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A Learning-oriented Assessment Approach to Understanding the Complexities of Classroom-based Language Assessment

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1. Introduction

Introduction

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- **QUESTION** – What comes to mind when we say *assessment* in relation to classrooms or learning spaces?

- Viewed by the public and many teachers as a tool to record student achievement using items/tasks that are employed in traditional large-scale tests.

- Reality and research demonstrate that much more happens in classrooms in terms of using *assessment* to support learning and inform teaching.

Introduction

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- Every teacher, intentionally or unintentionally, *embeds formal or informal*, *planned or spontaneous* assessments within aspects of teaching and learning.

- WHY? … To obtain information on learning gaps, so that these gaps can be closed.

(Black et al. 2003; Gardner, 2006; National Research Council, 2003; Stiggins, 1997).

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Introduction

- So … *formative assessment (ongoing assessment)* is embedded in many aspects of instruction.

- With this new interest, classroom-based assessment (tests and other methods/strategies) has emerged as a 2nd paradigm with an evolving research agenda.

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Introduction

We now recognize 2 assessment paradigms for discussion and research:

- Assessments external to the classroom
- Assessments internal to the classroom

Our focus - *Language assessment* internal to the classroom and the relationships across instruction, assessment and learning

- We refer to our perspective as *learning-oriented assessment (LOA).*

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Purpose of the talk

- To present/promote a *learning-oriented approach to classroom-based language assessment*, where assessment is treated as a critical component of the multifaceted and dynamic process of *learning*.

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Purpose of the talk

- This perspective is not to be confused with or in competition with other current perspectives.

- There is much interesting research going on in this area with sometimes different foci and audiences.

- We share common ground and can learn from each others work (e.g., purpose of this RT)
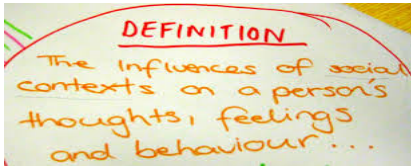
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Structure of the Talk

- Introduction
- Definition of LOA
- Historical context of LOA in L2 education
- A framework for LOA & data contexts
- Contributions of our work to date
- Issues, challenges and future directions

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2. So…What is Learning-Oriented Assessment?

What is LOA?

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LOA is an approach to language assessment that…

- *Takes places in the **local context of classrooms or other spaces*** (e.g., online chats)

- Acknowledges the centrality of ***learners, learning processes, & learning outcomes*** (i.e., is a vehicle for further learning) in the educational context

- Serves the learning process through ***student engagement and agency*** (e.g., self-regulation)

What is LOA?

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- Seeks ***to elicit information*** about learning through performance designed to ***highlight learning gaps, & trigger further processing*** for these gaps to be narrowed

- Uses ***planned, formal assessments*** (e.g., quizzes, tests, practice activities) ***embedded in instruction*** to promote further learning

- Uses ***spontaneous, informal assessments embedded in talk-in-interaction during instruction*** to promote further learning

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What is LOA?

- Recognizes the potential *agents* of these assessments as self, peer, teacher, materials & curriculum, technology

- Recognizes the potential role of *feedback* in triggering learning processes and in achieving success

- Recognizes the role that *local talk-in-interaction* can play in structuring & mediating learning
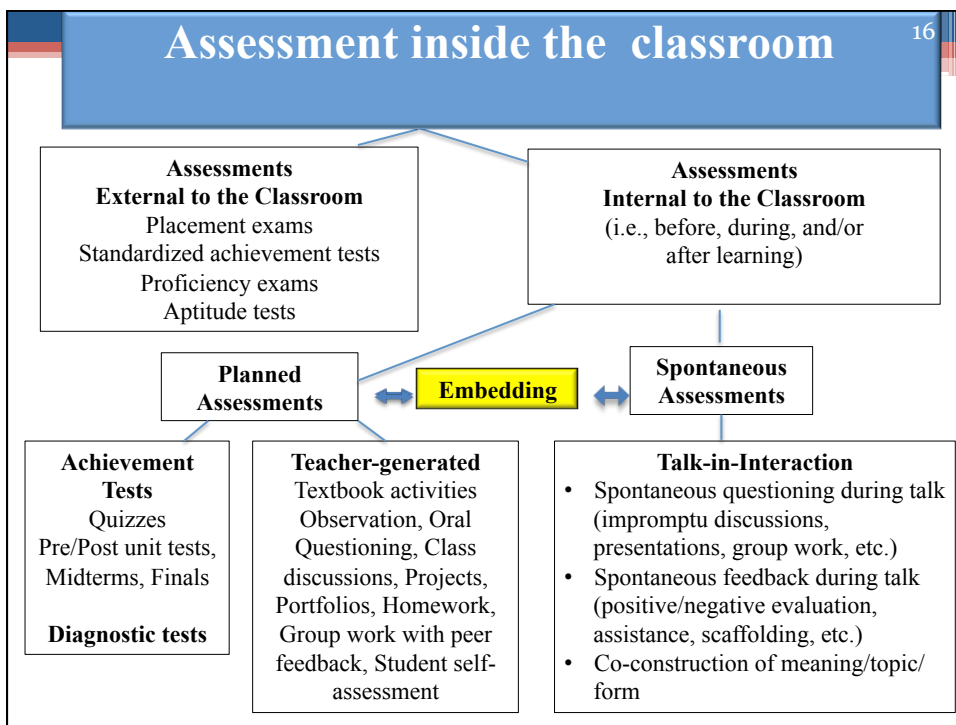
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What is LOA?

