classroom interaction. Take, for example, the following medical interaction.

Pt: This- chemotherapy (0.2) it won't have any lasting effects on havin' kids will it?
(2.2)

Pt: It will?

Dr: I'm afraid so.

(Source: Have, 1999, p. 4)

The goal of the conversation analyst is to investigate what is being accomplished for the speakers of this interaction. Have (1999) analyzes the interaction as follows:

The patient proposes an optimistic assessment as to the effect of her forthcoming chemotherapy, after which the physician is silent, leading to a remarkably long, 2.2-second pause. In so doing, he can be seen as demonstrating that he is not able to endorse this positive assessment. Thereupon, the patient 'reverses' her statement in a questioning manner, 'It will?', which the doctor then does confirm with: 'I'm afraid so'. (p. 5)

In terms of methodology, conversation analysts generally adhere to the following principles (Lazaraton, 2002, pp. 37–38):

1. using authentic, recorded data which are carefully transcribed;
2. using "unmotivated looking" rather than pre stated research questions;
3. employing the "turn" as the unit of analysis;
4. analyzing single cases, deviant cases, and collections thereof;
5. disregarding ethnographic and demographic particulars of the context and participants;
6. eschewing the coding and quantification of data.

Let us examine how these principles would be applied to an analysis of the interaction previously listed. First, the interaction is authentic, recorded data. Although the pauses are included, a fully transcribed interaction would include additional features of speech production. Second, the analysis involves "unmotivated looking." In other words, the researcher is not examining the discourse to answer a predetermined research question. Finally, the conversation analyst is not concerned with the social context of the interaction and, unlike interaction analysis, does not code and quantify the data.

Ethnography of Communication. The second major qualitative approach to discourse analysis is termed the *ethnography of communication*, which, as with all ethnographic research, recognizes the influence of culture and social realities in seeking to find holistic explanations for meaning and behavior. For Lazaraton (2002) the most salient difference between conversation analysis and the ethnography of communication is that the latter considers transcribed interactional data as "just one (and not necessarily the most important) source of information that should be considered in documenting cultural practices" (p. 40). In other words, the ethnographer of communication is concerned with the social context of the interaction and with achieving an emic and holistic perspective of the interaction. In an attempt

to achieve a holistic explanation of a classroom exchange, ethnographers of communication might use interviews, classroom observations, field notes, and other data in their study. In general most of the qualitative discourse analysis studies of interest to L2 researchers and practitioners adhere to the principles of the ethnography of communication. This is because, as Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, and Olsher (2002) point out, "most CA research, including some research on talk in educational institutions, is not built to answer theoretically motivated research questions of the type that applied linguists often ask" (p. 14). In our discussion of discourse analysis we provide examples of ethnographies of communication.

Doing Discourse Analysis

Transcriptions. For both conversation analysis and the ethnography of communication, natural interaction needs to be recorded and transcribed. Whereas it may seem that transcribing is a very simple process of writing down what is said, Have (1999) argues that a transcription is best seen as a "*translation*, made for various practical purposes, of the actually produced *speech* into a version of the standardized *language* of that particular community, with some selective indication of the actual speech production" (p. 76). Because spoken language conveys a good deal of meaning through intonation, pauses, overlaps, and so on, which cannot be fully captured in the written word, transcripts cannot be taken as equal to the recordings of spoken language. For this reason, Have (1999) contends that transcripts should not be considered as the data of discourse analysis; rather the recording itself is what the researcher must consider. What the researcher does in the process of transcribing the recording is to present a selective portion of the recording.

In an attempt to capture some of the features of spoken interaction, transcriptionists rely on coding systems that symbolize several features of spoken interaction. The following are some commonly used transcription symbols (adapted from Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Have, 1999):

Sequencing

- [A left bracket indicates the beginning of an overlap in speech.
-] A right bracket indicates the end of an overlap in speech.
- = An equal sign at the end of one line and an equal sign at the beginning of another indicates that there is no gap between the lines. This is called *latching*.

Timed Intervals

- (.) A period in parentheses indicates a micropause, that is, a pause of less than .2 second.

- (0.0) Numbers in parentheses indicate the length of a pause by tenths of a second.

Characteristics of Speech Production

<u>Word</u>	Underlining indicates some form of stress from pitch or loudness.
:	A colon indicates a lengthened sound or syllable. More colons indicate a more prolonged sound.
-	A dash indicates a cutoff, usually a glottal stop.
.	A period indicates falling intonation.
,	A comma indicates continuing intonation.
?	A question mark indicates a rising intonation.
.hhh	This symbol indicates inhalation.
hhh	This symbol indicates exhalation.

Transcriber's Doubts and Comments

- () Empty parentheses indicates the transcriber's inability to hear what was said.
- (()) Double parentheses indicates the transcriber's description of details of the scene.

Analyzing Transcripts. Once recordings are transcribed, the researcher begins the task of analyzing the data by searching for patterns and explaining the logic of the interaction. In order to accomplish this, the researcher starts with a process of "unmotivated looking," which entails noticing what may at first seem unremarkable features of the interaction. The idea is to approach the data with an open mind and not with any preconceived ideas of what the data mean. Starting with an open mind, Have (1999) suggests that researchers undertake the following steps.

- First, a sequence of the interaction needs to be selected for analysis as was done with the previously mentioned medical consultation.
- Next the researcher needs to characterize the actions in the sequence on a turn-by-turn basis by considering what the participants are doing in each turn. In order to accomplish this task, the researcher considers "how the timing and taking of turns provide for certain understandings of the actions and matters being talked about" (Have, 1999, p. 106).
- Finally, the researcher considers how the manner in which the actions were accomplished reflects certain identities, roles, and relationships for the participants.

The advantage of using discourse analysis to investigate classroom interaction is that it allows researchers to gain insight into what is being accomplished in a particular classroom interaction that takes place in a specific social context. As Kumaravadivelu (1999) notes, by emphasizing the social context of language use, classroom discourse analysts can "look at the classroom event as a social event and the classroom as a minisociety with its own rules and regulations, routines and rituals. Their focus is the experience of teachers and learners within this minisociety" (p. 458).

Discourse Analysis Research

One example of a classroom discourse analysis study in an EFL setting is Hancock (1997). In this study, Hancock investigated how learners in a private language school in Madrid performed two role plays: one set in a restaurant in which one learner was a waiter and the other a customer and another in a guesthouse in which one learner was the landlady and the other the guest.

Hancock found that in the role plays students shifted between a *literal frame* in which they were behaving as themselves and a *nonliteral frame* in which they were role playing. The language used in the literal frame was off-record between the learners themselves and was often in Spanish. The language in the nonliteral frame, on the other hand, was on-record to be heard by a potential audience and was typically in English, the target language. The off-record exchanges typically dealt with questions about the task itself or the language. The following exchange illustrates how in an off-record or literal frame, Spanish was used to clarify the task (off-record is in bold):

- 1 G do you like to have a shower?
- 2 MM yes please . . .
- 3 eso lo preguntava yo [I was going to ask that]
- 4 G no
- 5 MM es para mi [it's for me]
- 6 can I have a shower (p. 225)

The second example illustrates how Spanish was occasionally used in the off-record frame to ask how something is said in English (off-record is in bold).

- 1 Ev que digo [what shall I say]
- 2 Er {anything else?
- 3 Ev anything else? (p. 222)

Based on his analysis of the language used in these role plays, Hancock argues that teachers should not assume that all use of the L1 is bad and that use of the L2 is good. Rather sometimes the use of the mother tongue is a natural by-product of the interaction. Furthermore, attempts to stop such use of the L1 may be very difficult. The value of such studies is that, unlike coding systems that record only whether or not the L1 is used in the classroom or not, classroom discourse analysis can demonstrate the purposes L1 serves for the participants themselves. The study exemplifies how the meaning of an interaction is shaped by what precedes it and follows it and that every detail is purposeful and relevant.

A second example of a discourse analysis study focused on L2 learning is the investigation is Nakahama, Tyler, and van Lier (2001). In this study the researchers investigated how meaning is negotiated between native speakers (NSs) and nonnative speakers (NNSs) in two-way information-gap tasks as opposed to relatively unstructured conversations. The participants for the study were 3 Japanese females enrolled in an intermediate-level ESL university class and 3 female graduate students in linguistics. Each NS and NNS dyad interacted in a spot-the-difference information gap activity and a relatively unstructured conversation in which they discussed their common experiences at the university, their experiences living in the same city, and their common interests.

Part of the data analysis involved examining the discourse strategies used in each type of activity. For example, the researchers examined discourse strategies such as silence, the use of *okay*, the use of *oh*, and negotiation cycles. Previous research has shown that *oh* is frequently used to signal mutual understanding. In this study, the researchers found that in conversational activities, *oh* was quite frequently used for this purpose (112 times by NSs and 38 times by NNSs). The following excerpt from the conversational data illustrates how *oh* can be used to indicate understanding.

In a prior conversation, Mika (a NNS) mistakenly thought Donna (a NS) had asked her how long she would stay in the United States so she answered "for a year," whereas in reality Donna had asked her how long she had been in the United States. However, later in the conversation, Mika's answer did not make sense to Donna so she asked for clarification. In this excerpt Donna uses *oh* to show her understanding that Mika has not been in the United States for a year but only recently arrived.

