

Toward a transdisciplinary approach to FL classroom interaction

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Abstract

The focus of the article is on the questions and issues that have arisen in research on communication in second language contexts, as well as possibilities of addressing them that open up when one moves to the understanding of scientific inquiry as “a form of *anti*-disciplinary or transgressive knowledge, as a way of thinking and doing that is always problematizing” (Pennycook 2007: 37).

The article aims to point to some issues in research on communication in a FL classroom where a transdisciplinary approach might prove useful or even necessary to address them. An expanded analysis of a classroom discussion carried out within Hymes’ model that includes different modes and forms of communication as well as aspects of on-goingly changing contexts should illustrate the benefits of applying a transdisciplinary approach in research on communication in a second language classroom.

Keywords: affect; discourse; EFL classroom communication; Hymes’ model; interaction; transdisciplinarity.

1. Introduction

The term *transdisciplinarity* (albeit the multiplicity of meanings attached to it), has become a subject of great deliberation in language study in recent years (cf. Bernstein 2015; Byrd Clark 2016; Filipović 2015; Jenks 2003; Pennycook 2007, 2017). In its first use, credited to Jean Piaget (Bernstein 2015), it was defined as a “higher stage succeeding interdisciplinary relationships [...] which would not only cover interactions or reciprocities between specialized research projects, but would place these relationships within a total system without any firm boundaries between disciplines” (Piaget 1972: 138). Being

fairly concise, as the definition includes such basic characteristics of transdisciplinary inquiry as a common orientation to transcending and interpenetration of boundaries between concepts, methods and disciplines, and an attempt to bring continuity to research and resulting knowledge, it has become a springboard for subsequent transdisciplinary research.

Recent popularity of transdisciplinary research seems to result from the complex nature of the post-modern reality whose analysis demands resources that would enable effective handling of these complexities (de Freitas, Morin, & Nicolescu 1994; Nicolescu 2002). As a result, scholars need to rethink the methods of inquiry and respond to the fluidity of the terms that have lost their ontological status (Foucault 1984).

Present-day advocates of transdisciplinarity acknowledge that the concept, in general, contrasts with the traditional absolute separation of the subject and object of study (Nicolescu 2010), the phenomenon of dividing knowledge into separate disciplines, each with its own methodology, research practice, and pathways toward accomplishment, as well as with detachment and absence of collaboration of experts from diverse fields (academia, government, industry) on specific projects that transcend the boundaries of specific disciplines (Gibbons et al. 1994). Pennycook (2007: 37) claims that “a new conception of research must entail a shift in spaces of inquiry”, by which, following Jenks (2003: 3), he suggests “transgressing the boundaries of disciplinarity in scholarly thought and action” where transgression, means “the conduct which breaks rules or exceeds boundaries” (Pennycook 2007: 37).

This article first brings Hymes’ (1972) ‘SPEAKING’ model of communication into focus with an aim to broaden the spectrum of semio-linguistic analysis of communication in a FL classroom to include not only the elements of interaction as specified in Hymes’ model but also the material entities like human bodies, their sensory systems and objects in a situated configuration that are argued to retain agentive power of varied intensity in different interactional contexts (cf. Pennycook 2007, 2017). Such an approach should lend itself to the reconsideration of multidimensional ways of interaction and meaning making in an L2 classroom and demonstrate “the potential of transdisciplinarity - embodying its components of crossing between disciplines, literacies, modalities, languages, codes, contexts, and learning environments” (Byrd Clark 2016: 4).

2. The SPEAKING model and its (in)compatibility with recent research on FL classroom interaction

The model of communication developed by Dell Hymes in the early 1970s, labelled with the acronym 'SPEAKING' seems to be a good example of a transition in scholarly thought on a pathway to transdisciplinarity. Since its publication in 1972, the framework has conquered the majority of domains of L2 teaching and has specified both the process and the product of L2 education. In the model, 'S' stands for 'Setting and Scene' which are defined as "the time and place of a speech act and, in general, to the physical circumstances" as well as the "psychological setting" or "cultural definition," including characteristics such as range of formality and sense of play or seriousness (Hymes 1974: 55-56). 'P' stands for 'Participants,' and includes the speaker and audience. 'E' refers to 'Ends', or rather the purposes, goals and outcomes of the interaction (Hymes 1974: 56-57). The 'Act' sequence embraces the form and order of the event while 'Key' holds for cues that establish the "tone, manner, or spirit" of the speech act indicated by choice of language or language variety, gestures and paralinguistic cues such as intonation, laughter or crying. 'I' stands for 'Instrumentalities', i.e. both the channel and the medium of communication. On a larger scale, this term relates to language varieties, registers and media of transmission such as written, spoken or gestural. 'N' signifies 'Norms', i.e. the social rules governing the event and the participants' actions and reaction. Finally, 'G' meaning 'Genre' refers to the kind of speech act or event.

