

An Analysis of Classroom Discourse in the Foreign Language Teaching Context

John THURMAN

Introduction

Looking closely at what we say and at what others say will help us to become better speakers and will also help us to understand the feelings of others--feelings that come out in words and action. For this paper, I recorded a class session and I will analyze the class using the techniques of discourse analysis. From this analysis, I hope to become a better teacher and in doing so hope to see the students acquire greater skills in English and more value and power.

There are many aspects to discourse analysis. There is the analysis of normal conversation and the analysis of prepared talk. There is also the analysis of what is called institutional talk. This is talk that takes place between the representatives of social institutions and their clients. This could be the talk between a doctor and his or her patient or the talk between a cable repairman and the home owner.

This can also encompass the talk that goes on in the classroom. One of the greatest differences between everyday conversation and the talk that goes on in institutional talk is that everyday conversation is very unpredictable (Heritage, p. 165) . In this everyday conversation, the topics change rapidly and unpredictably. However, in institutional talk, the talk is constrained more in what is allowable between the participants, as in talking about the business at hand, there are specific goal orientations, as in teaching children and getting a patient better, and there are prescribed procedures that follow in the institutional talk, as in "follow the yellow line to the x-ray center" (Heritage, pp. 163-164) .

That classroom discourse is institutional talk is certain. There is a goal to the discourse; to teach the lesson and to learn the lesson--or at least do what the teacher says to do. Since the lessons are topic based, what can be allowed outside that topic is extremely limited and must provide a connection with what the lesson topic is. And there are certainly frameworks and procedures. Much of the classroom discourse is in a sort of question and answer type of interaction that if done outside the class would seem stilted and rigid. Indeed, it may be as Kumaravadivelu writes, the classroom can be looked at "as a minisociety with its own rules and regulations, routines and rituals" (1999, p. 458) . But be that as it may, one of the goals of an English as a foreign or second language class is to try to provide authentic input. From this, it is hoped that the students will be better able to interact with the outside.

A Discussion of This Class

In this paper, I will analyze a class recording done with my students. This class consists of fifteen second year students at a women's university. This class is officially designated as an intermediate level class. The textbook used for this class was Richard's New Interchange, Book 3. The class was recorded in

its entirety, ninety minutes. Unfortunately, the classroom itself is of an unusual shape, wide but shallow, so the class was recorded not straight from the back, but from the side. This, in addition to my not having a lot of experience recording, has resulted in there being a lot of missed words. The class was recorded with a Sharp Digital Video Camera. The day was hot so there was some manipulation of a fan. Overall, the class seemed to have three large sections to it, depending on the exercise, done as well as a small section at the start where there is a short question answer period about plans for the summer.

The format I would like to use in describing the class is a format suggested by Hatch on pages 314 and 315. Although I don't think I will be able to touch on all aspects of the outline given by Hatch, as this is a classroom setting and my lack of experience in analyzing discourse, I hope to be able to consider most of the outline in this paper. From this, I hope to become a better teacher. The outline in Hatch is:

- System and ritual constraints
- Scripts
- Speech act and speech event analysis
- Rhetorical analysis
- Rhetorical structural analysis
- Cohesion analysis
- Mode and syntax
- Mode
- Contextual analysis

In addition, there is also an additional category of pragmatics that I hope will shed some light on this discourse.

System Constraints

Despite there being countless languages and dialects around the world, all have some common aspects of discourse. One of these is the signals given to notify another when the communication will start. Be this mechanical, as in a phone or a "You Have Mail" message, or in speaking, all communication has to start somehow. On the other end, there are signals that are given and received that the communication will come to an end. In the classroom, the first is the signal that the class will begin and the second that the class is over. Here is the section from my transcript on the opening of my class:

(Students talking) (Teacher enters)

Teacher: How's it going? (10.5) Um. +++ Good afternoon. (9.0) {(Teacher adjusts fan)