60 Donna: But you were here last spring for the um..

61 Mika: Naa.

62 Donna: You were already here

63 Mika: I came here umm this umm this um January 2

64' Donna: Oh just January Oh so you haven't been here for one year
you've been you're going to

- 65 Mika: From
66 Donna: stay for a year
67 Mika: A ya (p. 397)

Such data analysis, as opposed to purely quantitative analysis, allows researchers to examine how particular features are used in a specific context and thus to reach conclusions about language use. The analysis is based on the assumption that "there is no a priori justification for believing that any detail of conversation, however minute, is disorderly, accidental or irrelevant" (Markee, 2000, p. 40). In this case, the particle *oh* was a key mechanism for showing Donna's understanding of the situation.

Critical Discourse Analysis

One criticism of discourse analysis is that while it does examine the sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspect of language use, it devotes no attention to the sociopolitical dimension of language use. Kumaravadivelu (1999), for one, argues that classroom discourse analysis is limited because it neglects to examine how the larger social and political framework influences what is said in the classroom. In order to overcome this shortcoming he advocates a critical approach to classroom discourse analysis. He maintains that critical classroom discourse analysis (CCDA) is based on various premises and principles including the premise that social, political, and historical conditions influence the interaction between teachers and learners and that the L2 classroom "is not a secluded, self-contained minisociety; it is rather a constituent of the larger society in which many forms of domination and inequality are produced and reproduced for the benefit of vested interests" (p. 472).

One example of how critical discourse analysis can be applied to classroom interaction is Chick (1996), who examined the interactions of a native South African English-speaking (SAE) professor with his ethnically diverse students in a post-apartheid South Africa. Based on his data, Chick maintains that in some instances Zulu students, unlike some of the SAE students, did not share the professor's understanding of the purpose of various educational routines. For example, in South African universities, post-examination interviews are common. Many SAE professors, as well as SAE students, see the interviews as a chance for teachers and students to discuss students' preparation and performance on a university examination. On the other hand, some Zulu students see the interview as a time to account for their performance on the exam. Hence, the SAE professor and Zulu students have cross purposes in the interviews. Chick's analysis of the discourse of the interviews illustrates how the SAE and Zulu students' different views of the purpose of the interview affected the interaction. The SAE stu-

dents tended to support the professor's idea that the interview was one of solidarity in which teacher and student were meeting to discuss their performance on the examination. This perspective is evident in the following exchange.

- Student: Now I don't think I did this essay um answered that question entirely in that frame of reference.
 Professor: Ya.
 Student: I think that is what you're going to say.
 Professor: Well, well, I'm I'm wanting to see.
 Student: You're you're going to say I didn't actually um answer the essay in relation . . . (p. 341)

A Zulu student, on the other hand, who believed the interview as a place to justify his performance, took a role of deference and politeness as is evident in the following example in which the Zulu student uses the address term *sir*.

- Professor: You mean . . . you didn't have the reading. . . .
 [Or you didn't know what the reading was . . .
 Student: [(*starts to speak*) Yes sir
 [= overlapping speech (p. 340)

Chick contends that by using this politeness, the student unknowingly challenged the professor's assumption that the meeting was one of equitable relations and thus, he was probably more negatively evaluated by the professor. Chick goes on to argue that in post-apartheid South Africa such intercultural miscommunications can have serious consequences in terms of access to jobs, social welfare, and educational opportunities, where success often depends on sharing the communicative assumptions of power holders. The value of critical discourse analysis research is that it explicitly acknowledges and analyzes the power relationships that exist in a classroom.

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Exploring the Ideas, 3.3

Read one of the discourse analysis studies listed here and then answer the questions that follow. If you are familiar with another discourse analysis study, you can analyze this article instead.

Articles:

- Lazaraton, A. (2003). Incidental displays of cultural knowledge in the nonnative-English-speaking teacher's classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 213–246. (This study examines the cultural knowledge shown by two nonnative-English-speaking teachers in their intensive English classroom.)
- Nakahama, Y., Tyler, A., & van Lier, L. (2001). Negotiation of meaning in conversational and information gap activities: A comparative discourse analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(3), 377–405. (This study contrasts how meaning is negotiated in two different types of interactions between native English speakers and nonnative English speakers in a relatively unstructured conversation and a two-way information gap activity.)
- Ulichny, P. (1996). Performed conversations in an ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30(4), 739–764. (This study employs discourse analysis to demonstrate how classroom interaction can combine the goals of negotiation of meaning and explicit instruction on the formal features of language.)

Questions:

1. What theoretical orientation informed the study?
2. Where was the study conducted?
3. Who were the participants of the study?
4. How were the data collected?
5. How were the data analyzed?
6. Is there any additional information you would like to have about the methodology used in the study?
7. What were the findings of the study? Do they seem justified in light of the data that were presented?
8. What were the pedagogical implications of the studies? Do they seem warranted in view of the findings of the study?

Be prepared to share your assessment of the article with your classmates.

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WRITTEN DISCOURSE**Text Analysis of Student Texts***Defining Text Analysis*

The field of text analysis developed during the 1970s and 1980s from a growing recognition that the traditional analysis of written texts from a largely morphological and syntactic perspective did not do justice to the

complexity of written texts. Instead, as Grabe and Kaplan (1996) note, text researchers began to recognize that a "text is a multidimensional construct; that is, no unidimensional analysis of text can offer an adequate interpretation of the nature of text" (p. 39). The growing recognition of the complex nature of effective writing resulted in the development of text analysis, which Connor (1994) defines in the following way.

Text analysis describes texts and evaluates their quality, both from the viewpoint of texts that learners produce as well as the kind of texts they need to produce. Text analysis can help ESL researchers, teachers, and language learners identify rules and principles of written or spoken texts at a variety of levels: sentences, sentence relations, and complete texts. This research orientation differs from traditional linguistic analysis in two major ways: (a) It extends analysis beyond the level of sentence grammar, and (b) it considers the multidimensional, communicative constraints of the situation. (p. 682)

Although those who support text analysis recognize the multidimensional nature of texts, some text analysts do isolate aspects of student texts such as verb choice and syntactic structure in an effort to contrast the writing style of proficient and non-proficient writers for the purpose of identifying typical features of effective texts.

Doing Syntactic Analysis of L2 Student Texts

Hyland (2002), among others, has argued for the importance of undertaking text analysis studies because such studies "can help us to understand both the features of effective writing and the influences that contribute to it" (p. 152). He lists various researchable questions on student texts, three of which are particularly relevant to our discussion:

- What features characterize the texts of this specific group of learners?
- Do these features differ from those in texts produced by other writers?
- Can these differences be explained by reference to language proficiency or L1 conventions? (p. 153)

Many studies that focus on the syntactic and lexical features of student texts address the questions listed above. Their purpose is to compare the linguistic features of texts written by L2 writers with those of L1 writers. The problem, of course, is to determine which features to analyze.

One of the early means used to examine the syntactic features of L1 student essays was what Hunt (1965) termed *T-units*. A T-unit is composed of a main clause and all of the dependent modifying clauses. For example, the sentence, "The student, who has taken several writing courses, still has problems with writing," would be considered as one T-unit. On the other

hand, the sentence, "The student has taken several writing courses, but he still has problems with writing," is composed of two T-units. Hunt proposed that in determining T-units the researcher should ignore the student's punctuation and instead cut up the text into "the shortest segments which it would be grammatically allowable to write with a capital letter at one end and a period or a question mark at the other, leaving no fragment as residue" (p. 27). Several measures of syntactic maturity have been developed using the T-unit including the (a) number of words per T-unit; (b) the number of T-units per sentence; (c) the number of clauses per T-unit; and (d) the number of words per clause. Employing these measures as a way of assessing the syntactic maturity of L1 writers, Hunt (1965) showed that students in grades 4, 8, and 12 showed an increase in their syntactic development as expressed in T-units.

When T-unit analysis was applied to L2 student essays, some researchers argued that T-units were not suitable for use with low proficiency students. Homburg (1984), for one, argued that with low proficiency students it is necessary to recognize students' punctuation in segmenting the text. Thus, he defined a sentence "as a string of words with a capital letter at the beginning of the first word and a period or another terminal punctuation mark after the last word" (pp. 91-92). T-unit analysis of L2 essays also began to include the concept of error free T-units, which seemed to discriminate more accurately among various levels of syntactic maturity, namely, grammatical accuracy and complexity.

Syntactic Text Analysis Research

Ishikawa (1995) is one study that employs error-free T-unit analysis with low proficiency EFL students. The subjects were two classes of freshmen at a Japanese women's college. Students in both classes were given a homework task based on picture stories. For the first task, students were given a series of questions to elicit the story, resulting in a guided writing task. In the second task, the students wrote out the full story based on the pictures alone with no guidance. Her samples included low-level writing narrations like the following:

A man looked an old house. He looked an old chair and proposed life. He proposed his life in the future. He entered in the room and proposed enjoying life. His hat was put off by the arrow. So he thought a strange thing. When he entered in the room, grandfather had died with the rope. He thought that he had died himself. He was very sad. (p. 53)

Ishikawa (1995) employed Homburg's definition of a T-unit, using the students' punctuation as sentence boundary markers. In analyzing the example shown above using Homburg's definition of a T-unit, the sample

would include 9 sentences and 9 T-units since the sample contains no compound sentences. It also contains 11 clauses since there are two complex sentences in the passage: "When he entered in the room, grandfather had died with the rope." And "He thought that he had died himself."