- Acknowledges the *synergies across assessment, instruction, & learning*

- Includes *assessments embedded in instruction for learning goals* and *learning embedded in assessments* for better performance goals**.**

- Involves a number of *interrelated dimensions* which co-determine learning outcomes

- (A framework of LOA elaborated on below)

Assessment inside and outside the classroom

Assessment inside the classroom

Assessments External to the Classroom	Assessments Internal to the Classroom
Placement exams Standardized achievement tests Proficiency exams Aptitude tests	(i.e., before, during, and/or after learning)

Planned Assessments	Embedding	Spontaneous Assessments

Achievement Tests	Teacher-generated	Talk-in-Interaction
Quizzes Pre/Post unit tests, Midterms, Finals **Diagnostic tests**	Textbook activities Observation, Oral Questioning, Class discussions, Projects, Portfolios, Homework, Group work with peer feedback, Student self-assessment	• Spontaneous questioning during talk (impromptu discussions, presentations, group work, etc.) • Spontaneous feedback during talk (positive/negative evaluation, assistance, scaffolding, etc.) • Co-construction of meaning/topic/form

3. Historical Context of Learning-Oriented Assessment in L2 Education

LOA draws on a diverse literature

- *Mainstream educational assessment (content areas such as math/science)
- *Language assessment
- Cognitive science
- Educational psychology
- Technology
- SLA
- L2 pedagogy
- Discourse, Conversational analysis (CA)
- Etc.

The roots of classroom assessment

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- In the late 1980's/early 1990's, the general education literature began to highlight the central role that assessment plays in classrooms through research in *formative assessment* (as opposed to *summative assessment*).
- FA = assessment designed to provide information to improve (feedback, etc.)
- SA = assessment to provide information on performance (associated with grades)

The roots of classroom assessment

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- The research designed to examine the effects of FA on academic content learning (math, science) influenced researchers in L2 assessment to pursue similar explorations.

(Black & Wiliam, 1998; Sadler, 1989; Wiliam, 2011)

The roots of classroom assessment

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- L2 assessment researchers conducted such research:

1) In L2 classrooms (McNamara, 2001; Purpura, 2004)
2) In mainstream classrooms where students were learning content subjects via their L2/ L3... (Leung, 2004; Rea-Dickens, 2008)

- The important role of language in learning across the curriculum was becoming evident.

Situating LOA in L2 Education

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- Evolution of the field of language testing/ assessment … from

　1) a sole focus on large-scale tests *external to the classroom,* to an additional interest in

　2) classroom-based assessments (tests & other observations) *internal to the classroom.*

- The emergence of 2 paradigms in terms of how to conceptualize, develop, administer, and validate assessments in the 2 contexts.

Some Strands of Literature in L2

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- (1) Assessment as central to teaching and learning (Genesee & Upshur 1996; Leung 2004; McNamara 2001; Purpura 2004; Rea-Dickens 2008; Shohamy 1998; Turner 2012)

- (2) Teacher processes in L2 assessment (Colby-Kelly & Turner 2007; Davison 2004; Leung & Teasdale 1997; Rea-Dickins 2001)

- (3) Specific assessment methods employed by teachers (Brown & Hudson 1998; Cheng, Rogers, & Hu 2004);

- (4) teacher decision-making and rating scales (Brindley 2001; Chalhoub-Deville 1997; Turner & Upshur 2002);

Some Strands of Literature in L2

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- (5) The role of teacher knowledge, experience, beliefs in assessment (Rea-Dickins 2004; Yin 2010);

- (6) The role of diagnostic and dynamic assessment in promoting teaching and learning (Alderson 2005; Lantolf & Poehner 2011);

- (7) The value of self- and peer-assessment for promoting self-regulation, autonomy, motivation, and learner outcomes (Oscarson 1997; Patri 2002; Saito 2008);

- (8) The role of technology in learning and assessment (Chapelle & Douglas 2006; Sawaki 2012).

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Evolution of Language Testing/ Assessment

- Confusion for L2 classroom-based assessments:
  - To what extent does assessment in large-scale contexts *apply to classroom contexts?*
    (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Purpura, 2004; Turner, 2012)

  - How does information associated with large-scale assessments *relate to classroom activity?* Should classroom-based assessments be reconceptualized for classroom contexts?
    (Moss, 1996, 2003; Taylor & Nolan, 1996).

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Evolution of Language Testing/ Assessment

- We now acknowledge/recognize:

- … that the *classroom is a unique learning context.*

- … that *both cognitive and social approaches are important* to theory and practice in L2 learning, assessment and teaching
  (Chalhoub-Deville, 2003; Hulstijn, 2014)

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Evolution of Language Testing/ Assessment

- ...that assessment within classrooms normally has the *goal* of providing information *so learners can identify and close learning gaps (if needed).*

- ... that *assessment methods* in classrooms are much more diversified than those in large-scale testing contexts, because they address different types of learning goals.

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Evolution of Language Testing/ Assessment

- Must also recognize that most research in mainstream assessment is in "content" areas (math, science).

- These studies lend themselves more to"somewhat" linear learning progressions (Harlen & Winter, 2004)

- *But... L2 learning is often non-linear*

- Caution is needed when considering the implications of mainstream assessment research in L2 contexts.

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So What Have We Learned?

- Classrooms are *complex learning environments.* They can include: individual/pair/ group work; scaffolding, assistance, self-monitoring, peer assessment, etc.

- These processes generate rich information, BUT regardless of the planning/practice there are *no guarantees* that teaching will be successful, or exactly what learners will learn (it is unpredictable).