The model was argued by its author to be productive and powerful in analyzing many different kinds of communicative situations since by looking at how people actually use language, patterns could be discovered that otherwise would not be revealed by just looking at the surface or even deep structures themselves. Upon closer inspection, though, some flaws of the model can be indicated. Leech (1976) pointed to the lack of its integration with other branches of linguistics or academic fields. Later, other researchers (Gumperz & Levinson 1996; Roger & Bull 1989) highlighted the impaired generalizability of the findings obtained through the systemic analysis of specific samples. Findings could not be generalized beyond the samples of the study, which seems to contradict Hymes' assumption that his model, by being systematic and thorough, is "heuristically important" (Coulthard 1985: 59). The impaired generalizability was also reflected in the lack of complete, systematic descriptions of data which should allow for statistical analysis (Roger & Bull 1989),

as well as in the difficulties reported in giving exhaustive descriptions of spoken spontaneous interaction (cf. Small 2008).

Furthermore, Blommaert (2016) and Pennycook (2007, 2017) have pointed to discrepancies between the components of Hymes' model and the postmodern reality. In particular, a different understanding of *Setting* and *Scene* has generated a change in the conceptualization of *Participants*. On the one hand, performative theories of identity (cf. Butler 1993, 1997) resonate with Hymes' idea of performance (1981) that comprises three abilities (interpreting, reporting, repeating) that are concurrently implied in the performance of culturally competent individuals who intentionally engage in certain behaviors targeting interactional goals. In a culturally incompetent individual, however, each of the abilities occurs separately and independently of the other, which indicates that the individual is on the way to achieving cultural competence, and hence is incapable of freely and agentively performing an identity that culturally competent individuals can enact. For instance, FL learners can understand what is going on in a situation without being able to say, or they can repeat the behavior (e.g. a ritual) as a way of describing it. In other words, performance means "assum[ing] responsibility to an audience" (Hymes 1981: 84).

On the other hand, in recent views on identity performance (Blommaert 2016; Bucholtz & Hall 2016; Pennycook 2007, 2017), the concept of intentionality has been extended to include not only embodied animate subjects but also inanimate material objects. In this view, the agency of the former is in part transferred to the material surroundings that "in and of themselves, have consequences" for the identity of interactants (Pennycook 2017: 277), who in their acts of identity-making momentarily encounter and experience *adaptable artefacts* (Pennycook 2007) that yield a particular feeling of the self in that particular space. Identity, then, is not only intentionally constructed by human interactants, but also "imbricated in complex arrangements that include non-human as well as human participants, whether animals, epidemics, objects, or technologies" (Bucholtz & Hall 2016: 186). A good example of the impact that material surroundings exerts on the situated identity of human interactants is recent online learning enforced by COVID pandemic. Online lessons can engage students from diverse cultural and local social environments whose material arrangement (e.g. a cluttered learning space shared by several people, a quiet neat space for one learner) may variably influence students' performance (e.g. distraction, alertness, productivity, fluency, accuracy).

Furthermore, interactional positions of students in a virtual class are frequently imposed in advance by the settings of an educational platform. In such cases, teachers retain control of the lesson structure and students' activities, speaking rights included. Thus identity becomes "a distributed effect of a range of interacting objects, people and places" (Pennycook 2017: 278), and an outcome of the dialectics of the enduring history of students' verbal and non-verbal actions and of how they interact with the surroundings. Language, then, rather than being a marker of socio-culturally grounded identity, is conceived as a tool of situated identity performance, and a phenomenal property of an individual whose signifying and identifying powers materialize in an instantaneous interaction. For instance, in a FL classroom setting led by a non-native teacher and with other non-native learners sharing L1, a learner may tend to actively engage in an L2 interaction with other students, while in a multilingual classroom led by a native speaker of the target language (TL), the individual can be overwhelmed by the diversity of unfamiliar accents, language repertoires, and behaviors, which can significantly lower their willingness or readiness to communicate.

What is more, new technologies and IT devices open-up possibilities of synchronous cross-spatial communication, and enable individuals to simultaneously participate in a number of spatially distinct interactions in which their positions can be markedly different. The cumulative impact of these concurrent communicative events on the position of an individual in one particular interaction is difficult to predict within the frames of Hymes' concept of speech community. Hymes argues that speech community "shares rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety" (Hymes, 1972b: 54). When individuals participate simultaneously in several interactions, they instantly switch between linguistic varieties or employ a kind of "a common code" that would be acceptable and intelligible to each participant in each single interaction. As Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton (1999: 2) claim, multilingualism boosts "extensity, intensity and velocity of global interactions", yet it also levels and smooths the cultural landscape of the world promoting homogeneity. These new *glocalized* environments (Robertson 1995) necessitate a redefinition of fundamental ideas about speech community, forms, purposes and means of communication. Scholars need to tackle what is fluid and nonlinear, because "[w]hat used to be considered deviant and abnormal – complexity, hybridity and other forms of 'impurity' in language use – has become, in this perspective, normal" (Blommaert 2016: 256).