However, it is more difficult to determine what should constitute an error. Should, for example, the sentence "His hat was put off by the arrow" be counted as an error free T-unit or not? Ishikawa decided to strictly define correctness: "Correctness was defined as correct with respect to discourse, vocabulary, grammar, and style, and strictly interpreted. A sentence or clause which might be correct in isolation was considered incorrect if it did not fit its discourse environment perfectly" (p. 59). According to this definition, "His hat was put off by the arrow" would be considered incorrect. She then used the following measures to determine which objective measures best discriminate low-proficiency writing samples.

Sentences per composition

T-units per composition

Error-free T-units per composition

Clauses per composition

Error-free clauses per composition

Words per composition

T-units per sentence

Error-free T-units per sentence

Clauses per sentence

Error-free clauses per sentence

Words per sentence

Error-free T-units/total T-units

Clauses per T-unit

Error-free clauses per T-unit

Words per T-unit

Words per error-free T-unit

Total words in T-units

Total words in error-free T-units

Error-free clauses/total clauses

Words per clause

Words per error-free clause

Total words in clauses

Total words in error-free clauses

Words in error-free clauses/total words in clauses (p. 60)

She found that the best measure for discriminating the syntactic maturity of the essays was the total words in error-free clauses and the second best the

number of error-free clauses per composition. T-units then provide one alternative for researching the syntactic maturity of L2 student texts.

T-unit analysis, however, is not the only measure that has been used to determine writing proficiency. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) note that studies have shown that the following developmental changes can be seen in more effective L2 writing.

- increased use of adjectives
- increased nominal complexity
- increased use of free modifiers
- increased use of sentence adverbials
- increased use of relative clauses
- increased use of finite adverbial clauses
- increased use of stylistic word-order variation
- increased use of passives
- increased use of complex NP subjects
- increased range of tense and modal usage, and
- decreased use of unmodified NPs (pp. 44–45)

One recent study that looked at a variety of features of L2 texts to determine their syntactic maturity is Hinkel (2003). In her study, Hinkel undertook a quantitative analysis of 1,083 L1 and L2 academic texts to determine some of the linguistic differences that exist in L1 and L2 academic essays. As she points out, "One of the difficult issues in teaching academically bound ESL students to produce appropriate academic written text is that research has not established with certainty what specific syntactic and lexical features, when taken together, can create an impression of a seemingly simplistic or reasonably sophisticated text in written L2 discourse" (p. 275).

The purpose of her study was to identify particular grammatical and lexical features that can create an impression of textual simplicity in L2 texts as compared to L1 texts. In order to do this, based on the findings of various analyses of spoken and written corpora, she identified specific syntactic features that she believed contribute to the impression of an unsophisticated text and counted the number of times these occurred in the academic writing of L2 writers and L1 writers.

She focused specifically on the following:

- (a) the frequency of the use of *be*-copula as the main verb with accompanying predicate adjective and existential *there*;
- (b) vague nouns such as *guy*, *man*, *people*, *society*, *stuff*, *thing*;
- (c) public verbs such as *acknowledge*, *admit*, *announce*, *assert*, *claim*, *confirm*, *contend*, *declare*, *disclose*, *insist*, *maintain*, *object*, *predict*, *protest*, *report*, *suggest*;

- (d) private verbs such as *believe, consider, decide, discover, doubt, dream, estimate, expect, feel, find, guess, imagine, know, learn, notice, observe, pretend, reflect, think*; and
- (e) expecting, tentative wanting verbs such as *attempt, desire, expect, plan, try, want*.

She found that the median frequency rate of *be*-copula and predicate adjectives of vague nouns, and of public, private, and expecting/tentative verbs was higher in L2 texts than L1 texts. Based on her findings, Hinkel maintains that L2 texts tend to include a smaller range of grammar and lexis than L1 texts and that many of the structures used in L2 texts demonstrate the use of features that are prevalent in spoken and conversational discourse.

Studies like Ishikawa (1995) and Hinkel (2003) begin to answer the questions posed by Hyland regarding the features of L2 texts and how they differ from L1 texts. Such research illustrates the kind of investigations that can be undertaken in analyzing the linguistic features of L2 writing, providing a model for small-scale classroom studies. Teachers who have students who are consistently doing poorly in L2 writing classes can examine the texts of these writers to see if they exhibit some of the lexical and grammatical features that seem to characterize simpler and less effective texts. Determining in what way the texts of particular L2 writers are more restricted in their choice of lexicon and syntactic structure provides a basis for developing a curriculum that will address these problems.

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Exploring the Ideas, 3.4

The following four student essays were written in response to the prompt listed below. First, read the four essays and then holistically evaluate them by ranking them from 1 (the most effective) to 4 (the least effective). Remember with holistic assessment, the idea is to quickly read the essay and then provide an overall evaluation of the text. Then, if possible, compare your ranking with your classmates and discuss why you ranked them as you did.

Now evaluate the four student essays listed below using some type of discrete linguistic analysis to assess their syntactic maturity. You might analyze them by employing a T-unit analysis as was used in the Ishikawa (1995) study cited earlier. You could also examine the texts using the features of L2 essays that were examined in the Hinkel (2003) study, namely, the frequency of the use of *be*-copula as the main verb with accompanying predicate adjectives and existential *there*, the use of vague

nouns, and public, private, and tentative wanting verbs. Then compare your results with your holistic assessment of the essay. If you find that the essays you ranked high showed minimal syntactic maturity based on some type of linguistic analysis, discuss why you ranked them highly.

PROMPT:

Most people have one possession that is especially important to them. For example, someone may value a musical instrument because of the many hours she spends playing music on it. Another person may value a piece of jewelry because it belonged to a relative. Finally, another person may value a photograph, a teapot, or a wall hanging because it reminds him of home.

Think about a possession you have that is important to you. Write a paper in which you: first describe it, and then explain why it is so important to you.

In the first part, be so specific that the reader will have a picture of it in his or her mind. In the second part, provide sufficient examples so that the reader understands exactly why the object is valuable to you (McKay, 1984, p. 56).

STUDENT A

Even though I am not the materialistic type of person and even though I don't like to use the word possession because I feel kind of a selfish person. But I have something special, it is a ring my mother gave to me around for years ago before I left my country to the U.S. for my education.

The ring is 18K gold with my initial engraved in it, it is a very small and simple ring and looks like a wedding ring.

I consider the ring important to me not because I like gold or any fancy jewelry, but because it was given to me by somebody whom I love and respect. And because every time I look at it I remember my mother, family, my country and people.

It took me a while before I adopted to the American culture, so I felt lonely and the ring was my only companion.

Everytime I look at the ring I also remember the advice my mother gave with it. She told me, "Son you are going to a country with different language and culture. You are going to face problems but be strong and struggle to get your education and come back to us."

So as you can conclude it is not the materialistic value of the ring that is important to me, it is the memory with the ring.

STUDENT B

Three years ago when I came to America, I brought a small Persian rug which was very valuable to me. It was made up by people who lived in villages in Iran. It has a rectangular shape, containing a mixture of bright blue, white, green, red and some other colors showing the rug's picture nicely. The picture on the rug was made by some beautiful bird, flying in the sky. The material which was used for making the rug is soft and delicate. So the rug is light and too easy to carry it.

The reason I love this particular rug described above is first that was a gift from my grandmother when I was 15 years old. Since then I always took care of it. It was kept in my room all the time. I used to look at it very morning when I woke up. It was a very beautiful rug I have ever seen. When I look at it carefully I can't stop admiring all the effort and art which were applied by people who made it. Second I have another memory of my rug, I used to pray on that rug every day. That's why it is very valuable to me. Third when my grandmother died I always felt I was not alone because I have something from her to remind of her. I know it was very important to my grandmother so I try to keep and take care of it well. And I don't want to exchange it with anything else in this world.

STUDENT C

As a rule I don't keep anything that brings me memories from the past. I don't know why, but I almost always get rid of my things and replace them for new ones. Friends tell me that my places (very often) has a different look and that's because I'm constantly changing my furniture. However, there is one thing that I have kept over the years and it is a picture of a big portion of my family and relatives. This is not a big picture, it is rather small. It was taken on Mothers' Days a few years ago. There are so many people in this picture that is hard to recognize their faces. Starting from left to right you could see my four uncles, followed my mother (smiling as usual), my two sisters, who look like they have been fighting, my grandmother is right in the center of the picture, I noticed her face and it is like saying "When are you going to finish taking this picture," three of my aunts are in the right side of my grandmother. Now this is the first row, because in the second one I could see (they are in front sitting down) my fourth brothers who look like angels. (They must be up to something), my father who looks bored, my four cousins are also here. And I could see their big teeth. Everybody is in my mother's living room which looks beautiful with all those flowers given by her children. I could see the wall which had been painted recently of white they look so clean, I can not see any chairs in the living room, but in the left side (down) of the picture I could see part of the table with a

big cake that looks like a wedding cake. It is too bad that the picture is a little bit too dark because you can't appreciate very well the guy in the front row sitting down on the right (guess who?*) Why do I like this picture? Because it was taken on a day that all of us were very happy, especially me. Everytime I look at this picture brings me good feelings about my people back home. This is the only picture that I have of all of them together. This is the picture of my beautiful family.

*myself

STUDENT D

I have one tennis racket that is important to me for a long time. I would like to describe my tennis racket and explain why it's important to me.

My tennis racket that I bought when I was in high school is a steel racket. The shape is everybody can imagine because I guess everybody know how a tennis racket looks like. On particular thing of my racket is it's made from steel which differs from the wood racket. The color of the racket is silver and the end of the grip has red color on which a white letter "w," which is a beginning letter of brand name, "Wilson." The red color seems that this racket belongs to female player.