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So what have we learned?

- The only way to gain insight into learning is to *assess* in one form or another, and to exploit the available agents.

- Assessment plays a central role in classrooms and serves as a *bridge between* teaching and learning (not an afterthought) (Colby-Kelly & Turner, 2007)

- BUT...still *many questions remain about how assessment unfolds in the classroom*.

What we propose

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- Currently we propose a ***working framework*** to help us deconstruct classroom assessment which we have further defined and labeled as ***LOA***.

- It is composed of seven ***interrelated dimensions*** which co-determine processing & learning outcomes

- It can be used as a ***heuristic*** for asking focused questions about the interface between learning and assessment.

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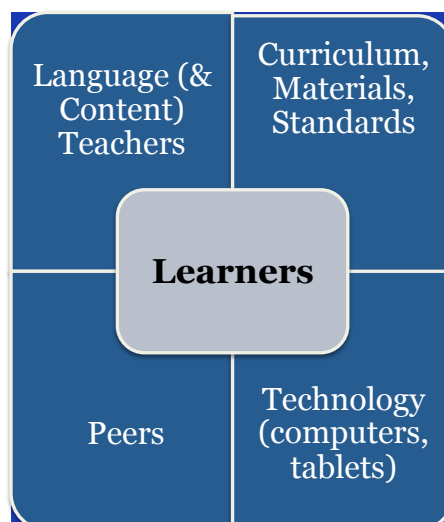# 4. A Framework for LOA

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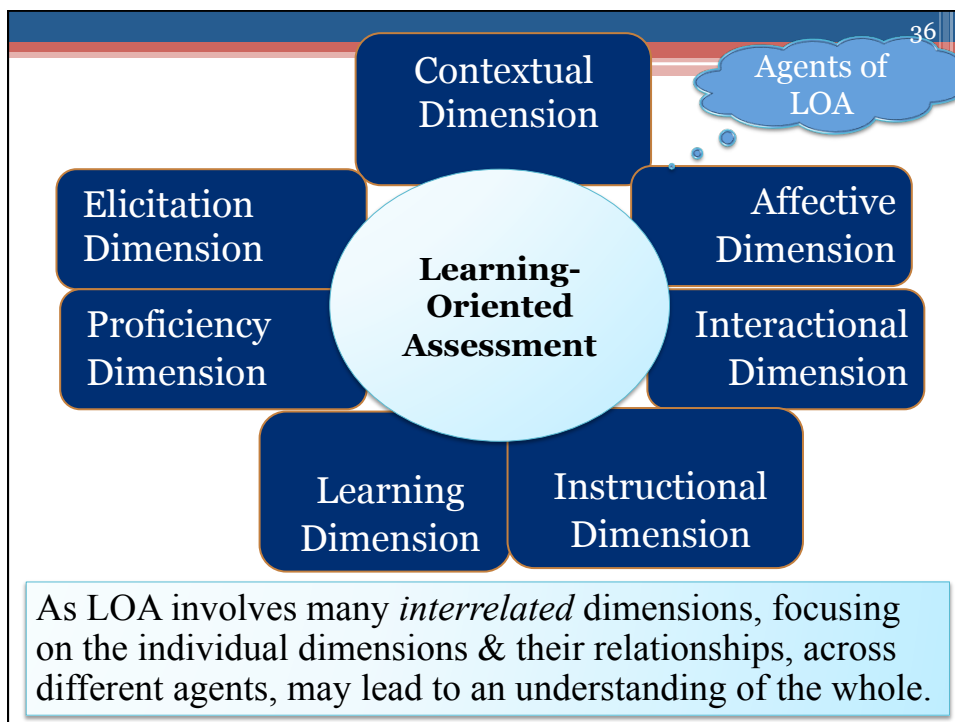## 4.1 The Agents of LOA

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The Agents

LOA involves several interrelated agents in the learning space.

Each dimension can be applied to each agent (e.g., what are learners/teachers learning?)

Language (& Content) Teachers	Curriculum, Materials, Standards
Learners	
Peers	Technology (computers, tablets)

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4.2 The Dimensions of LOA

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Contextual
Dimension

Agents of
LOA

Elicitation
Dimension

Affective
Dimension

Learning-
Oriented
Assessment

Proficiency
Dimension

Interactional
Dimension

Learning
Dimension

Instructional
Dimension

As LOA involves many *interrelated* dimensions, focusing on the individual dimensions & their relationships, across different agents, may lead to an understanding of the whole.

Contextual Dimension

Learning-Oriented Assessment

Agents of LOA

- What are the social, cultural, technological, educational, & political characteristics of the learning context? How do they promote or constrain LOA?
- Who are the agents? What are the resources? How do they affect processing & ultimate success?

Elicitation Dimension

Learning-Oriented Assessment

- What are the methods used to elicit information from learners about their knowledge, skills & abilities (KSAs) in planned & spontaneous assessments, & how do these methods further processing & ultimate success?

Proficiency Dimension

Learning-Oriented Assessment

- What L2 (or content) KSAs are being targeted in learners, & how are these KSAs differentiated across proficiency levels?
- What do the planned & spontaneous assessments reveal about the learners' KSAs?
- How do the learners' KSAs track over time?
- To what extent are the targeted KSAs aligned with external standards?

Learning-Oriented Assessment

Learning Dimension

- How is learning conceptualized & operationalized in instruction & assessment?
- How & to what extent do assessments foster the identification, comprehension, & integration of L2 learning targets into long-term memory, so they can be used seamlessly in communication?
- How & to what extent does feedback from assessments trigger L2 processing & close learning gaps?