Moreover, contemporary theories of language learning have emphasized learner imagination of and orientation toward imagined communities as “a way to appropriate meanings and create new identities” (Pavlenko & Norton 2007: 670). Imagination has been argued to enable learners to transcend the immediate context of language learning and to view themselves in a wider world context as well as to expand their range of identities (Kramersch 2000; Norton 2001). Imagined membership in different communities has been claimed to shape “individuals’ present and future decisions and behaviors and provides and evaluative and interpretive contexts for such decisions, behaviors and their outcomes” (Pavlenko & Norton 2007: 670). Norton (2001) also suggests that learners make different investments in language learning, i.e., at different times and in different contexts of language learning, they variably construct their relationship to the target language, which impacts their desire to practice it. The more learners invest in a language, the more opportunities they will have to construct L2 cultural concepts, meanings and accommodate their L2 identity. Hence, if the learners endorse the idea to be proficient in L2 in their possible self, they will be more motivated to master the target language regardless of the immediate contexts.

Finally, in contemporary forms of communication a range of media adopted to carry the substrate for the artefact is much wider. Messages can be produced on various *canvases* (Bateman 2008: 16), be it paper or billboard, or computer screen, or a smartphone. The importance of the canvas was emphasized by Hymes (1981: 5) in the Introduction to *In Vain I Tried to Tell You* where he says that academic interpretation of text meaning would be vain if scholars “refuse to consider and interpret the surprising facts of device, design, and performance inherent in the words of the texts”. He further admits that the substrate and the medium selected for the artefact’s canvas bring their own constraints regarding possible forms and meaning-making processes, as well as open up possibilities for more divergent interpretations of messages. Nowadays, with electronic communication used globally, a range of symbols, images, videos and texts assembled in one message with the application of different media and modalities can yield varied, often unexpected, original interpretations in audiences, while the opportunities of an on-going explanation or disambiguation are lower when compared to face-to-face communication (Pennycook 2007).

The above discussion has aimed to indicate some difficulties that can be encountered when traditional frameworks of linguistic research are employed to analyze contemporary contexts, forms and means of verbal and non-verbal

communication. Hymes' SPEAKING grid has been used as an example of these "traditional" models to demonstrate its potential for application in analyzing manifold communicative events and, at the same time, to point to some aspects of these events that SPEAKING falls short of grasping.

3. Towards transdisciplinarity in TESOL research

In this section the SPEAKING model is employed in an analysis of TESOL university classroom communicative situation with an intention to empirically support the idea that traditional frames of linguistic analysis, as exemplified by Hymes' SPEAKING heuristic can and should be interrogated to provide "the multidimensional ways in which we navigate the in-between-ness of language use and meaning making in different learning and teaching contexts" (Byrd Clark 2016: 9).

3.1. Summary of the communicative situation in a TESOL classroom

The data (see Appendix 1) comprise an excerpt from a discussion located in a university classroom and held in English, the participants' L2. Its total length was 90 minutes. It was audio-recorded and transcribed in Jeffersonian Transcription Notation (Jefferson 1984 – Appendix 2). The purpose of the communicative situation was to discuss the issue of a teacher's influence on the lives of their students. It was intended to develop freely, in the sense that the participants were not nominated for speaking, rather the moderator was to wait for them to engage when they felt like contributing. Amongst the 11 participants, there were 8 female and 2 male students and a female moderator – the teacher of the TESOL course. The students were seated in a semi-circle with the moderator in the middle, facing them.

The discussion started with a question posed by the moderator (turn 1) who then awaited contributions made by the students. Since their reaction was either silence or laughter (turns 2, 4, 6), the moderator launched her story about her own experiences with her school teachers (turn 23). This encouraged S2 to make a contribution, and he got a follow-up from the moderator, which continued in a dyadic interaction between the moderator and S2 until turn 32 while other students were listening and signaled their interactional engagement through laughter (turn 31). When the dialogue stopped, no other student self-

selected to make a contribution and the moderator again kept making recurrent attempts to elicit more contributions from other students (turns 32–64 – skipped from Appendix 1). When this strategy failed, she selected the next speaker by saying “*miss surname*” (turn 64) to call them, which is a typical form of addressing students by teachers in Polish university classrooms. From turn 64 through 85, typical tripartite school IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow-up) exchanges (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975) recurred; the moderator called a student, they responded and the moderator provided a follow-up. At turn 85, a change in turn initiation occurred; S2 self-selected and engaged in a dialogue with the moderator. This move was instigated by the way the contributions had been made, namely the students spoke one by one according to their sitting arrangement, and because S1 had finished speaking, S2 felt obliged to speak. When he finished, S10 self-selected, although this move was not imposed by the sitting arrangement, yet he was the only one who had not made a contribution earlier (turn 99). Other students who had produced their part before, turned to speaking in L1, with which they disengaged from the classroom activity as if they signaled that they “did their job”, and therefore could dismiss themselves from the activity.

