Resourceful Speaking in Language Learning: Constructing L2 Identity in Discourse and Interaction

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RESOURCEFUL SPEAKING IN LANGUAGE LEARNING: CONSTRUCTING L2 IDENTITY IN DISCOURSE AND INTERACTION

By

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find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards
of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

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It is commonly accepted that we shape our identity through our interactions with others; identity is a “discursive construct” that is “interactionally emergent” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005: 587). When we envision identity construction thus – fluid and dynamic, shaped through interaction and discourse – language becomes our primary vehicle of expression that is heavily dependent on not only our own linguistic ability, but also the language and perceptions of our interlocutors. L2 speakers are thus faced with a problem: how does one construct an identity in a language that is still being learned? Without a deep knowledge of linguistic structure and the subtleties of conversational, social, and cultural cues, how can L2 speakers ensure that they construct acceptable identities through their language use and interaction with others? Drawing on various sociolinguistic approaches and Conversation Analysis, this paper examines L2 identity construction within the context of one-on-one English lessons.
CONTENTS

SECTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION..............................................................................................1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.........................................................................4
   Identity studies in relation to this paper.........................................................4
   Terminology...................................................................................................5
   Resourceful speaker.......................................................................................8
III. STUDY AND METHODS..................................................................................10
IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.......................................................................13
   We engage in language practices.................................................................13
   We draw on linguistic repertoires...............................................................16
   We take up styles.........................................................................................19
   We partake in discourse..............................................................................22
   We do genres..............................................................................................35
IV. A WAY FORWARD..........................................................................................39
V. CONCLUSIONS...............................................................................................45

BIBLIOGRAPHY..................................................................................................46

APPENDIX...........................................................................................................51
TABLES

Table

1. Q-CQ(D)-A-C turn description (adapted from Markee, 2000:75).................. 29

2. Description of competencies (adapted from Celce-Murcia, 2007:46-50)......... 40
FIGURES

Figure

1. Competencies (from Celce-Murcia, 2007:45)....................................................... 39
**Introduction**

The concept of identity and how identity is constructed is not a new one in sociolinguistic studies. It is commonly accepted that we shape our identity through our interactions with others: according to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), identity is a “discursive construct” that is “interactionally emergent rather than assigned in an a priori fashion” (587). When we envision identity construction thus – through interaction and discourse – language becomes our primary vehicle of expression that is heavily dependent on not only our own linguistic ability, but also the linguistic skills and perceptions of our interlocutors.

Learners of an additional language are thus faced with a problem: how does one construct an ‘acceptable identity’\(^1\) in a language that is still being learned? Without a deep knowledge of linguistic structure and the subtleties of conversational, social, and cultural cues, how can second-language (hereafter L2) speakers ensure that they construct an acceptable identity through their language and interaction with others?

The issue is further complicated when we take into account the perception that many monolingual speakers have of those speaking English as an L2 in the United States. Often, those who speak English with an accent are met with a host of prejudices and stereotypes that impose certain identities upon the speaker, like that of a perpetual learner, an immigrant, or an outsider. Indeed, there has been a noted history in the US that "equates bilingualism and non-native speaker status with disability and cognitive impairment" (Hakuta, 1986: 676 in Pavlenko and Norton, 2007). Through countless repetitions and preserving the colonial/missionary agenda that English language teaching has historically promoted (Pennycook, 2012), a single instance of an 'other' sounding accent or non-standard syntax has become enough to cast L2 speakers in a

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\(^1\) ‘Acceptable identity’ is purposefully broad; the term refers to any identity or positioning that an
marked and/or negative light. For these reasons, L2 identity studies are much needed and can help to reverse these stereotypes.

Why is such a re-imagining of boundaries and an examination of L2 identity needed so desperately now? Among others, Pennycook (2012), Higgins (2011), and Pavlenko and Norton (2007) argue that globalization has made it so: the increasingly mobile and global world in which we live has created more interactions among different peoples, cultures, and languages. Faced with more mobility and more interactions with others, a "dismantling of conventional borders and boundaries” is necessary, as well as a new look at multilingual speakers who are quickly overtaking monolinguals as the norm (Higgins, 2011: 21). Linguistic and cultural boundaries that once seemed static are rapidly changing and blurring; we can no longer easily map identity to language, nationality, ethnicity, or culture.