How's this. Move it over. That. (2.0) See how it goes the other way.} Ok. Um. Thank you for coming today. It's Um. Kind of a nice ++ day today. Kind of a nice day. You could be ++ at the beach ++++ but + you come to my class. So thank you very much. You could be at the beach looking at all the cute ++++ (mumble) Ok let me go ahead and take roll. (5.5)

As mentioned before, the day was rather hot so there was a fan in the room (Lines 2-3). However, the rest of the opening is the way I usually start a class. One of my goals in teaching is to have as little anxiety as possible in the class when I teach. Although there may be many different types of anxiety, such as trait anxiety and state anxiety, what he hopes to avoid in the class is debilitating anxiety. To complete a recent

term paper for a weekend seminar at Temple University, Japan, I gave the students (in late April) a questionnaire similar to the Attitude and Motivation Test Battery but with some questions on anxiety. Compared with those in a study of students at another university, the scores were relatively low in the area of anxiety, which may be seen as a result of my efforts to conduct the class with as little anxiety as possible (Thurman, 2001).

This phatic talk, which may be seen as insincere complimentary, is honest and heart-felt¹. Boyle (2000), quotes Coupland *et al's* (cynical) definition of phatic talk as:

talk that is aimless, prefatory, obvious, uninteresting, sometimes suspect, and even irrelevant, but part of the process of fulfilling our intrinsically human needs for social cohesiveness and mutual recognition (p. 29).

He also states that phatic talk encompasses greetings, leave-takings and compliments as well. But be that as it may, the writer also agrees with Sarma (1991) when he or she² states, "mastery of such [i.e., phatic] utterances should obviously go a long way in improving the learner's performance" (p. 111). However, it was a hot day and I was thankful the students were there. The school is located in a town on the sea and there is a beach close by, as is mentioned in lines 5 and 6 and, admittedly it goes a little too far, in line 6.

Now, let's take a look at the closing:

(bell=22.5)

Teacher: All right. Lucky. All right. Lets continue this next week. Ok Emi. Next week. See you soon. (4.5) Ok. Goodbye. See you next week.

Student: Ok.

(57.0)

Teacher: (From here only particular students are addressed.) (Teacher talks to a student who picked up an OHP bulb on the desk and then a bolt) Oh yeah. That's from the OHP. That goes to the u::::m yeah the whiteboard. You ok?

Student: Goodbye.

Teacher: Bye-bye.

(35.5)

Student: Ok.

Teacher: Mayuko. Have a good summer. Ok.

Student: You too.

Teacher: Ok. Nice and hot.

Student: Do you have any plans?

Teacher: I'll stay in Kochi. (garbled) I have to clean my office. Lucky me. (14.0) (To a student not in this class standing outside in the hallway?) Hello. Goodbye Miss Kaori.

Student: Goodbye. See you next week.

This closing of this long class may be something of what is seen in other classrooms in that the closing signal is given by a bell. There seems to be no preclosing signal from the teacher in this case although there are two 'allrights' in line 2. If there could be something called a preclosing in this transcript, in the next

line there is the indication that this will be the last section to do:

Ok. Why don't just this this will be the last ++ uh + thing to do today. What I'd ...

The "Lucky" means that the bell rang in mid-practice and the students didn't have to produce their results after the lessons was ended, which could be anxiety-producing to many students. That or the fact that the class in a non air-conditioned room was over might account for the unusual loquacity of a few of the students upon leaving--maybe for the teacher's as well.

Ritual Constraints

Unlike system constraints, ritual constraints on discourse are different across cultures and languages. These constraints enable "smooth social interaction" and "allow communication to flow in the appropriate way" (Hatch, 47). According to Hatch, there are eight ritual constraints. These are ritual constraints in openings and closings, ritual constraints and backchannel signals, ritual constraints and turnover signals, ritual constraints and acoustically adequate and interpretable messages, ritual constraints and bracket signals, ritual constraints and nonparticipants signals, ritual constraints and preempt signals and ritual constraints and Grice's maxims.