3.2. SPEAKING applied and updated

In this section, the classroom discussion summarized in 3.1 is decomposed into the various factors that Hymes deemed to be relevant to produce a satisfactory account of a particular speech situation. Each component of the SPEAKING heuristic is further discussed in terms of possible modifications that might provide a more up-to-date description of the communicative situation.

3.2.1. Setting and scene

The discussion is held in a university classroom where the students sit in a semi-circle and the moderator sits in the middle facing them. The layout of the classroom has been changed for that particular meeting. Typically two-person desks are organized in parallel rows on the one side of the desk with the teacher sitting at the other side of the desk facing the group. This traditional classroom layout has been reorganized by the moderator in order to enable eye contact among the students, as is the case in panel discussions. Another reason why the layout has been changed is departing from regular classroom setting to make students feel at ease and therefore to lower the affective filter (the debate

was an extra meeting and the students volunteered to take part in it; they knew its agenda).

The physical setting with its set-up altered seems to have been conceived differently by each party involved in the discussion, the moderator and the students. Wright (2006: 64) notes that “classroom life is what teachers and learners make it. At the same time, classroom life is what they make of it, and what it makes them” with which he emphasizes reciprocal on-going influences between the physical classroom context, the psycho-social, the cognitive and the cultural context of the human participants. This resonates with Hymes’ notion of *Scene*, i.e., the psychological setting or construal of the communicative situation. Both learners and teachers come to the classroom with certain ideas as to what a “proper” lesson looks like, “and in their actions and interaction they will strive to implement these ideas. In addition, the society and the institution the classroom is part of have certain expectations and demands which exert influence on the way the classrooms turn out” (Van Lier 1988: 179).

The situation under analysis is perceived as a discussion of experts by the moderator and her behavior at the beginning of the discussion seems to support it. Admittedly, she initiates the discussion by posing a question (turn 1), as if playing a role of the teacher, yet she seems to be surprised with an absence of any verbal reaction from the students, and she does not force them to respond. Instead, she awaits their responses and directly attributes their silence to shyness (all right, don’t be shy – turn 3) rather than their lack of knowledge. Also, her next interactional move – telling her own story (turn 23) is not a typical teacher behavior; it does not instantiate any phenomenon that the teacher is explaining. Rather, the moderator self-selects as the first speaker in the discussion.

In contrast, the majority of the students conceive of the situation as yet another class. Only S2 freely engages in the discussion self-selecting as the next speaker in turn 24. Having delivered his story, he continues a dyadic exchange with the moderator as no other student expresses willingness to enter the talk. Upon the completion of this conversation, the long silence positions the moderator as the teacher who calls the students one by one, eliciting their answers. That the students conceive of the discussion in terms of a regular class is evidenced by the behavior of S2 who in turn 86 speaks again because, as he says, this is his turn, and by S10 who in turn 99 self-selects for speaking because he is the last person in the semi-circle and the only one who has not spoken yet.

The above reflection on *Setting* and *Scene* of the communicative situation seems to testify to the accuracy of Hymes' model. A formal, teacher-centered classroom set-up with students seated in a semi-circle facing the moderator, and then calling upon individual students to respond to a question could not have possibly created a context of panel discussion. Yet, two things seem to escape the analysis within this framework, namely the fluidity of the interactional positioning and the agency of the material. Commencing the discussion, the moderator aspires to a position equal with the students. They, however, resist that positioning and position the moderator as the teacher. What must be emphasized is that it is not the students or the moderator, i.e. animate entities that are decisive of that positioning. One can observe that the order of contributions and recognition of turn completion and transition relevance places (Sacks 1972) are not only marked with an aid of linguistic or paralinguistic features but also with the physical organization of the space. The institutional environment and the sitting arrangement, in particular also affect the communicative situation. As Wright (1987: 7) suggests, a classroom is "a complex grouping of factors which combine to produce certain types of social behavior". How the conversation proceeds is in part determined by the physical context whose local momentary configurations acquire agentive power.