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Learning-Oriented Assessment

Learning Dimension

- What are the (1) the cognitive demands (e.g., cognitive load, reasoning requirements), (2) the socio-cognitive demands (e.g., co-construction challenges), & (3) the strategic demands (e.g., self-regulation requirements) associated with planned & spontaneous assessments, & how do they impact processing & success?

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Learning-Oriented Assessment

Instructional Dimension

- How do teachers organize & manage the assessment process?
- How do teachers target & elicit information from learners in planned & spontaneous assessment contexts?
- How do teachers interpret & use assessment information to further processing & ultimate success?

Learning-Oriented Assessment

Instructional Dimension

- How do the teachers' content & pedagogical content knowledge impact teaching, learning & assessment decisions?
- How might technology be used to further processing & success?

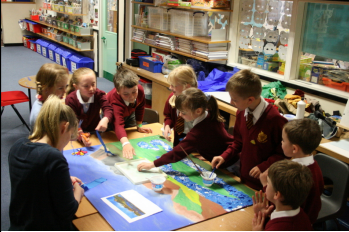**Learning-Oriented Assessment**

Interactional Dimension

- What is the interactional structure of spontaneous assessments when embedded in instruction, planned assessments (e.g., oral assessment), or in naturalistic conversation (e.g., office hours)?
- How are communicative topics, repair, & feedback structured interactionally, and how might this structure contribute to or impede processing and success?

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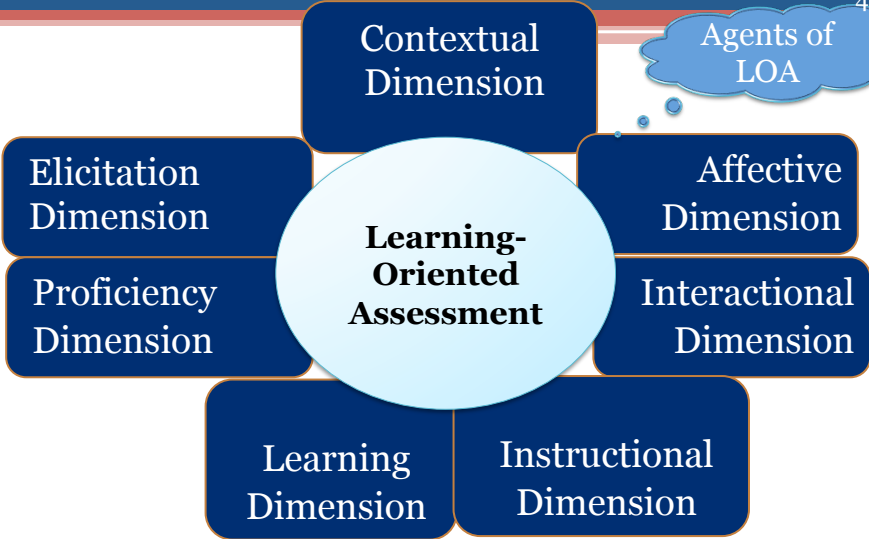
Learning-Oriented Assessment

Affective Dimension

- How & to what extent do assessments tap into a learner's socio-psychological attributes (e.g., level of engagement, persistence, agency), & how does this affect processing & success?

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Contextual Dimension

Agents of LOA

Elicitation Dimension

Affective Dimension

Learning-Oriented Assessment

Proficiency Dimension

Interactional Dimension

Learning Dimension

Instructional Dimension

Again, by focusing on these individual dimensions & their interrelationships, across different agents, we hope to gain a more nuanced understanding of the whole.

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4.3 Using the Framework to Examine LOA in Three Contexts

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Example 1

An Assessment with Embedded Assistance & Learning

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Wetland Ecosystem Task

Goals

To look at how different types of assistance could be embedded into a written science task, & to see how this assistance affected processing & ultimate performance

Context

My graduate seminar at TC. 12 students (3NNs; 9NSs)

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Assessment Method

Wetland Ecosystem. Look at the picture of the wetland ecosystem. You could find several food chains in this system. If all the large-mouth bass disappear, explain how the remaining organisms would be affected.
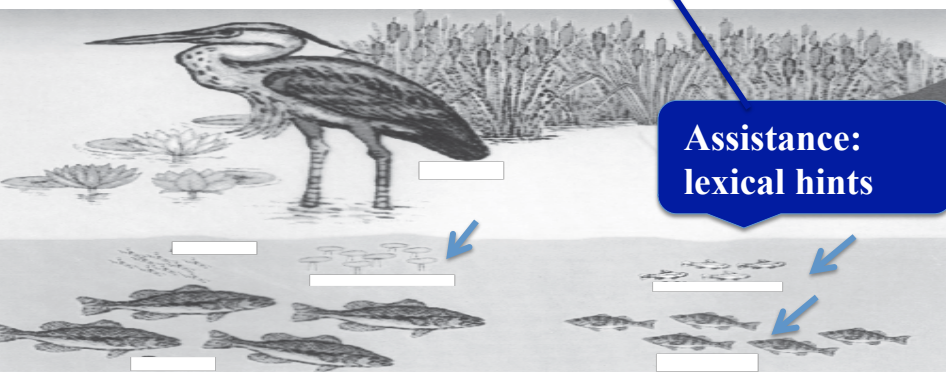
• Ask to write 5 versions of the ecosystem task—each with a different type of assistance
• Revise drafts after being given support.
• Submit learning logs after each task.