For the first, ritual constraints and openings and closings, this deals with socially or culturally appropriate openings and closings. Although, as I wrote before, there are system constraints that all languages have, this ritual constraint on openings deals with social and cultural settings. In the opening of my class, it might have been long for some but the intention of the opening was to help the students relax. However, there was one incomplete phrase (underlined below) in that was intended as a joke but may have been taken differently but I hope not:

Teacher: ... beach + + + + but + you come to my class. So thank you very much. You could be at the beach looking at all the cute + + + + (mumble) Ok let me go ahead and take roll. (5.5) Ok.

Ritual Constraints and Backchannel Signals

As for backchannel signals, which signal to the speaker that the listener is listening and understands what is being said, there seems to have been none other than repeating by the teacher what was said by the student. This repetition may have been to give the students that the teachers understands what the student has said, as in this long excerpt shows:

Teacher: ... summer? Yuki? Any plans? Huh? (4.0) Yuki I always ask this question. What do you plan to do this summer.

Student: I will go to Thailand.

Teacher: Thailand. Wo:w. Wo:w. Is this your first time overseas.

Student: (Shakes head) No no no.

Teacher: No? Where did you go last time?

Student: Australia.

Teacher: Australia. When + + did you go?

Student: When I was high school student.

Teacher: High school student. Thailand. Is it part are you going by yourself uh or are you going with friends? + + or are you going with + a group a you know a package tour.

Student: With friends.

Teacher: With friends. How many.

Student: (shows three fingers)

Teacher: Three. How long do you stay?

Student: Short time.

Teacher: Short time. Short time.

However, more overt backchannel signal occurred later in the class after the teacher explained a mistake in a crossword puzzle, perhaps the only occurrence of a backchannel signal by a student:

Teacher: ... dictionary + + + + right off the bat. (8.5) M? (1:21.5) By the way um + + + + in the book + + you have (Teacher writes on board) "sure + + of + + + + oneself." However in the puzzle + + + + only + + right here. (Teacher underlines "sure" on board) Ok.

Student: Ok.

This single occurrence of a backchannel signal (as opposed to an "Ok" as a "Yes" answer) by a student may worry the teacher as to whether or not what he is saying is either understood by the students or is boring to them.

Ritual Constraints and Turnover Signals

Next, concerning ritual constraints and turnover signals. In the turnover sequences, there is the first relevant pair and the second relevant pair. The first consists of the teacher asking the question and then there is a bid to answer the question. In the second relevant pair, there is the teacher nominating a student bidding to answer the question and that student answering the question. This sequencing may be prevalent in many classes, but in this class, there seems to have been little bidding by the students. This meant that the teacher often had to call on students. In fact, this has been an aspect of the class for a long time in that the teacher would call on a student by name. Some seemed to be lulled by this as can be seen by the below:

(Teacher: calls on a student) Miha. For example if you went (2.5) {(Teacher seems to have surprised to student being addressed) Are you ok?} Ok.

Although it has been mentioned to be a common occurrence in the language class in Japan (see Reinhelt, 1987), there seems to have been not too much consulting between students during the relevant second pair of the question. In addition, there seems to not have been a lot of lag time between the time during the nomination and response in the relevant second pair. In addition, these responses took the form of nonverbal responses:

Student: (shows three fingers)

as well as verbal ones.

Ritual Constraints and Acoustically Adequate and Interpretable Messages

The next ritual constraint, acoustically adequate and interpretable messages, is an important category for teaching. In this is included teacher talk and foreigner talk. Since this is a foreign language classroom, there can be no denying that teacher talk was used. In this case, the teacher spoke with a louder volume and there was clearer enunciation and a slower rate of speech than the person who was the teacher would use otherwise, as, for example, another professor in the department who is quite fluent in English. And while it is hoped that no foreigner talk, speech that is grammatically simpler and in some cases consi-

dered condescending, occurred, but other than a few “How you doings” the speech of the teacher seems to have no foreigner talk, unless the volume of the teacher’s speech, which could be thought excessive, can be considered so. The teacher has conducted classes this way since he has been teaching with the concern that the students hear what he is saying being uppermost in mind. The teacher also uses the same volume of speech when he lectures in Japanese as well.