3.2.2. Participants

The participants of the communicative situation are the fourth semester (second year) undergraduate students of TESOL at a university in Poland. The participants (2 males and 8 females) are pre-service teachers (referred to as students) with a long history of learning English as a foreign language (over 10 years of formal instruction in EFL on average). The participants of the discussion selected TESOL as their major and received extensive lecturing on psycholinguistics, psychology and pedagogy of learning and teaching EFL prior to the discussion, but they did not report any practice in teaching English before. They are all native users of Polish.

Although the group seems fairly homogenous as far as their ethnic and cultural origin is concerned, the content of their contributions reveals differences in their "cultural capitals" (Bourdieu 1985; Bourdieu & Passeron 1990). For instance, S2 and S10 "naturally" acquired the knowledge of what it means to be a teacher, since they both come from "teaching" families (turns 89, 99). Their contributions to the discussions are not similar quantitatively, though. S2 engages freely and contributes more. He says that not so much the teaching

profession but the language studies were his own choice (turns 93, 95). S10, on the other hand, reveals that his choice was a consequence of his family's suggestions (turn 99). So, S2 and S10 had first-hand opportunities of seeing what the teaching profession involves, yet the element of making free choice and taking an independent decision about one's career could have impacted their on-going classroom performance. For S2 the interest in the English language was the main motive to take up the studies leading to a university degree, while for S10 the career opportunities that open up after the studies were the main reason (turn 104).

A different configuration of variables is observable in S1 who chose the studies because of her interest in the language, the knowledge of which opens up many well-paid career opportunities. Nonetheless, she is not interested in becoming a teacher since her mother is a teacher (turn 83) and she considers it a very demanding but under-paid job. For S1 the socialization in this particular "teaching" habitus had negative impact on her career choice in contrast to S2 and S10 who present a positive attitude to taking on a teaching career. For S5 (turn 65), S6 (turn 68), S7 (turn 72) and S8 (turn 79) selecting the English studies and the teaching profession were the result of their socialization in their primary habitus as well as secondary habitus of their education. Their main motive was to master the language rather than become a teacher.

The motives behind the choices made by each contributor as well as their cultural capital translate into their participation in the discussion. Familiarity with discourses and practices of teaching, a positive disposition towards the use of language, and significant others in their socialization can be seen as a form of a situated cultural capital that bestows advantage on some interactants and bereaves others. So interactional behavior of individuals can only be roughly predicted on the basis of their ethnic group membership that Hymes argues to account for the contextual, relational and socially-judged aspects of speech. Alongside the cultural capital of the community come situationally configured assemblages of individually acquired capitals that "depend on the sum of the individual's prior experiences, the sociocultural context in which learning takes place, and what the individual wants, needs, and/ or is expected to do with that knowledge" (Johnson 2009: 2). These capitals also account for a varied performance of individuals in an interaction.

In addition to the recognition of the impact that cultural capital plays in communication, recent theories of L2 learning (Ting-Toomey 1994, Norton 2001, Pavlenko & Norton 2007) have emphasized learner's investment in learning. Norton (2001) suggests that learners make different investments in

language learning, i.e., at different times and in different contexts of language learning, they variably construct their relationship to the target language, which impacts their desire to practice it. The more learners invest in a language, the more opportunities they will have to construct L2 cultural concepts, meanings, and accommodate their L2 identity. Hence, if the learners endorse the idea to be proficient in L2 in their possible self, they will be more motivated towards the target language.

The concepts of cultural capital and investment can be extended to account for the process of learning in general. By analogy to L2 learning, it can be argued that student's desire to engage in meaningful learning tasks and practice can be perceived as a result of a relationship of a cultural capital and investment. In the discussion, contributions of S2 show that he invested in learning English to get a well-paid job. Yet, it is not only a good job that made him study English. His interest in English started in secondary school where he was discouraged to take up the language as a university major. S2 then invested his effort and time to become student and his frequent and rich contributions in the discussion reveal that he grasps and creates opportunities to master the language, and he heads for becoming an efficient language teacher. In turn 95, S2 emphasizes his active involvement in selecting the English course and quitting biology as well as taking responsibility for learning achievement. He presents himself as an independent and autonomous student who is able to critically evaluate various future socio-cultural discourses and position himself against the opportunities opened by these discourses.