This call for challenging and re-imagining a static notion of identity is perhaps the most prevalent undercurrent throughout L2 identity research. We can see emergent identity at work especially when language use is non-conforming with our own (often static and dated) expectations in in some way; these cases "sever the ideologically expected mapping between language and biology or culture; that is, they subvert essentialist preconceptions of linguistic ownership” (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005:588, emphasis added). We are most drawn to notice identity as it emerges through discourse when we are confronted with something other than the expected, something that does not conform to our ideas of social categories or static distinctions. Furthermore, assuming linguistic rights to speak or not speak a language is detrimental to acceptable identity construction. As we become more global and have increased contact with language speakers of all kinds, we face new opportunities as preconceived notions are shattered
and boundaries begin to shift. It is precisely in these moments of fluidity and change that L2 speakers can emerge as competent multilingual communicators.

This paper aims to examine L2 construction of identity in discourse, drawing on a range of sociolinguistic lenses and Conversation Analysis. The first section presents a selective literature review of current identity work and discusses problematic terminology in the field. An alternative term, *resourceful speaker* (Pennycook, 2012) is then presented and used as a base to examine identity construction in a specific setting of one-on-one English lessons. The third section highlights key areas in language teaching that may be addressed to better support and foster multilingual identity formation. Finally, as interactions are not solely dependent on one participant but also rely on the role of others, this paper will argue that a change in public perception regarding L2 speakers is needed in order to produce more space for L2 identity construction.
Literature Review

Identity studies in relation to this paper

Identity studies are rich, varied, and figure in numerous fields, of which psychology, sociolinguistics, and SLA (Second Language Acquisition), are only a few. Due to the wealth of information and approaches, this brief literature review will be necessarily selective: its scope is limited to current research of identity construction in interaction in order to provide sufficient background for this paper.

Bucholtz & Hall (2005) define identity broadly as “the social positioning of self and other” (586). The authors present an understanding of identity that agrees with current research: identity is not stable or static, but rather fluid and able to emerge dynamically through discourse and interaction. All interactions thus include the negotiation of identity, in which speakers both claim certain identities for themselves – reflexive positioning – and assign identities to other participants in interaction – interactive positioning (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Davies & Harré, 1990). Participation in interaction and discourse thus allows identities to be claimed, assigned, discarded, or re-imagined in a variety of ways.

Studies of positioning in the language classroom are important in the construction of L2 identity, particularly because L2 speakers are often the recipients of interactive positioning (having positions, roles, or identities assigned to them by others). Menard & Warwick (2008) show how an ESL teacher of adult, Latina women positioned her students (broadly and unfairly) into certain gender and economic roles through her discourse with the students and by the types of activities she gave to the class. Through discursive resources, however, students were able to reject this positioning and/or work it into something more appropriate that better aligned with their own reflexive positioning of themselves. Studies by Duff (2002) and Talmy (2004) also
demonstrate how students may reject or reconfigure the social positioning and identities assigned to them through discourse.

The distribution of power in discourse also factors heavily in identity studies, as certain speakers may have more discursive power than others (Bourdieu, 1977; Fairclough, 1992). Teaching is often set up for just this type of uneven power distribution, assigning more power to the teacher and less to the student. However, students also may “bid for more powerful identities,” reframing their relationship or positioning in interaction (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Norton & Toohey go on to note the important role that language teaching can play in providing students with the resources to successfully navigate power discourses: “pedagogical practices have the potential to be transformative in offering language learners more powerful positions than those they may occupy either inside or outside the classroom” (417).

Terminology

It has been widely recognized for some time that the terminology used in language teaching and research needs to be re-imagined to more appropriately represent changing notions. Perhaps the most hotly contested is the term *native speaker* and what being a native speaker entails. Traditionally, the native speaker was the unquestioned language model in any second language course; the closer students could imitate the phonology and sentence structure of a native speaker, the more proficient in the language they were deemed to be. Saddled with this comparison, even highly advanced speakers with lingering L1\(^2\) accents were (and indeed, often still are) frequently viewed as insufficient L2 learners despite their high proficiency. While most now agree that the usefulness of the term native speaker is outdated, sociolinguists, researchers,

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\(^2\) L1 refers to the first language a person grows up speaking, though is often less contested than the term 'native,' which roughly signifies the same idea.
and language teachers alike are often divided as to what it means to be a native speaker, and thus the extent to which native-like status can be achieved by others.