The racket is very important to me because it has been teaching me something special. Since I got the racket, I have been playing a lot of games with other players. Sometime I won several games and sometimes I lost; however, everytime the racket seemed to tell me something special. I don't know what it is exactly, but I think it might be a kind of patience. It didn't matter if I won the game or not. The important thing was that I had patience while I was playing. When I was winning, I had patience to win the game. When I was defeated by the player, I had also patience to the player and myself, I think.

Of course, I brought the racket when I came to the United States. Sometimes I play tennis with my friend. Whenever I see my tennis racket, it reminds me of that I should have patience to every body with whom I'm related and everything which happens to me.

(Source of essay, McKay, 1984, pp. 57-60)

* * *

Defining Contrastive Rhetoric Analysis

While studies on the linguistic features of L2 texts offer valuable information on the differences between L1 and L2 texts, some argue that such studies are too limited in scope in that they do not address issues of genre

and culture. These individuals argue instead for a contrastive rhetoric approach to text analysis.

A focus on contrastive rhetoric began with the work of Kaplan (1966). In this seminal study, Kaplan analyzed the essays of 600 L2 students from various language and cultural backgrounds in order to characterize their rhetorical development. Based on his analysis, he argued that various cultures exemplify different types of rhetorical development. According to Kaplan, writers from Arabic culture tend to exhibit parallelisms in their writing. Texts from what he terms Oriental cultures (referring to Chinese and Korean but not Japanese) tend to be marked by indirection, whereas writers from Romance language backgrounds and Russia seem to exhibit more digression in their writing. Although his study has been widely criticized for its methodology, it nevertheless provided the impetus for an examination of how rhetorical development differs according to one's linguistic and cultural background.

Connor (1996) defines contrastive rhetoric as "an area of research in second language acquisition that identifies problems in composition encountered by second language writers and, by referring to the rhetorical strategies of the first language, attempts to explain them" (p. 5). Kaplan (2001) maintains that writers from different cultures and linguistic background may differ in their answers to the following questions.

1. What may be discussed?
2. Who has the authority to speak/write? Or: Who has the authority to write to whom under what circumstance?
3. What form(s) may the writing take?
4. What is evidence?
5. What arrangement of evidence is likely to appeal (be convincing) to readers? (p. ix)

Kaplan notes that in answer to the first question, in the U.S. it might be considered appropriate to consider the issue of abortion as a topic for a class essay. However, in Northern Europe (Finland, Norway, Sweden, etc.) it would generally be considered inappropriate to assign an essay on this topic because abortion is considered exclusively a medical question. The aim of contrastive rhetoric is to find out how cultures differ in their answer to the five questions listed above.

The field has been criticized for frequently assuming that L2 writers of English should acquire the rhetorical patterns of western culture rather than using English according to their own rhetorical development. Land and Whitley (1989), for example, argue that by asking L2 writers to use the rhetorical patterns of western English-speaking cultures, "we require our

ESL students to share and reproduce in their writing our world view, one to which they are, of course alien. Such instruction is composition as colonization" (p. 289). Reid (1992), on the other hand, maintains that studies in contrastive rhetoric are not intended to suggest that certain rhetorical patterns are superior. Rather, because L2 writers are generally compared with L1 writers in western academic contexts, L2 writers themselves often consider one of their learning objectives to master the rhetorical patterns of western English-speaking countries.

Doing Contrastive Rhetoric Analysis

One of the most challenging aspects of undertaking research in contrastive rhetoric is to arrive at a productive methodology. Kaplan's (1966) method involved looking for rhetorical patterns in the texts of L2 writers from particular cultural backgrounds and then making generalizations about the rhetoric of various cultures. Yet, as Mohan and Lo (1985) point out, differences in the texts of L2 writers as compared with L1 writers could be due to L2 students' lack of proficiency in English rather than to cultural differences. Another method used in contrastive rhetoric studies is to examine the texts of proficient writers from two cultures in order to determine how writers from various cultures tend to differ in the development of a particular genre. The methodological problem that arises in such studies is to determine how to select representative authors and examples and how to compare texts from a particular genre while minimizing the effect of translation.

Another methodological approach in contrastive rhetoric studies is to examine what learners are taught about the development of particular texts in their rhetoric books, assuming that this is what the culture considers to be effective writing. Jenkins and Hinds (1987), for example, examined the models included in L1 textbooks on the writing of business letters in English, French, and Japanese in order to arrive at some rhetorical differences that exist in how students are taught to write business letters in these cultures. The problem with this approach is that what rhetoric textbooks promote as the typical rhetorical development of a particular genre may not be what in fact proficient writers from that culture use.

Another method used in contrastive rhetoric studies is to examine how the use of particular syntactic features differs cross-culturally. Hinkel (1995), for example, investigated how the use of modals of obligation (e.g., *must*, *have to*, *should*, *ought to* and *need to*) differs depending on one's cultural background. In order to do this, she compared the use of modals in 455 academic essays written by Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, and Vietnamese speakers with 280 essays of native English speakers. She found that L2 and L1 texts differed in the degree to which they used these modals and the contexts in which they used them. For example, L2 texts tended to exhibit more use of modals of obligation than L1 texts in dealing with the topics of academics,

family and friendship, and traditions. Cultural differences in the context in which modals are used resulted in sentences like the following.

According to Confucianism, people *have to* respect their parents. They also *have to* respect teachers. Teachers are like parents to students and we *have to* follow their advice. (Korean) (p. 331)

When I study here I *must* work very hard. I *must* study to respect my parents and to participate in the development of my country. (Chinese) (p. 331)

All married couples *must* have a baby because it is their duty. However, women *must* raise their children, not babysitters. (Japanese) (p. 336)

A more recent methodological approach to contrastive rhetoric is the use of a corpus to analyze how writers from different cultures enact moves in a specific genre. This methodology is exemplified in a study by Upton and Connor (2001). The data for the study came from a larger corpora of job application letters and resumes written by business students from the U.S., Belgium, Finland, Germany, and Thailand. In their analysis the authors used a coding system for analyzing the moves of a letter of application based on an earlier study. These moves are as follows.

1. Identify the source of information. (Explain how and where you learned of the position.)
2. Apply for the position. (State desire for consideration.)
3. Provide argument, including supporting information, for the job application.
 - a. Implicit argument based on neutral evidence or information about background and experience.
 - b. Arguments based on what would be good for the hiring company. ("My intercultural training will be an asset to your international negotiations team.")
 - c. Arguments based on what would be good for the applicant. ("This job will give me the opportunity to test my intercultural training.")
4. Indicate desire for an interview or a desire for future contact, or specify means of further communication/how to be contacted.
5. Express politeness (pleasantries) or appreciation at the end of the letter.
6. Offer to provide more information.
7. Reference attached resume. (p. 318)

The data on which this study is based consisted of 70 letters of application written by Belgians, 26 letters written by Finns, and 57 letters written by

Americans. All of the students were undergraduate university students who were taking a business writing course. Upton and Connor coded each of these letters according to the rhetorical moves listed above. They then looked at the politeness strategies the writers used in enacting these moves. They found that the Americans in their study tended to be much more patterned, almost formulaic in their use of politeness strategies. The Belgians, on the other hand, tended to be much more individual in their expression of politeness with the Finns falling in between. For example, in enacting move 4 (indicating a desire for an interview or future contact), a representative example from an American student was:

When reviewing your list of candidates for this position, please consider me for an interview. (p. 320)

On the other hand, a representative example from a Belgian or Finn would be:

I would very much appreciate having an interview with you during which I can prove my English communication skills. (p. 320)

There are several features of the methodology used in this study that are significant in regard to contrastive rhetoric studies. First, the study made use of a corpus to analyze specific moves and politeness formulae. Second, the corpus included data from a specific genre, in this case letters of application. And finally, the study clearly specified the cultural background of the writers and the context in which they were writing the letters. This type of analysis allows for a much more fine tuned analysis of cultural differences than was present in the early contrastive rhetoric investigations.

Reviewing studies in contrastive rhetoric and examining the methods they use has several benefits. First, doing so may be of value to you in designing your own contrastive rhetoric study. Second, becoming familiar with the findings of contrastive rhetoric studies can help you design materials that raise learners' awareness of how rhetorical patterns differ cross-culturally. Finally, an awareness of the findings of contrastive rhetoric studies is useful in the assessment of L2 texts so that assessors do not penalize L2 writers for the use of rhetorical patterns that differ from their own.

* * *

Exploring the Ideas, 3.5

Read one of the contrastive rhetoric studies listed below and then answer the questions that follow. If you are familiar with another contrastive rhetoric study, you can analyze this article instead.

Articles:

- Ferris, D. (1994). Rhetorical strategies in student persuasive writing: Differences between native and non-native English speakers. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 28(1), 45–65. (This study analyzes 60 persuasive texts written by L1 and L2 university students to determine how they differ on 33 variables.)
- Hinkel, E. (2004). Tense, aspect and the passive voice in L1 and L2 academic texts. *Language Teaching Research*, 8(1), 5–29. (This study analyzes placement and diagnostic tests written by L1 and L2 speakers to determine how these texts differ in the use of past, present and future tenses, the progressive and perfect aspects, and passive verbs.)
- Scarcella, R. (1984). How writers orient their readers in expository essays: A comparative study of native and non-native English writers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 18(4), 671–689. (This study analyzes 110 essays written by native and non-native English speakers to determine what linguistic devices they use to engage their readers.)