In fact, each contribution made by the students in the discussion reveals that they invested time, money and effort to become members of a community they aspired to. They imagined themselves becoming members of the community of non-native users of English, which motivated them to select specific university courses, yet their actions differed in terms of agency they invested, which is revealed in the stories they deliver. Agency has been described by Van Lier (2010: x) as “the ways in which, and the extents to which, a person is compelled to, motivated to, allowed to, and coerced to, act”, and equally, “the person deciding to, wanting to, insisting to, agreeing to, and negotiating to, act.” The students present themselves as agentive individuals who attempt to influence the course and functioning of their life circumstances. In some cases, the agency was severely constrained by relying on the decision made by an important Other. S7 in turns 70 and 72 says that it was her teacher who told her to study to become teacher, whereas S8 in turn 79 mentions her brother as

an authority. For S5, turn 65, her agency meant choosing between two undesirable options (translation and teaching), and excluding the more unwanted one. S1 in turn 83 implies that she had no agency at all; rather she was positioned in the discourse of TESOL. A similar situation is with S10 whose primary habitus positioned him. Brown (2014) argues agency in learning contexts means awareness and control of actions and choice, which implies that learners must contribute to the learning process and assume responsibility for the accompanying circumstances. If agency is absent, then learners will apply a “mechanistic approach” (Brown 2014: 103) and do what is merely required in the learning context. This resembles the situation displayed in the discussion. The students speak only when called to or when the sitting arrangement forces them to do so. While they are aware that they are involved in the learning process, they, except for S2, have little sense of ownership. They acknowledge that their study and career choices were partly free and partly imposed by their primary and secondary habitus (Bourdieu 1985). S7 in turn 70 makes a sweeping generalization and says that she chose her career, like everybody else in the classroom, under the influence of other social actors, be it a subject teacher or family. Brown (2014) refers to it as “perceived agency”, i.e., the extent to which learners believe their efforts are sufficient to accomplish the learning objective. In our study, perceived agency is observed with their choice of taking part in the discussion as the means to obtain a higher semester course grade – a further step in career development. In the discussion they agentively position themselves as students and resist the positioning of equal parties of the discussion and, at the same time, they position the moderator as the teacher and effectively realize the idea of a teacher-centered class rather than a panel discussion.

The above reflection on the component of *Participants* in the Hymes’ model seeks to illustrate that communicative behavior of interactants is an outcome of an interplay of factors that have to be accounted for simultaneously, hence it exceeds the boundaries of disciplinary analysis. To understand participants’ interactional behavior and to account for flexibility of a situated verbal and non-verbal performance, one has to integrate concepts from such disciplines as sociology, psychology, pedagogy, discourse analysis and linguistics. In transdisciplinary analysis, such diverse concepts as identity, agency, cultural capital, motivation, language performance are phenomenologically called upon as they dialectically interact with the local context and produce a fine-grained view of the interaction.

3.2.3. Goals, act sequence, norms, genre

A number of other factors, encompassed by Hymes' model, that exert impact on a communicative situation are touched upon in the subsequent discussion in an effort to show possibilities for a transdisciplinary analysis in TESOL. One of the most conspicuous factors are varied flexibly modified goals aimed at by each party in the classroom discussion. Obviously, in any interaction participants tend to accomplish different, frequently conflicting goals, and therefore they have to navigate their communicative moves to achieve as much as possible. In the discussion under analysis, an overtly stated goal is to discuss the influence of the teacher on the lives of their students. Nevertheless, the participants bring a number of other "covert" goals they struggle to accomplish. Firstly, the moderator wants to obtain data for her research and enhance the views of the students' on the teaching profession. The students, in turn, are motivated by the perspective of getting a good partial assessment that will improve their final course grade. These varied goals have impact on the performance of the parties in the discussion. The moderator views the communicative situation in terms of a panel discussion while for students it is yet another formal class that may positively influence their course performance and that is why, their behavior does not depart far from that of a regular class. As Aleksandrak (2013: 138) observes, "learners' language production is often a form of realization of a specific task and it is subject to some form of evaluation" and therefore, exclusively meaning-oriented utterances, which constitute most of every day conversations, are infrequent in classroom contexts (Piotrowski 2011). The awareness of being under constant evaluation may have inhibitory effect on the performance of the less confident students or the ones whose identification with the group or the target culture is low. Moreover, too much insistence on following the patterns typical of everyday conversation, as is the case at the beginning of the discussion, may prove counterproductive and reduce students' speaking opportunities, particularly in less confident learners, as well as result in undue use of the native language – as observed in the final part of the discussion when students turned to Polish having completed their task.

Accomplishing communicative goals is intertwined with 'Act Sequence'. By changing the classroom layout and posing a fairly general opening question, the moderator wants to replicate the characteristics of a panel discussion, which, in her view, should cater for a spontaneous language production of the