Another ritual constraint is the concept of speech accommodation. Although it can be a common practice for male students who are fluent in English to revert to what is called katana-English, that is English that is spoken strictly according to the constraints of the Japanese sound system, to distance themselves from the native English speaker when in the group of friends, there seems to not have been this occurrence both during class time and outside of class time. Perhaps it may be that females respect others as people more.³

Ritual Constraints and Bracket Signals

When thinking about the next ritual constraint, bracket signals, these can be an important part of the class. Using aside (other than the many cases where the teacher talks with himself, perhaps more indicative of the naturalness of the class discourse for the class that was recorded and a different aspect of classroom discourse than ritual constraints) helps the teacher make concepts and what he is talking about clearer to the students. For example, the few sentences below, although clumsy, can be considered a side sequence at least trying to help to illustrate the meaning of “miss” :

Teacher: I heard I heard the story that once a Japanese goes ++ touc the plane lands in the foreign country “I want to eat umeboshi” he says he says to himself. I want to eat umeboshi. Umeboshi. But he’s never (garbled) doesn’t like umeboshi or something.

Then there is side sequence that is almost without framing other than an “um” and a three-second wait and must have come upon the students rather quickly but again this may be more indicative of the naturalness of the class:

Teacher: Ok. Um. These are all feelings and often you’ll see them in the face. So um (3.0) but there used to be a really nice t shirt (Teacher gestures to own shirt) and it had all these it had little faces ++ printed on the front and it would s and it would have all the emotions on the face like nervous worried. A very cute t shirt. I’ve been trying t to find one but I never have been able to. Um. Here’s another one.Ok. (7.5)

Ritual Constraints and Nonparticipant Signals

The sixth ritual constraint, that of nonparticipant signals, is really not relevant here, as all in the room knew each other and there was no need for the students to introduce themselves. Hatch also mentions that whispering is a nonparticipant signal, but this occurs often in a class. This would occur in a class when students want to clarify something that happened in class with each other or are just talking with each other. That the teacher had to interrupt two students several times:

(Teacher gets the attention of two talking students) Rumi Yuki how ya doing over there. Ok? Ready?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Ok.

But this is a very common occurrence in a second language class in Japan. Sometimes it is gossiping and

given the time will occur in class. It is unavoidable.

Ritual Constraints and Preempt Signals

The seventh ritual constraint, that of preempt signals, consists of occasions where the speaker is interrupted. This is probably something not seen in a class in Japan very often and there were no occasions where I could find this in the script--unless the bell to end the class could be considered such. However, this was interpreted as the signal to end the class, rather than as a signal that the speaker was being interrupted as there was no talking occurring when the bell sounded.

If there is a case where the teacher is being interrupted in class, then there is a serious problem of what is going on in the class. In this case, the teacher is doing so poorly in his or her teaching that the frustration felt by the students boils to the surface, causing interruption and in the way this is done is often considered impolite. For this to happen in a class in Japan, that would mean that there are certainly serious problems.

Ritual Constraints and Grice's Maxims

The last ritual constraint that Hatch writes about, Grice's maxims, is an important constraint. In these maxims are the foundations for all conversations and how well we adhere to these maxims in discourse is important. These maxims are that we are relevant, that we are truthful, that we are clear and that we have the proper quantity for the occasion. As can be seen, these are all important maxims for the second language class. In the class being discussed, these maxims seem to have been followed without any egregious violations, although these maxims may be regularly violated, leading to conversational implicature.