Cook (1999) argues, "L2 students cannot be turned into native speakers without altering the core meaning of native speaker. Asserting that 'adults usually fail to become native speakers' (Felix, 1987: 140) is like saying that ducks fail to become swans" (187). Cook’s view of nativeness relies on birth and thus cannot be altered; L2 speakers may achieve a high level of proficiency, but never native speaker status. As a result, Cook argues that the native speaker model is not appropriate in language teaching and should not be the goal to which students are forced to aim. Rather, a more apt model may be that of a successful and proficient L2 user (2008; 1999). In contrast, others suggest that the term 'native' refers more to competency than to birth (e.g., Pennycook, 2012; Shuck, 2006; Mukherjee, 2005). According to Mukherjee (2005), "nativeness is about nothing else but linguistic competence as instantiated in language use" (11, in Pennycook, 2013: 83). If nativeness is purely about competence, then L2 speakers can indeed become native speakers by achieving a high level of linguistic and discursive ability. Regardless of whether achieving native speaker ability is feasible or not, Pennycook (2012) concludes that the term should be done away with entirely as a means of describing linguistic proficiency. Whether or not one argues for re-imagining the term native speaker, doing away with it altogether, or maintaining that native speaker status is an unquestionable matter of birth, one point is clear: what is needed is to think differently, particularly with regards to how these terms relate to the formation of an L2 identity.

Another example of the effect of terminology on L2 identity is the distinction that has been made for many years in SLA (second language acquisition) research between an L2 learner and an L2 user. According to Cook (2008), an L2 learner is engaged in the process of acquiring
language but not using it, while an L2 user "uses the second language for real-life purposes" (11). Often, one may be both an L2 learner and user: a person may interact with others on a day-to-day basis in the target language community, and that same person may also be engaged in taking L2 language classes. In the classroom, the person is a learner; in the 'real world,' the person is an L2 user. As both Cook and Piller (2002) point out, making the appropriate distinction is essential in the formation of identity from both the L2 speaker's perspective and from the perspective of others. We stop referring to speakers of a native language as "learners" at a young age, even though we continue acquiring words and knowledge of our native language throughout our lives. "Therefore," argues Piller, "it seems inappropriate to treat L2 users as perpetual learners" (180). Treating a language user as a 'perpetual learner' contributes to the mindset of linguistic inferiority (indeed, even of intellectual inferiority) often associated with L2 speakers. Labeled as a perpetual L2 learner, one might be assumed to never reach a sufficiently high point of acquisition to be considered a proficient user, a thought especially demeaning to those L2 speakers that have reached a highly skilled and proficient level (and often are successfully integrated into the target-language community). Thus, the shift from L2 learner to L2 user\(^3\) represents a positive shift in acknowledging the intelligence and multilingual competence that has been achieved.

Finally, I question whether the designation L2 should be re-imagined as well. In SLA, the term L2 (or L2s) refers to any language that a speaker acquires after the native language (L1). Thus, L2 may not only refer to a speaker’s second language, but to the third, fourth, sixth, eighth, eighth,

\(^3\) Although, the term "user" - here in reference to using a language – might potentially carry negative connotations (i.e., drug user). Thus, throughout the rest of this paper, the term L2 speaker will be used to mean speakers of any number of additional languages.
etc. While appreciating the broadness of the definition, the term itself still suggests the acquisition of a second language only and may not be appropriate for more multilingual speakers. We see this same issue at work in ESL (English as a Second Language), a common description used for multilingual students learning English in the school system. In this realm, at least, there is a slow shift towards the designation ELL (English Language Learner), which may help to broaden the scope. To avoid limiting the number of languages spoken, perhaps a term like $L(x)$ speaker would be more appropriate, where the variable $x$ may stand in for any real number. While a term like this might work on paper, there doesn’t seem to be an attractive way to speak this term out loud. These issues may seem inconsequential or trivial, but labeling plays an important role in identity formation. If we are to apply labels to language learners, it pays to think carefully about what those labels suggest and imply.