Questions:

1. What was the focus of the study?
2. What written data were examined in the study?
3. How were the data collected?
4. How were the data analyzed?
5. Is there any additional information you would like to have on the methodology of the study?
6. What were the findings of the study? Do they seem justified in light of the evidence presented in the study?
7. What were the pedagogical implications of the study? Do they seem warranted in the context of the study?

Be prepared to share your assessment of the research report with your classmates.

* * *

Text Analysis of Teacher Texts

Doing Text Analysis of Teacher Feedback

The benefits of teacher feedback on student essays have been widely debated, with some questioning its value. Frequently the criticism of teacher feedback arises from the belief that teacher comments are vague and confusing to students. (See, for example, Zamel, 1985.) Clearly any study of the effectiveness of teacher comments depends on the ability to categorize the type of feedback that teachers give students and to assess the effect of such feedback on the development of students' writing.

One study that attempts to do this is Ferris (1997). In this study, Ferris examined over 1,600 marginal and end comments written by teachers on 110 drafts of student essays written by 47 advanced L2 students. She then analyzed the length of the written feedback, the type of comments made, the use of hedges, and whether or not the comments were text specific. In reference to the type of comments teachers wrote, she developed the following categories.

1. Ask for information/question
Did you work out this problem with your roommates?
2. Make a request/question
Can you provide a thesis statement here—What did you learn from this?
3. Make a request/statement
This paragraph might be better earlier in the essay.
4. Make a request/imperative
Mention what Zinsser says about parental pressure.
5. Give information/question
Most states do allow a waiting period before an adoption is final—Do you feel that all such laws are wrong?
6. Give information/statement
Iowa law favors parental rights. Michigan and California consider the best interests of the child.
7. Make a positive comment/statement or exclamation
A nice start to your essay! You've done an impressive job of finding facts and quotes to support your argument.
8. Make a grammar/mechanics comment/question/statement or imperative
Past or present tense?
 - a. *Your verb tenses are confusing me in this paragraph.*
 - b. *Don't forget to spell-check!* (p. 321)

Ferris then assessed the impact of these comments on student revisions. She developed a subjective rating scale based on the degree to which students utilized the comments to revise their essays by making no attempt, a minimal attempt, or a substantive attempt to address the comment. She also analyzed the changes students made to determine whether or not they improved the paper, had mixed effects, or negligible or negative effects on the essay. Overall she found that the changes students made in response to teachers' comments tended to improve the students' papers and that marginal requests for information, requests (regardless of their grammatical form), and summary comments on grammar led to the most substantive

changes. Ferris's typology is based on teachers' responses to the writing of advanced L2 students. It may well be that a different coding system would be needed for less advanced students.

Ferris's study illustrates one type of research that can be undertaken regarding teacher feedback on student essays. Supplementing this research could be research on determining students' preferences for the various types of feedback. In addition, verbal reports could be used to determine how students go about processing the feedback provided by teachers.

* * *

Exploring the Ideas, 3.6

Listed below are three essays written by intermediate-level L2 university students. To begin, respond to the essays as if you were the teacher of the students' L2 writing class. Make any marginal or end comments that you believe would help students in revising their essays.

Now examine your comments using the Ferris (1997) coding system included in the chapter. Note any comments that you find difficult to categorize. If you were using this system in a research project and had these problems of categorization, how would you deal with them?

PROMPT:

Write a two-paragraph essay developed as follows:

First paragraph: Describe a particular place in which you feel comfortable. It can be a corner in your room, a street in your neighborhood, or a place in the country or at the beach. Try to make each detail of your description contribute to a clear picture of this place.

Second paragraph: Explain why this place is "comfortable." You may use additional examples to illustrate your definition. (McKay, 1984, p. 154)

STUDENT A

Repulse Bay is the only place in which I would spend my whole life without hesitation. It is located in the southern part of the Hong Kong Island. The beach which is half-moon shape, is deeply covered by fair and smooth sand. The water is blue in color, with unusually good smell of fresh sea water which no other beach can give me. The scenery is picturesque. There are some very extraordinary rocks which eject out from the steep sea-cliffs, forming some natural sculpturers. Laying on the golden sand, soothing by the warm sun and soft-breeze, and embracing by the graceful sculpturers wash away my worried, miseries, and strains completely.

I enjoy staying in a place where social tension and pollution do not exist. It has to be natural, gigantic and extraordinary. I prefer ocean scene rather than mountain view because the former is always the representation and symbol of softness and motherhood. It should also be quiet and impressive because I enjoy privacy very much. No other place can give me such comfort and fulfillment, but my most favorite beach—Repulse Bay.

STUDENT B

A particular place where I would feel comfortable would be a peaceful place. A place where I could only hear the birds sing. A place where I could feel the wind blowing my hair. A place that has beautiful green grass, and some of my favorite flowers, for example; red roses, red carnations, and yellow daisies. This place should also have different kinds of miniature fruit trees, for example; an apple tree, a cherry tree, and an orange tree.

The particular place where I always like to be is in my mother's garden. I feel very comfortable and happy when I'm there. I do my homework there, because I feel I can concentrate more than when I'm inside the house. The garden for me is so special, because I can really notice nature. The smell of the flowers and the growing of the fruits make me go everyday and stay there for at least an hour.

STUDENT C

The left corner of my room, just opposite my bed, is the most comfortable place for me. A brown modern-designed desk, which is placed close to the wall, is matched with an orange armchair. Just above the desk on the wall is hung with a small abstract painting. On the right, between the desk and the window, there is a stand lamp. On the other side of the desk is the brown wooden bookshelves. It stands from the floor up to the ceiling. Piles of books are put in it according to alphabetical order of author.

This place is comfortable because it is quiet and elegant. Sitting on the chair and looking out through the window, it is the nice backyard which is cultivated with colorful charming flowers. People scarcely go down the backyard, that I can read my books quietly with any border. If I am not reading, I can switch on the cassette on my desk and listen to the music. This corner is so lovely that I always spend a whole night in it.

(Source of essays, McKay, 1984, pp. 156–157)

Doing Text Analysis of Teacher Designed Classroom Materials

Teachers develop a variety of texts to be used in the classroom including course outlines, prompts for student essays, classroom activities, and exam questions. Studies on these texts can help teachers become more aware of

the patterns in their own texts and provide a basis for familiarizing students with the typical patterns in teacher texts. One example of such research is Horowitz's (1986) study of essay examination prompts. In the study, Horowitz collected 284 essay examination prompts from 15 academic departments. Based on his analysis of these prompts he arrived at a typology of the following four purposes that exam questions may serve:

1. Display familiarity with a concept.
2. Display familiarity with the relation between/among concepts.
3. Display familiarity with a process.
4. Display familiarity with argumentation. (p. 110)

He then provided examples of each category based on the data he gathered. He argued that familiarizing students with such a typology and offering examples of each type would better prepare students to write essay exams.

The value of such research is that it raises teachers' awareness of the features of specific pedagogical genres, in this case, essay examination prompts. Given such typologies, teachers can then investigate students' preferences regarding particular kinds of prompts; they can also examine which type of prompt results in the most developed student essays. Clearly far more research is needed into pedagogical genres, like essay prompts and teacher designed classroom tasks. One of the difficulties in undertaking such research is to gather a large enough sample to be able to make generalizations about the common moves that characterize a particular type of teacher-designed materials.

Text Analysis of Second Language Teaching Materials

Certainly one of the most pervasive and influential types of classroom materials is textbooks. In our discussion of textbooks we focus on two ways of researching textbooks. One is to focus on the language used in the textbook—the grammatical structures and lexicon and their use in dialogues and reading texts. The second is to research the social information in the textbooks in terms of such features as the gender, economic class, and ethnic background of the characters. One of the best ways to research the language of textbooks is to use a corpus. In order to demonstrate how this can be done, we begin with a discussion of corpus-based research.

Defining Corpus-Based Research

A *corpus* is a collection of written or spoken naturally occurring language that is stored electronically. Corpora are of two general types. The first is a *specialized corpus* that contains texts of a particular type such as medical dis-

course, L2 learner language, or literary works. A *general corpus*, on the other hand, includes a wide range of text types, including written and spoken texts, as well as texts of different registers or fields.

Several factors affect the design of a corpus, among them the following (Hunston, 2002).

- *Size*—With the increasing data storage capability of computers, it is possible to collect larger and larger corpora. Some argue that too much data in a corpus can be overwhelming, and thus, they support the use of a more limited corpus. In general, the size of a corpus is related to the purpose of the research. For lexicographers, having a very large corpus is helpful. On the other hand, if one wishes to examine the language used in a particular type of genre, such as academic textbooks, a more limited corpus can be quite valuable.
- *Content*—The content of a corpus should be suited to the purpose of the research. As Hunston (2002) points out, “a corpus is neither good nor bad in itself, but suited or not suited to a particular purpose” (p. 26). For example, if a researcher wants to determine the authenticity of informal spoken dialogues in an L2 textbook, two corpora are needed: one containing textbook dialogues and the other a corpora of spoken informal conversations.
- *Representativeness*—If the purpose of the research is to examine general spoken informal conversational English, then the corpus should include conversations that demonstrate variation in the gender and age of the speakers, as well as diversity in the situations used.
- *Permanence*—If a corpus is to remain effective, it must be consistently updated to reflect changes in the language.