Relevancy

The first of Grice's maxims is that of relevancy--is the information the person is departing information that is relevant to the context. Teachers naturally want to stay on-topic when teaching their students, but at times straying off-topic cannot be avoided and once started, needs to be completed. In the t-shirt aside mentioned above (lines 320-324), this might be considered irrelevant by most teachers and with good reason. This class was the first time these topics were taught this year and there was an aspect of naturalness and unplannedness in the teacher's speech. This course is broken into two sections with the same topics being taught to two different groups. This class was the first in the rotation and this exact class was taught later and as expected, there was less naturalness but perhaps more relevancy in the teacher's speech. In that second class there was mention about the t-shirt with the faces.

Truthfulness

Next is the maxim of truthfulness, or how truthful someone is being in departing information. That this maxim would be adhered to in education is a given as it is the duty of the teacher to impart knowledge that is truthful. In the truthfulness maxim there is sarcasm included. Even in this case the maxim was not violated inside the classroom but after class, when the teacher was talking with a student about summer plans, there was this:

Student: Do you have any plans?

Teacher: I'll stay in Kochi. (garbled) I have to clean my office. Lucky me. (14.0) (To a student not in this class standing outside in the hallway?) Hello. Goodbye Miss Kaori.

As can be seen in this dyad, the underlined part was obviously meant as sarcasm. Unfortunately,

since this took place outside the classroom the student's reaction was not recorded.

Quantity

The quantity maxim relates to how much information is being given for the context and how long a turn is being taken by whom in the context as well. Is there too much information being given by the teacher and are his turns too long? This may vary according to teaching philosophies and personal opinion as well as what society may accept. Teachers who feel that a class should be more student centered would object to how much time is being taken by the teacher. Perhaps this class is teacher-fronted too much. With the information in the transcript, the writer hopes to gain insights to his teaching and from this become a better teacher. The writer is grateful for this opportunity to examine his class in more detail and he hopes to learn more from it.

Clarity

The last maxim, that of clarity, was mentioned previously in the ritual constraint of acoustically adequate and interpretable messages. However, Grice also includes the role of the listener in that he or she would give cues so that the speaker can repair unclarities. In the case of this class, there seems to have been none of those signals from the student to the teacher verbally. Non-verbally, however, there were some cases where the student may have shown silence or a tilting of the head sideways. This may have happened here in line 40 but unfortunately, the camera was on the teacher at the moment:

Uh how about Rie how was the test? Easy difficult so so.

Student: So so.

Teacher: So so. What was easy? What part was easy?

(8.0)

(Student: There seems to have been a nonverbal response here)

Teacher: You don't remember?

Student: (nods)

Discourse Mode

Next, the writer would like to skip to a discussion of the discourse mode and examine how, according to Hatch, the discourse in this classroom was planned or unplanned. Although there are several dichotomies mentioned in Hatch, pp. 235-236, the dichotomy the writer would like to focus on is the dichotomy of planned versus unplanned discourse, specifically, how the discourse of this classroom resembled unplanned more than planned discourse, which will hopefully shed some light on this teacher's particular teaching style.

It can be assumed that what goes on in the classroom is planned. Teachers make lesson plans in one form or another, from formal, typed lesson plans to notes scribbled on paper or the palm of a hand. However, when looking through the transcript of this class, it was found that there was much in this teacher's discourse that was unplanned. Perhaps because he was so busy, as mentioned in line 99 in the transcript, and hadn't even yet prepared the proper place for the class text's tape, that the discourse of the teacher was unplanned. One of the more noticeable markers for unplanned speech is how many repairs are used in the discourse. But perhaps the writer is getting ahead of himself here.

Repairs

As mentioned in the last paragraph, there are certain markers denoting whether the discourse is more unplanned or not. These six markers are: clausal or phrasal organization, left dislocation and topic-comment structures, nextness, parallelism, repair and conjoined clauses. Although it is certain that not all of the markers in this example of classroom discourse were implemented, one of them, repairs, was exceedingly prevalent. The multitude of repairs found in this includes self-initiated self-repair repairs:

Teacher: You you're not doing uh ++ goma-suri are you?