Resourceful Speaker

It is not only terms such as native speaker, L2 learner, user, or the designation L2 itself that need to be re-examined; rather, in order to explore how speakers construct identity we may need to re-imagine or deconstruct the very notion of language itself and what it means to speak a language. As Pennycook (2012) states:

We do not actually 'speak languages,' we are not in fact 'native speakers' of things called 'languages' (Canut, 2007). Rather, we engage in language practices (Pennycook, 2010), we draw on linguistic repertoires, we take up styles, we partake in discourse, we do genres. (98)

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4 This term is fraught with its own problems and controversy, but this discussion is outside the scope of the current paper.
What we need to accommodate this concept, according to Pennycook, is an understanding of L2 use informed by more social force and power, a term that embodies not only the language that speakers use, but also the resources they employ to communicate successfully. Pennycook's preferred term is *resourceful speaker*, defined as "both having available language resources and being good at shifting between styles, discourses, and genres" (2012:99, emphasis added). This term grants a large amount of agency to L2 speakers and suggests that language is not only about linguistic competence, but rather necessitates a broader range of discursive and interactional competencies.

If we shift the focus away from trying to achieve this potentially unattainable goal of native-like language proficiency and instead towards a goal of becoming a resourceful speaker (Pennycook, 2012) of language in general, L2 speakers may then have a richly extended range of options available to them to showcase their skills. There is a vast amount of agency and active participation embodied within Pennycook’s very definition of what it means to be a resourceful speaker: *engage, draw on, take up, partake, do*. These are not the verbs of someone aiming to achieve distant proficiency in a language. These are verbs and practices that reflect every day language use, interaction, and negotiation, in which linguistic proficiency plays only a part. How, then, do speakers construct meaningful identities in other languages? What tools might they use to showcase their ability to be resourceful speakers?
**Study and Methods**

To examine how L2 speakers may construct identity in interaction, this study will draw on data from a range of established sources, as well as data gathered from one-on-one English lessons provided through a free service at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Lessons are offered through the Student Worker Alliance Program (SWAP), a student-run organization with a goal of bringing together traditionally distant campus populations via education. SWAP pairs together university employees (many of whom may be immigrants and/or speak little English) with undergrad students who volunteer their time to teach hour-long English lessons twice a week.

The majority of SWAP employee participants work as custodial staff or with dining services on campus. SWAP lessons are free of charge, and some employers may offer extra incentives for their employees to sign up for lessons (extra accumulated leave time, for example). Lessons are held on campus within the employee’s workday, thus facilitating ease of access and convenience.

Before teaching, student volunteers with SWAP are required to complete a four-hour training session informed by the Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement and SWAP’s parent organization, *Intercambio*, which also provides lesson materials to student volunteers. *Intercambio* is a local community group that provides low-cost English and life-skills lessons to adult immigrants in the Boulder area. The aid and materials they provide to SWAP focus on teaching grammar structures and vocabulary within the context of real-life events: lessons are designed around practical activities like navigating the bus system, going to the doctor, speaking to a landlord about renting an apartment, applying for jobs, etc. The founders of *Intercambio* designed these lessons to give their students the skills needed to integrate more fully into the
community through interaction, thus building towards more self-sufficiency in every day life (intercamiboweb.org).

For this study, a single employee/student pair was selected with the guidance of SWAP coordinators, and consent was obtained from each participant. This particular pair was selected because they have worked together for the past four years, and SWAP advised that recording might cause less unease if the participants were already familiar with each other and with the structure of SWAP lessons in general. Three SWAP lessons were recorded for this study for a total of three hours of recorded audio data. Lessons were voice-recorded without video to minimize the discomfort of each participant and to be as unobtrusive as possible. A brief language-background questionnaire was also distributed, which participants discussed and completed in the third and final recorded lesson.

All lessons were held in a break room of one of the campus dining halls where the employee worked. Throughout the duration of each lesson, various employees would pass through and the television was often turned on; these elements made for a substantial amount of background noise and occasional transcription difficulty, though the majority of the recorded lessons were clear and easily decipherable.