One of the main advantages of using a corpus is that it provides information that is more reliable than native speaker intuition. As Biber and Conrad (2001) note, one common intuition about language use is that the present progressive is the unmarked or most frequent choice in informal conversation. Yet their research demonstrates that in fact the simple present tense is the unmarked choice in conversation. There are, however, limitations to corpus-based research. For one thing, a corpus can show only what is included in the corpus so that “a statement about evidence in a corpus is a statement about that corpus, not about the language or register of which the corpus is a sample. Thus conclusions about language drawn from a corpus have to be treated as deductions, not as facts” (Hunston, 2002, p. 23). The most serious drawback of corpus-based research, however, is that it presents language out of context. Hence, the researcher generally knows little about who made the statement, in what context, and with what intent and paralinguistic features.

Corpus-based research includes a variety of specialized terminology. For example, in corpus research, *tokens* are the number of running words in a corpus, whereas *types* are the number of different words in the corpus. In a beginning level textbook, where an effort is made to recycle new vocabulary, one could anticipate fewer types than would appear in advanced level materials. *Lemmas* are composed of words with related forms such as *go*, *goes*, and *went*. Finally *tagging* refers to the addition of a code on words in a corpus. A *tagger*, for example, would allow a researcher to retrieve only the noun form of *help*. (For further reading on corpus linguistics terminology and research approaches, as well as useful Web sites, see the book review section of *TESOL Quarterly*, 37, 2.)

Doing Corpus-Based Research

Two areas of corpus-based research are especially valuable for developing and assessing L2 textbooks. The first is the calculation of *word frequency lists*. A frequency list is simply a list of all the types of words that appear in a corpus, along with the number of occurrences of each word.

Let us take, for example, the appearance of common verbs in English. Based on the research of Biber et al. (1999) with the *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, Biber and Conrad (2001) point out that nearly 400 different verbs occur over 20 times per million words. However, only 63 verbs occur more than 500 times and only 12 verbs occur more than 1,000 times. These 12 verbs are: *say, get, go, know, think, see, make, come, take, want, give, and mean*. With this information, L2 textbook writers would clearly want to include the 12 most common verbs in beginning level materials.

Word frequency lists are even more useful when they are sorted by register. For example, whereas the 12 most common verbs are very important in conversation where they account for over 45% of all verbs, they account for only 11% of verbs in academic prose. This kind of information is especially helpful in designing materials for English for Specific Purposes. For example, knowing what are the most frequently used verbs in a corpus of business texts would be valuable information in designing English for Business textbooks.

A second type of analysis that can be done with a corpus is *concordancing*. Concordancing programs allow the user to bring together all the instances of a particular word along with the words that surround it. The selected word is referred to as the *node word/phrase*. For example, the following is a partial list of the use of word *disclose* as it appears in the Brown corpus of written English sorted by the word that follows on the right. Presenting *disclose* sorted right as shown here demonstrates that *disclose* often collocates or goes with the word *details*. On the other hand, if the list were sorted by the word on the left, a researcher would be better able to make generalization about the use of *disclose* as an infinitive. The best way to read concordance lines is to skim them initially from top to bottom, looking for central patterns.

Concordances for **disclose** = 70

Net Dictionary entries for disclose

1 s as often neglect as hesitance to disclose. A busy president, conversant with
 2 "While it may be appropriate to disclose an item of official information und
 3 his firm. However, he refused to disclose any further details about Mr Chan.
 4 se material that it was obliged to disclose anyway. Mr Kalisher was later brie
 5 ng's request for the Government to disclose at today's Legco meeting recent dip
 6 Mr Tony Eason, said the proposal to disclose Category II buildings did not match
 7 consequences. Few were willing to disclose details of the meeting. The Liberal
 8 on the Prince of Wales Hospital to disclose details of an internal investigation
 9 police last Sunday but refused to disclose details of the arrest. Mr Huang sai
 10 er examination. Mr Lam declined to disclose details of the incident, saying an
 11 sisted yesterday that it would not disclose details of the PM's diary so far in
 12 compense, and has asked Barclays to disclose documents relevant to its claim.
 13 as exceeding \$10,000,000 (we don't disclose financial figures to the public). It
 14 ess," said Ms Yiu, who declined to disclose her full name. Many food operators
 15 A dismayed Mr Tsang, who would not disclose his full name, said government poli
 16 d so simple that he didn't like to disclose his ignorance. While Mr& Biatz w
 17 For the first time, companies must disclose in a clear and concise manner how
 18 ted to Britain, is threatening to disclose in his memoirs this year. So
 19 said it would be inappropriate to disclose information on import and export de
 20 recorded the conversation and would disclose it to their families and schools.
 21 ecoreded the conversation and would disclose it to their families and schools.

The data listed above and used below in *Exploring the Ideas, 3.7* was taken from the Brown corpus. The Brown corpus was compiled in 1961 and includes 500 samples of over 2,000 words each. The samples represent a wide range of styles and varieties of prose. The searches were taken from the Web Concordancer that is available free on the Web at <http://www.edict.com.hk/concordance>.

* * *

Exploring the Ideas, 3.7

The verbs *declare*, *disclose*, and *expose* all have the feature *to state*; however, they differ in their syntactic patterns and collocations. Examine the following concordances of these three verbs from the Brown corpus. To begin, identify what words each verb tends to collocate with. For example, the previous data suggests that the verb *disclose* often collates with the word *detail*. Second, look for the common syntactic patterns used with each verb. Do some of these verbs tend to be used more widely in the passive or infinitive form? Finally, formulate any tentative conclusions you could make about the difference in the collocation and syntactic patterns of these three verbs.

You will notice that the entry for *expose* contains both the noun and verb form. If you were using this list for research purposes, it would be wise to use a tagger to elicit only the verb form.

Concordances for **declare** = 41 Net Dictionary entries for declare

1 a' fly the pro-democracy banner and declare a fully-elected legislature as the
 2 rupting, but refused his request to declare a ceasefire for Russian Christmas,
 3 would have to call in the army and declare a state of emergency if the disput
 4 nds they received. Members should declare all interests they received directly
 5 said his motion called on China to declare an amnesty and release all political
 6 cing a mechanism for the courts to declare an election void and streamlining so
 7 h surplus now that we think we can declare another dividend," Mr Etches said.
 8 GILSLATIVE Councillors will have to declare any sponsorship or material benefits
 9 in July, then I would not need to declare anything." The Legislative Counci
 10 d," Mr Etches said. "We hope to declare at least one more dividend between M
 11 > (92:07:29> (3> Councillors to declare donations By LANA WONG and CONNIE
 12 rlier that members did not have to declare donations from their political organ
 13 t that legislators did not have to declare donations received by their parties,
 14 servant Exco members had little to declare except their posts in the Governmen
 15 Anson Chan Pang On-sang, has yet to declare her interests. (2197> (92:07:28>
 16 Smith: "Of course, Rhodesia could declare herself independent, and she would b
 17 nd May. While he is not expected to declare his formal candidature for at leas
 18 MICHAEL ATHERTON'S decision to declare in Sydney yesterday with Graeme Hi
 19 lines, councillors are required to declare land and property of "substantial v
 20 entury. As a Yorkshireman, I declare my interest. I await the call from
 21 stands before the congregation to declare publicly their faith and to be recei
 22 and thereafter a hundred followers declare secrecy a higher verity. This is si
 23 ian conscience was leading some to declare slavery wrong and to act accordingly
 24 c, say the only two legislators to declare such directorships. Mr Peter Wong H
 25 rgotten hearing his adored Czarina declare that all truly great men had odditi
 26 next year unless the President can declare that it is safe for them to return
 27 Year's Eve address to the nation to declare that it was his "constitutional du
 28 ldings. He had earlier refused to declare that the title to a flat below the
 29 plaintiffs are asking the court to declare that they can buy flats in the Jing
 30 d, "it is no longer fashionable to declare that we can say nothing certain abo
 31 ically, to draw a line here and to declare that, in due course, this Council wi
 32 ent financial advisers will have to declare the commission they will earn. The
 33 ndlord, Mr Lau Wong-fat, need only declare the country of their holdings, which
 34 ey note, the Revenue Service might declare the pension plan is discriminatory
 35 . The Milan stock exchange had to declare the trades null and void to avoid fo
 36 Legislative Councillors failed to declare their affiliation to political group
 37 are required by the Government to declare their interests. Earlier this year
 38 and the company was quickly able to declare very liberal dividends on its capit

39 r properties. But Mr Ngai did not declare where his properties were, saying he
 40 expected its staff to voluntarily declare whether they had the right of abode
 41 y-five years of married life could declare with some pride that her husband had