Wetland Ecosystem (3)   53

1. Confirm the labels in the picture.
2. Revise your response from task 2, taking into consideration the new information.

Wetland Ecosystem (4)   54

1. Look at one example of a food chain.
   algae → minnows → perch → large-mouth bass → heron
2. Revise your response, taking into consideration the new information.
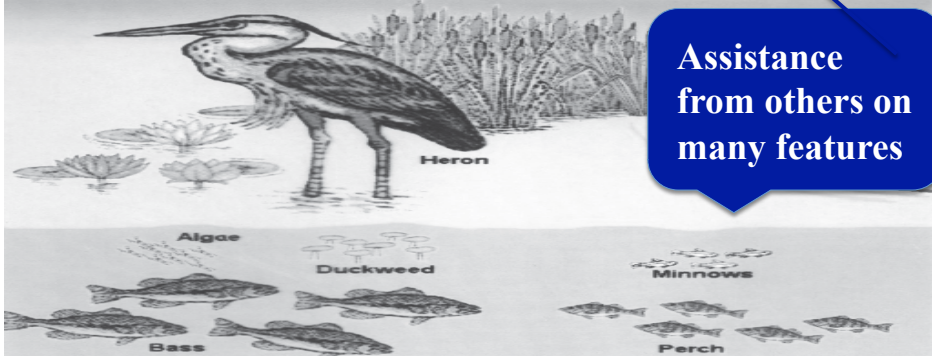
Wetland Ecosystem (5)

55

1. Look at one example of a food chain.

   Algae → Minnows → Perch → Large-Mouth Bass → Heron

2. Share your draft with a partner. Clarify any misunderstandings.

3. Individually, revise your draft based on your conversation.

Assistance from others on many features

Heron

Algae

Duckweed

Minnows

Bass

Perch

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Results

• 10 of the 12 students made significant improvements in both language & science across the 5 tasks.

• 1 student wrote a linguistically precise and scientifically accurate response from the beginning → no change across the tasks.

• 1 student made a slight amount of improvement across the 5 tasks—the task seemed too difficult.

So what did the students report in their learning logs?

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Elicitation Dimension
• As intended, the initial task elicited extended language performance from which to judge language & content knowledge. Other tasks generally elicited refined performance both linguistically and scientifically.

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Proficiency Dimension
• Performance generally improved over time.
• Student reflections from the learning logs

Kerry (after task 1—no assistance)

I did horribly on this task! I felt I really lacked the appropriate scientific terminology […] needed to describe what was happening. I didn't know the name of the creatures and species, nor did I know how to describe the levels within the ecosystem.

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Proficiency Dimension

Kerry (after task 2—labeling assistance)

Labeling helped me quite a bit [...] it made me aware that there were actually six different species in the picture. [...] When I first started, I didn't notice the minnows, duckweed, & algae, and thought we were talking about an ecosystem with 3, not 6 species. However, I am still confused about the general processes [...], as my general knowledge of ecosystems is pretty limited.

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Proficiency Dimension

Jeff (after task 4—scientific help with the food chain)

It helped me perform better since I had a clearer idea of what the food chains were, and what the actual effects of the disappearance would be.

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Proficiency Dimension

Bruno (after task 5—help from peer discussion)

I didn't need to revise. It may be that I just am overly confident and felt like I knew the answer from the start. I thought I performed quite well from the initial assignment. […]

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Proficiency & Affective Dimensions

Sara (after task 5—help from peer discussion)

The discussion raised doubts as my partner interpreted the data differently thinking that the stork would also eat the perch. I decided to go with my own intuitions and not include this in my final draft, although it troubled me.

My performance improved, I think, as I got more confident, and realized that with labels and diagrams I could work it out for myself.

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Looking at the Activity from an LOA perspective

The Learning Dimension

*Nora (after task 5—help from peer discussion)
The discussion did help me preform better. It helped me see another possible consequence of the bass disappearing from the area, which I had not thought of before. We also had a chance to touch upon things we still do not know and would learn about. So I think it primed us for further learning :)*

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Some Thoughts

- Performance generally improved (*proficiency dimension*)—as seen in the essays and reported by students
- The inclusion of lexical support as part of the task (elicitation dimension)
  - triggered language and reasoning skills about the ecosystem (*learning dimension*),
  - produced better performance
  - (*proficiency dimension*), &
  - gave students more confidence
  - (*affective dimension*)

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Some Thoughts

- The inclusion of discussion time as a part of the task (*elicitation dimension*) allowed students
  - to confirm/disconfirm their answers (*proficiency dimension*),
  - understand gaps in knowledge (*learning dimension*),
  - reduce their anxiety (*affective dimension*),
  - help each other (*instructional dimension*), and
  - all this was done through the co-construction of knowledge through talk (*interactional dimension*)

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Example 2

Spontaneous Assessments Embedded in Instruction

"Go Away"

(a seasoned teacher)

Contextual Dimension—*Go away*

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Ann has 30 years of ESL/EFL teaching experience. She is teaching a high proficiency-level, adult ESL class. She is going over an activity on the lexical meaning of phrasal verbs (*go away).* Phrasal verbs are considered to be very challenging for ELLs. Ann's class is full of assessments embedded in instruction.

Excerpt taken from: Fagan, D. S. (2014) Beyond "Excellent!": Uncovering the systematicity behind positive feedback turn construction in ESL classrooms. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language, 8*(1), 45-63.