students. These moves, however, “hinder rather than foster that process” (Pawlak 2004: 103), and lead to the development of a typical classroom format. The students are adamant that they are not going to speak off-the-cuff and persistent periods of silence force the moderator to employ a classroom routine of eliciting responses from the students. She turns to the use the ‘Norms’ of university class address typical for the Polish culture (*miss/mister+surname* – turns 64, 69, 82), and the students readily present their opinions when called upon. Being socialized in such a classroom discourse, they conform to these norms of classroom communication. This form of address used by the moderator, however, implies the social distance similar to the one that holds between the teacher and the group of learners in a classroom, and thus positions the interactants as two parties on the two sides of the desk, the teacher and the students. The students use their first names to address one another or when reporting the words of other students while the moderator clings to “*miss/mister+surname*” pattern. Her conscious attempts to create a discussion of equal parties (sharing her own stories or using phrases like *come on guys, come on don’t be shy; ladies first*) fail. Her positioning as a teacher rather than a moderator of a panel discussion may result from the implicit nuances of the situated discourse, namely the classroom space, the sitting arrangement, the group of people that regularly take part in classes led by the moderator in that particular classroom, as well as the looming evaluation of the contributions the students are expected to make in the discussion. Consequently, the local product, i.e. the discussion is “a phenomenological property of social life”, a feeling that is produced by particular forms of intentional and unintentional activities and behaviors, which “yield particular sorts of material effects” (Appadurai 1996: 182).

‘Norms’ are also implied in ‘Genre’ since any form of communication in any mode is a socially-agreed-upon convention that has specific design features that support certain content. In the present study, two different genres are being targeted at by each party. The moderator makes every effort to organize a panel discussion; she invited discussants, prepared the agenda, informed them of possible questions that might be posed. She selected a fairly general topic of the discussion; the one that could be grounded in the students’ own experiences as learners (the moderator encourages them to share their experiences by telling her own story first – turn 23), and based on the information they obtained in the courses of psychology and methodology of ELT that they had already completed. On the other hand, a different set of criteria are applied

by the students to identify the genre of the communicative situation. They conceive of the situation as a typical classroom setting and recognize their roles as learners who are required to respond when called upon. It seems, then, that both the elements of the physical setting and the elicitation procedure may account for a different perception of the situation by the students. They start speaking when called or when another speaker stopped speaking and they approve of the follow-ups made by the moderator. Also, the utterance *it's my turn now so*, produced by S2 in turn 86 and followed by an outburst of laughter indicates that the students view the situation as a typical class with two sides of the desk; they speak when called to do so and produce back-channels like, *well, erm, mhm* or laughter to signal their class engagement and identification with the group of learners. When they have made their contribution, they feel at ease and switch to L1 to talk to other group members. When called again by the moderator, they switch back to L2 to respond.

4. Conclusion

The aim of the article is to present a broader semio-linguistic analysis of communication in a FL classroom to include not only the elements of interaction as specified in Hymes' model but also the material entities like human bodies, and objects in a situated configuration that are argued to retain agentive power of varied intensity in different interactional contexts. It is argued that a reliable account of foreign language classroom communication needs to address a number of phenomenal artefacts, factors, behaviors and practices that have different values for different participants. They all in a particular configuration generate effects that are distinct from those caused by each single artefact or a human actor. In such contexts, meaning making is relocated to the dynamic relations among human subjects and their cognitive apparatus, material objects, places and linguistic resources. Each element present in the situation becomes a sign that does not mirror its referent or points to the world in a transparent or uniform way nor does it contain inherent meaning. Rather, it is given fleeting meanings by people in particular times and in particular places.

It is shown that the focus of the analysis moves to understanding communication as fleeting verbal and non-verbal practices and "moments of action" (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 159) where "historical trajectories of people, places, discourse, ideas, and objects come together" (Scollon & Scollon 2007: 620).

Therefore, rather than conceive communication as the process of fitting to culturally, institutionally, and situationally-imposed patterns that might surface in actual production, as is posited by Hymes, the paper advocates for an analytical approach which holds that the material, the mental, and the social interact to yield temporary, situationally-relevant meanings that are communicated in moments of action.

Appendix 1

Excerpt transcript

- 1 M: okay (.) do you believe you'll have a long lasting impact on the lives of your future students? A long lasting impact on (erm) the self-esteem of your students? (.) (erm) do teachers have a long lasting impact on the self-esteem of the students?
- 2 (...)
- 3 M: all right don't be shy
- 4 (...)
- 5 M: ladies first?
- 6 Ss: (laughter) no
- 7-22 M: Further attempts to encourage Ss to speak**
- 23 M: all right I can remember a teacher my teacher of Polish in my secondary school (.) 'cause when I left primary school I wanted to be a teacher of Polish and then I changed my mind (.) because (erm) we had such a poor Polish teacher (.) she disappointed me so much (.) I turned to (.) another language although I can't say that my English teacher influenced my choice very much
- 24 S2: (erm) I can remember our high school English teacher when me and a friend of mine told her that we want to study English philology she said don't do this subject (.) it's too hard (.) you won't be able to (.) to I don't know (.) finish this she said (.) better try something else (.) it wasn't very nice of her
- 25 (...)
- 26 M: so she lowered your self esteem
- 27 S2: yeah (.) exactly
- 28 (...)
- 29 M: but only in this (.) in this personal personal situation (.) otherwise she was quite good high school quite a good teacher
- 30 S2: yeah she was very good teacher (.) obviously we learned a lot (.) but (erm) I don't know probably she was afraid that she'll lose her job or something