Concordances for **expose** = 23 Net Dictionary entries for expose

1 ROVER, the first car maker to expose a 1995 model, has given the Metro
 2 nsurance and investments. This will expose,and therefore end, some shady pra
 3 plaster on the walls hacked off to expose bare brick, the ceiling strung wit
 4 ime Minister is absolutely right to expose it as a serious threat to the futu
 5 Recently, WREL won praise for its expose of particular cases of employment a
 6 id the release of the tapes would expose other underground activists, in effe
 7 o pulled his jacket to one side to expose part of an imitation pistol he was c
 8 resent, the truth we are trying to expose,right now, is that the makers of c
 9 ve gone undercover as passengers to expose rogue minicab drivers and pass inf
 10 y to manipulate their profits. This expose so enraged some companies and the
 11 ling report meant that we could not expose the children and staff to the risk
 12 -Semitism than this opportunity to expose the exact link between the respectab
 13 phase of the Tories' campaign to expose the fault-lines in the opposition's
 14 t would, according to the minutes, "expose the government to serious criticis
 15 and the existing MTRC operation to expose the problems implicit in the existin
 16 on). I consider it to be my job to expose the public to what is being written
 17 tent. ## BUT IF THE Trial did not expose the special Nazi mania so deadly to
 18 y answers during the past year to expose the spending of some \$1 million on p
 19 ldwide product domestically could expose the supposed barrier between interna
 20 ally amendment- an act which could expose the United States to no practical ri
 21 strategy of the South has been to expose the vices of the North, to demonstr
 22 d him because they feared he might expose their secrets and corrupt practice.
 23 nounced a new activity designed to expose thousands of teen-age boys and girl

Concordances for **disclose** = 70 Net Dictionary entries for disclose

1 s as often neglect as hesitance to disclose. A busy president, conversant with
 2 ``While it may be appropriate to disclose an item of official information und
 3 his firm. However, he refused to disclose any further details about Mr Chan.
 4 ee material that it was obliged to disclose anyway. Mr Kalisher was later brie
 5 ng's request for the Government to disclose at today's Legco meeting recent dip
 6 Mr Tony Eason, said the proposal to disclose Category II buildings did not match
 7 consequences. Few were willing to disclose details of the meeting. The Liberal
 8 on the Prince of Wales Hospital to disclose details of an internal investigation
 9 police last Sunday but refused to disclose details of the arrest. Mr Huang sai
 10 er examination. Mr Lam declined to disclose details of the incident, saying an
 11 sisted yesterday that it would not disclose details of the PM's diary so far in
 12 compense, and has asked Barclays to disclose documents relevant to its claim.
 13 as exceeding \$10,000,000 (we don't disclose financial figures to the public). It

14 ess," said Ma Yiu, who declined to disclose her full name. Many food operators
 15 A dismayed Mr Tsang, who would not disclose his full name, said government poli
 16 d so simple that he didn't like to disclose his ignorance. While Mr& Slatz w
 17 For the first time, companies must disclose in a clear and concise manner how
 18 ted to Britain, is threatening to disclose in his memoirs this year. So
 19 said it would be inappropriate to disclose information on import and export de
 20 recorded the conversation and would disclose it to their families and schools.
 21 ecorded the conversation and would disclose it to their families and schools.
 22 endently managed pension fund. To disclose its assets which must not be dispos
 23 So far, the OECD has refused to disclose its country-by-country studies, al
 24 return for the defence agreeing to disclose material that it was obliged to dis
 25 illors to decide whether or not to disclose more than required, it said. On th
 26 Although the Government has yet to disclose Mr Deng's itinerary, sources said
 27 I felt it would be inopportune to disclose my presence. Not that I intentionall
 28 e. The act makes it an offence to disclose official information in areas relate
 29 argument that it could be unwise to disclose one's financial position to a stra
 30 eau of Investigation reports might disclose.Section 6 (j) of the Act, as w
 31 plete listing and description would disclose.Several were born in the early dec
 32 us rates, with others expected to disclose similar setbacks. Mike Urnston, the
 33 eeks said. However, he refused to disclose specific steps for the \$9 billion s
 34 idelines, councillors will have to disclose such sponsorships or material benef
 35 s at Coventry last month will today disclose that the altimeters were correctly
 36 o invest. The guidance notes also disclose that the new operators will get a s
 37 Frank Young, she stopped the cab to disclose that Young had been shot dead, tear
 38 s. Mr Tam urged both governments to disclose the contents of the negotiations.
 39 sed the Government's willingness to disclose the list. But the Secretary for Pl
 40 eration. The spokesman declined to disclose the other plans but said the board
 41 nes will not require councillors to disclose the specific amount of the financia
 42 the councillors are not required to disclose the amount of benefits they receive
 43 ar, forcing financial salesmen to disclose the amount of their commission, may
 44 irport issue but said he could not disclose the contents of the plan. The Chine
 45 is not going to be our practice to disclose the details of our relationships wi
 46 thout requiring the councillors to disclose the exact amount of sponsorships or
 47 compensation. The failure to disclose the findings of a City tribunal whic
 48 m''. He said it would be wrong to disclose the information to a third party wit
 49 s Li said. The bureau refused to disclose the location of the hotel or how l
 50 nics boss Mr Gulu Lalvani would not disclose the name of the buyer of his Cheste
 51 tters and fishermen. He refused to disclose the name of the developer. A total
 52 kong. Mr Lalvani said he could not disclose the name of the new owner but would
 53 prepared to ask the Government to disclose the relevant exchanges between Brit
 54 ance, it may not be appropriate to disclose the same item of information under a
 55 tions to parties requiring them to disclose the source of funds they received.
 56 nt, asked that Osman be ordered to disclose the source of his funding because he
 57 ndings and urged the government to disclose the survey methods. An Agriculture
 58 House. Causeway Bay. They did not disclose the time or the number of participa

59 are to complete. NatWest will not disclose the total cost, but the final bill i
 60 f Article /2, of the Agreement, to disclose the use thereof in the projects and
 61 over sales staff being forced to disclose their commissions and charges contin
 62 banks and the Bank of England to disclose their customers' identities, claimin
 63 be released soon but declined to disclose their identities. The three bisho
 64 e improvement if companies had to disclose their positions fully, and executive
 65 ad until their speeches refused to disclose their stance on the electoral arran
 66 ad until their speeches refused to disclose their stance on the electoral arran
 67 ad until their speeches refused to disclose their stance on the electoral arran
 68 valry east of the Macon railway to disclose to Sherman that he was missing the
 69 was fair. His lawyers refused to disclose what the costs were. It is believed
 70 the Government is in a position to disclose whatever it feels fit while the Exco

* * *

Exploring the Ideas, 3.8

Listed below are the Web sites for some free corpora with concordancers. Identify a lexical pattern that you want to research. For example, you might undertake research on the use of *interested in* versus *interesting*, or you might look for the words that collocate with a particular group of verbs that share a common meaning such as the verbs in *Exploring the Ideas, 3.7*. Then visit at least two of the Web sites and undertake a search for the problem you have identified. Be certain to note what type of data are included in the corpus you search since, as was pointed out earlier, what is included in a corpus has a significant impact on what is found. Be prepared to describe the findings of your search. (My thanks to Erkan Karabacak, a graduate student at San Francisco State University, for supplying these sites.) For additional concordancing programs see O'Keeffe and Farr (2003).

Some Online Free Corpora in English with Concordancers

The Compleat Lexical Tutor

<http://132.208.224.131/>

This is a very interactive Web site with various corpora. Moreover you can use your own text as a corpus in order to analyze it. It also includes many ideas for teachers and learners on how to use a corpus in class for research-based learning.

Online KWIC Concordancer

<http://ysomeya.hp.infoseek.co.jp/>

This site has a helpful one-million-word corpus of business letters.

MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English)

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micase/>

This site includes a 1,848,364 word transcript from 152 different texts. You can search for phrases in specified contexts. You can easily track the concordance results with references to files, full utterances, and speakers.

Web Concordancer

<http://www.edict.com.hk/concordance/>

This site has several corpora, including literature. This site also offers easy-to-use concordancing software for free.

British National Corpus

<http://sara.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/lookup.html>

This site has 100 million words of written and spoken corpus. It has easy-to-use instructions. However, key words in context are not aligned, which makes it harder to see the pattern of the context.

Collins Cobuild Corpus Concordance Sampler

<http://www.collinswordbanks.co.uk/>

This easy to use 56 million-word corpus has three sub corpora from Britain and the United States. It also has a short easy-to-follow guide.

Turbo Lingo

<http://main.amu.edu.pl/~sipkadan/lingo.htm>

This is an easy to use online concordancer in which you can paste and analyze your own corpus. It also finds two-word phrases in a corpus, which might be helpful in detecting over-used phrases in learner corpora.

WebCorp

<http://www.webcorp.org.uk/>

This very clever concordancer uses the whole WWW as a corpus. You also have access to the text of the key word in the concordance.

WebCONC

<http://www.niederlandistik.fu-berlin.de/cgi-bin/web-conc.cgi?art=google&sprache=en>

This online software does key words in context with many languages.

Corpus-Based Research of L2 Teaching Materials

Liu's (2003) corpus-based research focused on American English idiom teaching materials. In the study, Liu used three corpora—a corpus of spoken *professional* American English, a corpus of spoken American *media* language, and a corpus of *academic* spoken English. In this way the corpus included a wide range of spoken English registers. His next step was to identify the idioms he would search in his corpora. In order to do this, he consulted major contemporary English idiom dictionaries and phrasal verb dictionaries and selected 9,683 idioms to search.

He then searched for these idioms and tabulated their frequency in four different corpora. One of them was based on all three corpora and the other three from each of the three corpora included in his study. Based on his analysis he found that, in general, idioms were rarely used in the corpora. Furthermore, idioms are sensitive to register so that, for example, the idiom *to hang out (with)* had only 8 tokens in the professional spoken corpus with far more in the other corpora. Finally, he found that idioms can vary in form so that the meaning of the idiom *ballpark figure* was extended to *ballpark idea*.