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Time out

Discourse Analysis 101

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The Discourse of Spontaneous Assessments

Talk is interactionally organized in terms of
adjacency pairs

Selected-response question
A: Is the answer *go out* or *go away*? [first pair part]
B: Go away. [second pair part]
A: Good. [closing 3rd]

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The Discourse of Spontaneous Assessments

Limited-production question.
    A: How old are you? [FPP]
Insert → B: Why do you want to know? [FPP]
    A: Because I want to buy you something. [SPP]
    B: OK. *53.* [SPP]

Extended-production question
A: *What do you mean by LOA*? [FPP]
B: *Bla bla bla bla and bla blab bla* [SPP]
    In other words, bla bla bla. And
    bla bla bla…..
A: ((eyes rolling)) Thanks. [CT]

Interactional Dimension—*Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	*((looks back at her worksheet))*- okay.
02		(0.6)- *((gradually looks up at LL))*
03		let's go:,
04		(1.2)- *((looks at LL))*
05		what's the answer for that one?
06	Ichiro:	go away.
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-let's go awa:y, (0.2) because (0.6)
08		and the only reason you know (0.2) is because
09		of the sentence that precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a month.
12		(0.2)
13		sounds like frustration. sounds like this
14		person needs to escape.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

FPP
FPP
SPP
FPP
SPP
CT + E
E

Elicitation Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	***((looks back at her worksheet))- okay.***
02		***(0.6)- ((gradually looks up at LL))***
03		***let's go:,***
04		***(1.2)- ((looks at LL))***
05		what's the answer for that one?
06	Ichiro:	go away.
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-let's go awa:y**,** (0.2) becau y
08		reason you know (0.2) is because of t
09		precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a month.
12		(0.2)
13		sounds like frustration. sounds like this person needs to
14		escape.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

Equivalent of Task Directions

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Elicitation Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	*((looks back at her worksheet))*- okay.
02		(0.6)- *((gradually looks up at LL))*
03		let's go:,
04		(1.2)- *((looks at LL))*
05		**what's the answer for that one?**
06	Ichiro:	**go away.**
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-let's go awa:y**,** (0.2) becaus
08		reason you know (0.2) is because of th
09		precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a mon
12		(0.2)
13		sounds like frustration. sounds like this person needs to
14		escape.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

In line 5, the T initiates a limited-production Task

In line 6, Ichiro produces a one-word response

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Proficiency Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	*((looks back at her worksheet))*- okay.
02		(0.6)- *((gradually looks up at LL))*
03		let's go:,
04		(1.2)- *((looks at LL))*
05		what's the answer for that one?
06	Ichiro:	**go away.**
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-let's go awa:y**,** (0.2) because
08		reason you know (0.2) is because of the
09		precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a mon
12		(0.2)
13		**sounds like frustration. sounds like this person**
14		**needs to escape**.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

In line 6 SS displays knowledge of phrasal verb meaning

In lines 13-14, T explains the meaning of the phrasal verb

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Learning Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	*((looks back at her worksheet))*- okay.
02		(0.6)- *((gradually looks up at LL))*
03		let's go:,
04		(1.2)- *((looks at LL))*
05		**what's the answer for that one?**
06	Ichiro:	**go away.**
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-**let's go awa:y**, (0.2) because (0.6) & the only
08		reason you know (0.2) is because of the sentence that
09		precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a m[onth].
12		(0.2)
13		sounds like frustration. sounds like th[is person needs to]
14		escape.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

In line 7 The T provides feedback in the form of a confirmatory recast + explanation

Her explanation designed to ensure understanding

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Instructional Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

01	Ann:	***((looks back at her worksheet))*- o[kay.]**
02		**(0.6)- *((gradually looks up at LL))***
03		**let's go:,**
04		**(1.2)- *((looks at LL))***
05		what's the answer for that one?
06	Ichiro:	go away.
07	Ann:	*((to all LL))*-let's go awa:y, (0.2) because (0.6) & the only
08		reason you know (0.2) is because of the sentence that
09		precedes it.
10		(0.4)
11		we've been in Barcelona for over a month.
12		(0.2)
13		sounds like frustration. sounds like this person needs to
14		escape.
15		(0.8)- *((holds ear))*
16		that's why it makes sense.

In lines 3, The T manages the elicitation with a directive

Instructional Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

```
01    Ann:      ((looks back at her worksheet))- okay.
02              (0.6)- ((gradually looks up at LL))
03              let's go:,
04              (1.2)- ((looks at LL))
05              what's the answer for that one?
06    Ichiro:   go away.
07     Ann:     ((to all LL))-let's go awa:y, (0.2) because
08              reason you know (0.2) is because of the
09              precedes it.
10              (0.4)
11              we've been in Barcelona for over a mon
12              (0.2)
13              sounds like frustration. sounds like this person needs to
14              escape.
15              (0.8)- ((holds ear))
16               that's why it makes sense.
```

After the indirect question in line 3, in line 5, the T elicits performance through a direct question

Instructional Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

```
01    Ann:      ((looks back at her worksheet))- ol
02              (0.6)- ((gradually looks up at LL))
03              let's go:,
04              (1.2)- ((looks at LL))
05               what's the answer for that one?
06    Ichiro:    go away.
07     Ann:     ((to all LL))-let's go awa:y, (0.2) k
08              reason you know (0.2) is because of the sentence that
09              precedes it.
10              (0.4)
11              we've been in Barcelona for over a month.
12              (0.2)
13              sounds like frustration. sounds like this person needs to
14              escape.
15              (0.8)- ((holds ear))
16               that's why it makes sense.
```

In this stretch, the T confirms correctness & models the answer with a recast; then provides an explanation

79

Instructional Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

```
01    Ann:     ((looks back at her worksheet))- okay
02             (0.6)- ((gradually looks up at LL))
03             let's go:,
04             (1.2)- ((looks at LL))
05              what's the answer for that one?
06    Ichiro:  go away.
07    Ann:     ((to all LL))-let's go awa:y, (0.2) becau
08             reason you know (0.2) is because of th
09             precedes it.
10             (0.4)
11             we've been in Barcelona for over a mo
12             (0.2)
13             sounds like frustration. sounds like th
14             escape.
15             (0.8)- ((holds ear))
16              that's why it makes sense.
```

In line 7, besides assessing Ichiro's performance, the T looks to see if ALL students have understood. To increase the likeliness of this, she provides an explanation.