- 31 Ss: (laughter)
32 (...)
- 64 M: miss SURNAME?
- 65 S5: (.) (erm) first of all I chose this because erm I like wo:: children and erm I like share my knowledge which (.) (laughter) which is I think enough (.) (laughter) and why I didn't choose another specialization (.) because for me sitting on the texts an:d I don't know searching some vocabulary is (.) is boring huh!
- 66 M: (.) you like working with children yea and sharing knowledge? (.) [miss SURNAME?]
- 67 S5: [yeah]
- 68 S6: (.) well it's hard to say why I chosen why I chose this specialization (erm a::m:) well (.) I don't know now if I: want to work at school and with children I (.) (erm) but it's (.) (erm) (.) well it's interesting job but I don't know yet if I really want to do it (.) maybe I (.) I know maybe I will change plans and I'll go to another study and to (erm) another university mmm but everything can change so I: it's hard to say why
- 69 M: miss SURNAME?
- 70 S7: (Erm) (.) I think mmm I chose to be a teacher teacher for the same reason as everybody else said (.) I like to work with children (.) and it (.) to some extent its I was influenced by my teacher I liked the way she: **taached** an:: (.) that's why I chose it
- 71 M: so you were influenced by the method the way she taught or her general knowledge as well (.) personal (.) approach?
- 72 S7: (erm) I was influenced by her knowledge (.) an:d (mmm) further way she: was she shared this knowledge with her students (.) an:d she: also mmm told me that (yyy) I can start learning English and that I can become a teacher
- 73 M: so she influenced your self-esteem yes? it did grow
- 74 S7: Yes
- 75 M: did any of your of your classmates go to the university and study English?
- 76 S7: mmm no: I think it (.) no
- 77 M: you were the only one mhm
- 78 M: (.) miss SURNAME how about you?
- 79 S8: (.) so my dream was to be a teacher in the future and (.) when I went to primary school erm I: I really liked English (.) class but erm I wasn't really good in this subject but my brother told me never to give up an:d I listened to him and I don't and now I am here
- 80 M: so it was your brother who influenced your choice?
- 81 S8: yes I think yes
- 82 M: miss SURNAME?
- 83 S1: I don't want to be a teacher (.) I I: chose this school because I like English and I think that I will: I will erm seek for a job connected with English but not teaching (.) I'm not patient enough (.) (laughter) my mother is a teacher and she: erm and I know that it's hard work and (laughter) maybe private lessons when a child can focus on one thing

- and is not disturbed by other children but erm I erm I don't want to teach the whole class
- 84 M: Mhm
- 85 (...)
- 86 S2: it's my turn now so=
- 87 Ss: [(laughter)]
- 88 S2: [=so my father was a teacher my sister is a teacher her husband is a teacher [so=
- 89 Ss: [(laughter)]
- 90 S2: [=so you see=]
- 91 M: [family business yeah?
- 92 Ss: (laughter)
- 93 S2: =no to be honest I don't want to be a teacher but I would like to learn English well and find a job connected with it and (.) that's it
- 94 M: Mhm
- 95 S2: erm two years ago I studied biology but I didn't like those studies at all so I decided to change something an:d because I always liked English erm I decided to follow (.) that direction=
- 96 M: Mhm
- 97 S2: =and I think this decision gives me better job opportunities so I'm here
- 98 Ss: (whispers in L1)
- 99 S10:my choice was influenced by my family erm because my mother is a teacher (.) my two aunts are are teachers and erm my grandmother was a teacher erm so I also have to [be a teacher]
- 100 Ss: [(laughter)]
- 101 M: [so again] your family influenced your choice rather than (.) school experience
- 102 S10:Yes
- 103 M: why English?
- 104 S10:erm because erm (.)I know that I: I will find a job (.) after these studies

Appendix 2

Jeffersonian Transcription Notation

Symbol	Name	Use
[text]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.

Symbol	Name	Use
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds.
. or ↓	Period or Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch.
? or ↑	Question Mark or Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch.
,	Comma	Indicates a temporary rise or fall in intonation.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
>text<	Greater than / Less than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<text>	Less than / Greater than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
°	Degree symbol	Indicates whisper or reduced volume speech.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
underline	Underlined text	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
:::	Colon(s)	Indicates prolongation of an utterance.
(hhh)		Audible exhalation
? or (.hhh)	High Dot	Audible inhalation
(text)	Parentheses	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
((italic text))	Double Parentheses	Annotation of non-verbal activity.

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