And in silence, as much as a four-and-a-half-second silence mid-sentence:

Teacher: Right. Talk talk to me um (4.5) probably +++ uh during + as well as many, many places of silence (the pluses) between words. These however, might be considered to be teacher talk and just the teaching style of this teacher in that he speaks slower in class than outside of it.

In addition, sometimes the repair was upfront as in the below (in this example, the mistake is in italics, the repair is underlined and the expression that it was a repair in double-underline) :

Teacher: with your partner two-by-two +++ *do these puzzles*. Ok. (3.5) Do this puzzle. I'm sorry. Not English. (4.0)

Although repairs was the most prevalent, as mentioned beforehand, there were also some other markers of unplannedness speech. One of these is talking in clauses or phrases. Since this was a class the teacher obviously wanted to try to give the students input in complete sentences. However, especially when doing some asides, the talk would revert to that which was more clausal than complete. For example, in the extract below, the teacher is talking about something he misses in Japan (which seems to be verging on the border of foreigner talk) :

Teacher: ... when I was in California +++ often I would have *mum tor* do you do you know tortilla chips taco chips +++ yeah and salsa I would eat quite often {(Teacher pats his stomach) I think so}

and in the next example when the teacher talks about a t-shirt he once saw:

Teacher: ... (3.0) but there used to be a really nice t shirt. (Teacher gestures to own shirt) and it had all these it had little faces ++ printed on the front and it would s and it would have all the emotions on the face like nervous worried. A very cute t shirt. I've been trying t to find one but I never have been able to.

That the class was more unplanned than usual can be seen by the many repairs and the phrasal rather than sentential aspect of the discourse. As was mentioned before, this same class is taught to two sections. This was the first in the rotation to be taught. In retrospect, the second class that was taught later was more planned and things done in this class that was recorded were not done for that second class, both in teaching materials and in the discourse.

Speech Acts

When we speak, we often have certain intentions behind what we say. One of these has already been mentioned, that of complimenting in the speech act called expressives. This was elucidated in detail when

the system constraint of openings was discussed. There are six speech acts in all called directives, commissives, representatives, declaratives, expressives and a category called speech act functions and subfunctions. Of these there seem to be only two, expressives and directives, which took place during the class. Expressives have already been mentioned. Directives, however, may be a different story. Since this is a class, it is an essential part of the class for the teacher to get the students to do something. There are five different directives mentioned by Hatch on page 122. Of these the first (“I need...”) may be a little demeaning so it wasn’t used in this class. However, other directives were used. The second one mentioned by Hatch, that of the imperative, was, like most classes, used most often. This was used (albeit sometimes with a representative such as just as in the example below) when the teacher asked the students to do some pair work, as in:

Teacher: ... (Teacher passes out papers) So urn take a little bit of time ++ with your partner k two-by-two and just... write down what you think... you would miss if you went to a foreign country. The third one mentioned by Hatch, that of the imbedded imperative and the fifth one, that of the hint were also used in this class. The third was used when the teacher needed a student to move from one place to another so that there may be a pair:

Teacher: ... what I’d like you to do take a look at ++ (Teacher asks student to sit next to another student:) Ok Mari why don’t you come up here. Yeah. Thank you. I Take a look at B. B. (2.5)

As an example of the type of directive called the hint, the teacher most often used “let’s” as in the example below:

Teacher: Ok. Lets take a break.

There may be a reason that the word “let’s” was used most often. As can be understood by the nuance, this word may convey a meaning of camaraderie and perhaps because it was a hot day the teacher may have wanted to convey a feeling of “I know how you feel in this hot room. Let’s pull through this together.”