80

Instructional Dimension: *Phrasal Verbs*

```
01    Ann:     ((looks back at her worksheet))- okay
02             (0.6)- ((gradually looks up at LL))
03             let's go:,
04             (1.2)- ((looks at LL))
05              what's the answer for that one?
06    Ichiro:  go away.
07    Ann:     ((to all LL))-let's go awa:y, (0.2) because (0.6) & the only
08             reason you know (0.2) is because of the sentence that
09             precedes it.
10             (0.4)
11             we've been in Barcelona for over
12             (0.2)
13             sounds like frustration. sounds l
14             needs to escape.
15             (0.8)- ((holds ear))
16              that's why it makes sense.
```

In line 13, the T shows content knowledge of phrasal verbs meanings

In lines 11-14, the T shows pedagogical content knowledge of how to teach phrasal verbs meanings

81

Some Thoughts

- Ann is a knowledgeable and skilled teacher, drawing on her formal training and years of experience to elicit and assess performance. She uses this information to make split second decisions—in this case, to provide further explanation in the hopes that this will trigger or confirm understanding.
- Using an LOA framework, we were able to focus on each part in order to better understand the whole.

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Example 3
Spontaneous Assessments
Embedded in Instruction

*Meatballs were eaten by
my husband and me*

**(Teaching challenges
& missed Opportunities)**

Contextual Dimension--*Meatballs*

Yee is an adult, intermediate-level student in an ESL program. She was the only person to arrive on time on Day 1 of a new lesson targeting the passive voice as a resource for discussing processes *(*desalination*)*.

Waiting for others, Jeff, the T began with a typical unplanned task —*What did you do last weekend*? He then proceeds to use the weekend activity narrative to begin teaching the passive voice.

Contextual Dimension--*Meatballs*

Unfortunately, Jeff did not realize that unlike descriptions of processes, the weekend activity narrative is more conducive to eliciting past tense, active voice verbs than passive voice verbs. As a result, this produced some pretty "interesting/painful" dialogue.

The first extract is at the beginning of this conversation.

85

Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?

17   Ye   Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.

18   T   Meatballs.

19   Ye   Yeah, meatball.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en (.)

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah.

86

Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, **what did you do?**   ← FPP

17   Ye   **Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.**   ← SPP

18   T   **Meatballs.**   ← CT

19   Ye   Yeah, meatball.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en (.

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah.

> **The T oriented to the mistake "a meatball" in line 17, & produced a closing third, designed to *repair* the form mistake**

87

Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16	T	Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?
17	Ye	Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.
18	T	**Meatballs.**
19	Ye	**Yeah, meatball.**
20	T	Meatballs
21	Ye	In the me
22	T	Ok, good.
23	Ye	Yeah.

CT → T: Repair

FPP

SPP

However, Ye did not hear the T's response as CT error correction.

She heard it as the FPP of a meaning confirmation sequence—where she confirms the T's understanding.

88

Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16	T	Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?
17	Ye	Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.
18	T	**Meatballs.**
19	Ye	**Yeah, meatball.**
20	T	Meatballs were e
21	Ye	In the meatball sh
22	T	Ok, good.
23	Ye	Yeah.

FPP

SPP

FPP

SPP

In line 19, by confirming the T's understanding, that she had eaten meatballs, she shifts roles from being the student to being the confirmer of meaning (yeah meatballs).

Situational identity shift

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Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt: Meatballs were

16 T   Ok (.) Whe- What was

17 Ye Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.)

18 T   Meatballs.

19 Ye Yeah, meatball.

> In line 20, the T models a passive sentence by reformulating Ye's active voice sentence in line 17 to a passive voice sentence (FPP). Ye understands the meaning & finishes the T's utterance & chuckles (SPP)

20 T   **Meatballs were eat::en (.)**   ← FPP

21 Ye **In the meatball shop hh**   ← SPP

22 T   Ok, good.

23 Ye Yeah.

90

Interactional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt: Meatb_____ball shop

16 T   Ok (.) Wh_____o? ← FPP

17 Ye Uhm (…)   ← SPP

18 T   Meatballs.   ← FPP

19 Ye Yeah, mea   ← SPP

> In line 22, the T acknowledges Ye's completion of his sentence (OK) & provides a CT (good). But in line 23, Ye again treats this as a FPP & affirms the T's "good" assessment (yeah)—a maintenance of the identity shift (SPP)

20 T   Meatballs   ← FPP

21 Ye In the meatb   ← SPP

22 T   **Ok, good.**   ← FPP

23 Ye **Yeah.**   ← SPP

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Elicitation Dimension: *Meatballs*

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, **what did you do?**

17   Ye Uhm (…) **We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball**.

18   T   Meatballs.

19   Ye Yeah, meatball.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en

21   Ye In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye Yeah.

> **In line 16, the T initiates an extended-production task**
>
> **Ye provides a 1-sentence response, changing this question to a limited-production task**

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Proficiency Dimension: *Meatballs*

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did y

17   Ye Uhm (…) **We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball**.

18   T   **Meatballs.**

19   Ye Yeah, meatball.

20   T   **Meatballs were eat::en (.)**

21

22

23

> **Ye displayed inaccurate knowledge of gram form**

> **The T heard the form error & corrected it**

> **In line 20, the T reformulated Ye's active voice to a passive sentence**

> **However, this use of the passive was pragmatically inappropriate in this context**

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Learning Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt 1: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was

17   Ye   Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.)

18 → T   **Meatballs**.