Liu then compared the findings of his research with the information in the dictionaries he had initially consulted. What he found was that the selection of idioms in these books was inconsistent, with some of the dictionaries not including idioms that frequently appeared in the corpora he used. More importantly, the primary meaning listed for some of the idioms in the dictionaries was not consistent with those found in the corpora. For example, the primary meaning of the idiom *bring up* in the idiom dictionaries was listed as *to rear or educate a person (often a child)* rather than the primary meaning in the corpora *to mention and start discussion of an issue*. He concludes by arguing that idioms presented in teaching and reference materials “need to be selected in a more rigorous, systematic way, and should be based on authentic language rather than intuition in order to increase their content representativeness” (p. 687).

* * *

Exploring the Ideas, 3.9

Read one of the corpus-based L2 text studies listed below and then answer the questions that follow. If you are familiar with another corpus-based study that focuses on L2 written texts, you can analyze this article instead. Notice from the articles listed how corpus-based studies are being used to examine students' texts, classroom materials, and academic vocabulary.

Articles:

- Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2), 213–238. (This study describes the development and evaluation of a new word list of academic vocabulary that clarifies which academic words are widely used.)
- Flowerdew, L. (2003). A combined corpus and systemic-functional analysis of the problem-solution pattern in a student and professional corpus of technical writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 489–512. (Using a corpus of undergraduate student writing and one containing professional writing, the author describes the similarities and differences between expert and novice writing in the problem-solution pattern.)
- Frazier, S. (2003). A corpus analysis of *would*-clauses without adjacent *if*-clauses. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(3), 443–466. (This study compares how *would*-clauses without adjacent *if*-clauses are dealt with in ESL/EFL textbooks, as opposed to how they appear in three corpora.)

Questions:

1. What was the goal of the study?
2. What corpora were used?
3. What procedures were followed?
4. What were the findings of the study? Do they seem justified in light of the evidence presented?
5. What pedagogical implications were drawn? Do they seem warranted in view of the findings of the study?

Non-Corpus Research of L2 Teaching Materials

Studies of L2 teaching materials, of course, can also be done without corpora analysis. One example of this type of research is Gilmore (2004). In this study, Gilmore assessed the authenticity of dialogues in seven L2 textbooks. Gilmore chose to focus specifically on service encounters, such as a tourist asking for help at a tourist center, because they can be easily replicated outside of a classroom. In addition, the speakers are strangers so the relationship is clear. To begin, he selected service encounters that appeared in his textbook sample. The questions in the service encounter were then reformulated and used as a basis for him to undertake a similar authentic encounter outside of the classroom. These encounters were recorded and transcribed so that Gilmore could compare the discourse features of the textbook dialogues and his encounters outside of the classroom.

Nine separate discourse features were identified and compared in the two versions. These included lexical density, false starts, repetition, pauses, terminal overlap, latching, hesitation devices, and back-channels. He found considerable differences in the use of these features between the two con-

texts. Although he found that in some newer textbooks there were more of the discourse features found in the authentic data, he maintains that textbooks still need to present more authentic interactions in order to prepare students for their encounters outside of the classroom.

Critical Text Analysis Research

Critical text analysis, like critical discourse analysis, seeks to examine how the larger social and political framework influences what is said in a classroom. One of the early studies of this type of textbook analysis is Auerbach (1986), who examined the theoretical assumptions and social implications of curricula used in competency-based ESL programs. In the study, she argues that competency-based adult education (CBAE) materials reflect a tradition of socializing immigrants for specific roles in the existing social order. She maintains that "current CBAE/ESL texts seem to follow the tradition of preparing students to fulfill employers' needs. Many mention only minimum-wage jobs as options for newcomers—for example, bus-boy, maid, janitor, and factory worker—and teaches language functions of subservience, such as apologizing and following orders" (p. 418). As support for this contention, she analyzed the content of CBAE/ESL texts, citing the following dialogue from Walsh (1984) as an illustration of how the content of a dialogue can socialize immigrants for particular roles.

1. Go to work on time. Don't be late . . .
2. Work hard. Don't be lazy.
3. Work carefully. Always do your best.
4. Ask questions if you don't understand or are not sure . . .
5. Be friendly. Get along with everybody. Be nice to other workers. . .
Smile at them. Be clean and neat. (p. 418)

Another example of a study that critically examined the content of L2 textbooks is Matsuda (2002). The purpose of this study was to explore the representation of English speakers in EFL textbooks used in the first year of junior high school in Japan. Her sample included all of the 7th grade textbooks that were approved by the Monbusho (the Ministry of Education). To begin, she examined the kinds of people that were represented as English-users in Japanese EFL textbooks. In order to explore this question, she identified the nationality of the main characters introduced in the early sections of each textbook before the regular chapters began and counted the number of words uttered by each character. She found that the majority of the main characters in the textbooks were from Japan (34) or inner circle countries (e.g., the U.S., Canada, and Australia) (30). The number of characters from other countries was quite limited (8). In addition she found

that speakers from inner circle countries, although lower in number than Japanese characters, spoke considerably more words (3,074 as compared to 2,844). Furthermore, characters from other countries spoke hardly at all. The high number of speakers from inner circle countries, coupled with the number of words spoken by these characters, suggests that the owners and main users of English are native speakers. Little recognition is given in the text to the increasing use of English as a lingua franca for bilingual speakers of English. Studies such as this one illustrate how simply counting the country of origin of characters in a textbook, along with the number of words spoken by these characters, can be used to discover some of the social assumptions being made in a textbook.

Another study of the social assumptions contained in L2 textbooks is a study by Iwasaki (2000), which examined the cultural context and content of Japanese high school oral communication textbooks. In her investigation of twelve Ministry of Education approved oral communication textbooks, Iwasaki sought to determine if the dialogues used characters and topics from what Cortazzi and Jin (1999) call the *source culture* (i.e., Japan) the *target culture* (i.e., native English-speaking cultures) or the *international target culture* (i.e., interactions between L2 speakers of English). She found that the source culture was used in 83% of the interactions and that in 60% of the textbooks the source culture was used exclusively. Examples of international target culture interactions were extremely rare although today English is used more and more among L2 speakers of English. In terms of cultural content, the textbooks dealt primarily with surface level aspects of culture such as food, names, customs, and school life.

Several of the dialogues in her data contained implicit assumptions as to the relationship between Japanese and western culture. The following dialogue, for example, subtly suggests that western culture should be emulated.

Rye: Jim?

Jim: What.

Rye: Is your father always doing the dishes like that?

Jim: Yes. My parents take turns cooking and doing the dishes.

Rye: My father never helps with the housework.
He's too tired after a long day's work.

Jim: I think the Japanese work too much and too long.
What do you think?

Rye: I think so too. But people are taking more holidays than before.
My father stays home longer.

Jim: What does he do on holidays?

Rye: Usually, he just relaxes. But you know what?

He started to learn cooking.

Jim: Does he cook well?

Rye: Yes, he cooks very well.

Everything is very very well-done.

(Source: *Echo*, 1997. Tokyo: Sanyusya, Lesson 18, "Housework," as cited in Iwasaki, 2000)

In light of the assumptions made in this dialogue regarding gender roles and western culture, a researcher could examine to what extent other dialogues in the text support or challenge these assumptions. To the extent that students focus more on what is said in an L2 text than how it is said, we need more research on the assumptions that exist in textbooks regarding ethnic identity, social class, and gender. Such research exemplifies a critical approach to L2 teaching and learning that seeks to challenge and change the existing social and political structure.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we examined various methods for studying classroom discourse. In terms of oral discourse we looked at two methods: interaction analysis and discourses analysis. Interaction analysis, by providing a coding scheme for analyzing classroom interaction, makes it possible to compare classroom discourse patterns across contexts. However, the complexity of such coding schemes often makes them difficult to use. In addition, the coding scheme limits what is salient to the researcher. Discourse analysis looks at a classroom interaction in the context of a particular teacher and learner in a specific classroom. The advantage of discourse analysis is that attention can be given to patterns as they arise from the data. The disadvantage is that the findings are limited to one particular context.

In discussing the analysis of written discourse using text analysis, we emphasized that the focus of text analysis can differ greatly. Whereas some text analysis involves an examination of the syntactic features of a text, other involves an examination of the rhetorical and cultural features of a text. In addition, although some text analysis involves counting discrete features of a text using predetermined categories such as T-units, other research examines the research data to develop unique categories for data analysis, such as categories regarding teachers' written feedback. Finally, some text analysis involves the use of corpora to evaluate and develop classroom materials. We ended the chapter by pointing out the possibility of adopting a critical approach to classroom materials research.

FURTHER READING

On Interaction Analysis

- Chaudron, C. (1988). *Second language classrooms: Research on teaching and learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Fanselow, J. (1987). *Breaking rules*. New York: Longman.
- Spada, N., & Fröhlich, M. (1995). *COLT Observation Scheme*. Sydney: NCELTR, Macquarie University.

On Discourse Analysis

- Have, P. (1999). *Doing conversation analysis*. London: Sage.
- Lazaraton, A. (2002). Quantitative and qualitative approaches to discourse analysis. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 22, 32–51.
- Markee, N. (2000). *Conversation analysis*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
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On Text Analysis

- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London: Addison Wesley Longman. (Chapter 2)

On Contrastive Rhetoric

- Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
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- Panepa, C. (Ed.). (2001). *Contrastive rhetoric revisited and redefined*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

On Corpus-Based Research

- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2001). Quantitative corpus-based research: Much more than bean counting. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(2), 331–336.
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- Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpora in applied linguistics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
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