Pragmatics

The next topic in this analysis of a class, is the topic of pragmatics. Rather than looking at the forms the sentences are taking, pragmatics looks at the context in which something is said, as well as its intention, as was seen in the section on speech acts. Can pragmatics be used to help understand what went on in the class better? Generally speaking, in the second language classroom, much of what goes on is de-contextualized. For example, there was an exercise where the students wrote what they would miss if they went to a foreign country. Another exercise also dealt with what the students would feel while in a foreign country. (i.e., what they would be most worried about or what they would be most excited about, etc.) Without the context of being in a foreign country, these concepts can only be superficially taught. In the category of entailment, for example, where there is the supposition that what they say is true and relevant. But without the context of being in a foreign country, entailment may not be found here. There are some aspects to pragmatics, however, that may help us to understand the discourse of the class better.

One of these is paraphrasing. As was mentioned in class, paraphrasing is a tool often used by teachers. However, the writer had a problem finding that many paraphrases in this classroom discourse. There may be a reason for this; that the teacher had been teaching for long enough to know what level of

discourse to use. But that doesn't mean that no paraphrasing was used. Perhaps some of the asides could be considered paraphrases as they were used to illuminate what the teacher was saying. One example of paraphrasing might be the below where the teacher was explaining the meaning of "uncomfortable." Interestingly, this paraphrase starts out with a Californiaism; "like:"

Teacher: ... Sometimes for example + you you're clothes feel (Teacher shakes upper body and makes a sour face) uncomfortable. Like they don't fit right or they don't feel good.

Conclusion

I have learned much from doing this study. In all the years of my teaching, this was the first time that I actually recorded myself, although I had wanted to do it beforehand many, many times. In doing the above discourse analysis, I have found out some weak points and some strong points in my teaching. I believe that one of the strong points in this class was that I used natural speech as much as possible. From the start of my teaching, I have tried to keep the naturalness to the speech I use in class. Although the rate of speech has certainly slowed, as could be expected, but hopefully not as slow as the VOA's "News in Special English," there were also many repairs and many side sequences where other teachers might not use them. As can be understood from just a cursory glance at the transcript, however, I need to prepare better for classes. As I mentioned before, this was the first of two similar classes so it might have been expected that there would be mistakes, but the fact that there were major mistakes in the handouts should in the future be avoided. Doing this analysis has helped me in many ways to understand my teaching better.

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Transcript Conventions

In the transcript, the conventions mentioned of Jefferson (1979, cited in Schiffrin 1994) were fol-

lowed as much as possible. To help clear up the transcript, commas and hyphens were eliminated. Below is a reference for the symbols in the transcript.

Speech:

// were used for an overlap

: was used to indicate an extension of a sound

? was used to denote a rising intonation at the end of a sentence

↑ was used to denote a marked rising shift in intonation, and

↓ was used to denote a marked falling shift in intonation

° was used to denote speech which was quieter than the surrounding talk

Pauses

+ was used to denote a pause in speech. As many were written as could for the duration of the pause. If the pause was longer than six plus signs, then a number denoting the duration of the pause in seconds and tenths of a second were inserted. If there was a time when there was no talking, as when during a break or during student's group work, then the duration of the time was written minutes:seconds.tenths. The duration of the tape was also written in the same way, as in:

419 (tape=38.5)

Asides:

There were many asides in the text. When the teacher was doing an action, these are in parentheses, as in:

Teacher: (laughs)

If the teacher was talking to himself or to a particular student, then this direction is in parentheses and what was said in connection with that action is in curly brackets, as in:

... and salsa I would eat quite often {(Teacher pats his stomach) I think so}

Explanations:

Explanations of the text where it would be ambiguous as well as utterances that were not understandable are also in parentheses.

¹For a study on the differences between compliments as they are done in the Japanese culture and the American culture, please see Barnlund and Araki, 1985.

²The author's first name is given only as "C. R. S."

³Fenter, in a diary of his family's stay for a year in Japan, noted that while the elementary-age girls would say "Good morning," the boys would not.