19 → Ye   **Yeah, meatball**.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah

> **In line 18, the T initiated a potentially helpful feedback sequence (meatballs).**
> **But in line 19, Ye did not *notice* the feedback. And the T didn't *follow through* on the mistake. An ex. of failed assistance and learning (Learning Dimension)**

94

Learning Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt 1: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?

17   Ye   Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.)

18 → T   **Meatballs**.

19 → Ye   **Yeah, meatball**.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hl

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah

> **Instead, in line 19, Ye didn't realize she was being "taught" something. She thought the T had not understood so she verified his understanding (Learning Dim)**

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Learning Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt 1: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?

17   Ye   Uhm (…) **We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.**

18 → T   Meatballs.

19 → Ye   Yeah, meatball.

20   T   **Meatballs were eat::en (.)**

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah

In reformulating the active voice sentence in a pragmatically inappropriate way, the T provided Ye with problematic input. This also does not bode well for learning. (Learning Dim)

96

Instructional Dimension: *Meatballs*

T elicits performance

16   T   Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?

17   Ye   Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.

Hears error & provides feedback

18   T   Meatballs.

Fails to address lack of noticing

19   Ye   Yeah, meatball.

20   T   Meatballs were eat::en (.)

Provides pragmatically inappropriate) input

21   Ye   In the meatball shop hh

22   T   Ok, good.

23   Ye   Yeah.

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Instructional Dimension: *Meatballs*

16 T Ok (.) Whe- What was the da

17 Ye Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) m

18 T Meatballs.

19 Ye Yeah, meatball.

20 T Meatballs were eat::en (.)

21 Ye In the meatball shop hh

22 T Ok, good.

23 Ye Yeah.

> *T's Content Knowledge*—in producing this sentence, we see the T knows the form of the passive, but may not its meaning or use.

> *Pedagogical Content K*: The T may not know how to teach the passive. He missed many teaching opportunities

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98

Instructional Dimension: *Meatballs*

Excerpt 1: Meatballs were eaten in the meatball shop

16   T Ok (.) Whe- What was the date, what did you do?

17   Ye Uhm (…) We (.) ate (.) a (.) meatball.

18   T Meatballs

19   Ye Yeah, meatball

20 → T Meatballs were eat::en (.)

21 → Ye In the meatball shop hh

22 → T Ok, good.

23 → Ye Yeah

> In line 20, the T seemed overly concerned with teaching the passive form, paying no attention to its appropriate use

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Some Thoughts

- This small extract is reflective of the same teaching and learning we saw over the next four days. The T continued to focus on form at the expense of meaning and use. Tracking Ye's performance over the next 4 days, we saw that she never really learned to *use* the passive to describe processes, but she did know the forms. The same results were clearly confirmed on the end-of-unit exam.

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Some Thoughts

- In this extract, we used the LOA framework to tease apart interaction, elicitation, proficiency, learning, & instruction. By focusing on each dimension & their interrelationships, and by taking into account the 2 agents, we were able to systematically notice several points:
    - that assessment cannot be separated from learning & instruction
    - that questions intended to produce extended language production actually produced limited production
    - that knowledge of the passive is not just about form, but also about meaning and use.

Some Thoughts

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- that learning cannot transpire without good input

- that in order to learn from assessment, the teacher needs to *notice & evaluate performance*, and *follow through*, so learners will be forced to accommodate & restructure their current understandings for the future

- that the teacher, despite many excellent qualities, needs to learn more about the passive and how to teach it, which includes the use of assessment to trigger processing and promote learning.

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5. Contribution of our work to date

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Contributions

- Have **provided a working framework** for exploring questions concerning LOA. It includes interacting dimensions and agents to help deconstruct LOA to start understanding its complex nature.

- Have **woven together the diverse interdisciplinary literature on classroom assessment** as a backdrop for LOA in order to inform the working framework and data analysis (Turner & Purpura, forthcoming).

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Contributions

- Have emphasized the role of **language processing** and the need to consider processing in the equation of successful language and content learning.

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6. Issues, Challenges & Future Directions

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Where we are…

- The LOA framework draws on and pays tribute to a vast amount of research and theory in classroom based assessment. This framework was useful for us in understanding the complexities of assessment in classroom contexts.

- Much of what we've learned in our work, we believe, can be applied to large-scale assessment contexts—especially those designed to incorporate assistance and learning. We will see some examples of this over the next three days.

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Where we are…

- It is at times challenging for all of us to rethink something that we are comfortable with—like the notion that assessment is not just an afterthought, but is intrinsically related to instruction and learning, and that assessment, learning and instruction happen on a moment-by-moment basis in naturalistic and classroom interactions.
- We have presented one approach to assessment and learning. We are energized to see what others will tell and show us over the next three days. And we are thrilled to discuss this with you.

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Thank You!