The SWAP participants in this study are Ana, a university employee, and Natalie, her student teacher volunteer. Ana and Natalie have been working together for the past four years and have developed a comfortable friendship in addition to their student-teacher relationship. Ana is a native Spanish speaker from El Salvador who has lived in the US for fourteen years. She states that she began to officially study English about six years ago. She works for CU dining services, and relates that she speaks English at work occasionally with students, some co-

\(^5\) Pseudonyms are used to protect the privacy of participants.
workers, and with her bosses/supervisors. She also speaks some English at home with her children. Natalie is a native English speaker from Colorado in her senior year of undergraduate study. She has already completed one major in business Spanish and has traveled abroad in Spanish speaking countries; as such, Natalie and Ana are able to use Spanish to communicate as well as English. Their ability to converse and negotiate meaning in two shared languages sets this pair apart from countless other one-on-one English lesson pairs, both within the SWAP program and in any number of English programs worldwide. A shared bilingual ability facilitates L2 identity construction by helping both partners ensure mutual understanding and validating their experiences. As such, the findings presented below should be read with this in mind; these findings are particular to this pair and likely do not represent the experiences of a pair that does not share the same bilingual ability.
Findings and Discussion

Using Pennycook’s (2012) term resourceful speaker and working through each part of its definition as a base, the next section will explore how L2 speakers may use a variety of sociolinguistic concepts to construct identity.

We engage in language practices.

Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2001) refer to groups of people with shared experiences and the language practices that they use, thus linking members by language use rather than broad, affixed categories such as class, gender, race, L1, etc. According to Eckert (2006):

The importance of the community of practice lies in the recognition that identity is not fixed, that convention does not pre-exist use, and that language use is a continual process of learning. The community of practice is a prime locus of this process of identity and linguistic construction. (emphasis added, 3)

Among the many useful facets of communities of practice, a strong tenant of this theory is that identities are not fixed. Freed from the designations (and often, the accompanying assumptions) of various prescribed identities such as L2 speaker, Spanish speaker, or student, members of a community of practice are thus given more freedom to take up certain aspects of their identity or discard them to construct new ones. In analyzing the one-on-one English lesson data in the sections to follow, it seems clear that Ana and Natalie have formed their own small community of practice, built from four years of language study together. Their experience together has produced particular, recurring conversational patterns and sequences which will be discussed throughout this analysis, as well as specific roles. As the analysis will show, teacher and student
roles are the most common; as such, this paper will largely focus on how these identities are taken up and shifted throughout the participants’ interactions. However, many more potential identities and roles exist and deserve equal weight, which unfortunately is beyond the scope of this paper.\footnote{Examples of other roles to explore within this particular data set include: initiator, competent vs incompetent speaker, class/privilege distinctions, and the role of a CU student vs the role of a CU employee.}

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) posit a series of five principles in their framework of identity studies. The fourth principle, \textit{relationality}, emphasizes that identities are not static or “autonomous” in nature; rather, they “acquire social meaning in relation to other available identity positions and other social actors” (598). Throughout the data, Ana and Natalie position themselves as either student or teacher fluidly and frequently, and they orient to these different roles in relation to one another: when one participant takes up the role of the teacher, the other fills the role of the student and vice-versa. Yet, as will be shown, participants may also manipulate or reject these roles and position themselves in new ones instead.

As part of the relationality principle, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) propose three pairs of relations to exhibit how relationality can exist in a number of different contexts. One of these pairs is \textit{authentication and denaturalization}, which addresses the ways in which speakers make claims to realness and artifice (601). To demonstrate authentication, the authors cite an example from Bauman (1992), in which an Icelandic narrator prefaces his story by providing evidence of his rights to tell it. Setting up his story through authentication gives the speaker the rights to act as narrator as the most knowledgeable participant regarding the story (602).

We see claims to authentication functioning in a similar way in the following example. After a particularly difficult section of the lesson about expressions, during which Ana has
frequently made excuses for not understanding the material, she finally gives a reason why. She tells the sad story of a family she knows: the father committed suicide three months ago, and the mother is currently dying of cancer. Her utterance below starts off a long segment of Spanish-language only and effectively marks the end of the English lesson. By initiating this narrative, Ana drops the role of student and takes up the role of narrator. She prefaces the narration, which she has initiated as an explanation of why she finds it difficult to work, by authenticating her claim to this story:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 1:*

1. A: **Ah, que ser? (9.0) Mi cabeza ( ) no traigo mucho aquí**
   ‘Ah, really? My head ( ) I can’t work much here’

2. → **porque. (1.7) no te conté ( ) una hermana de mi**
   ‘because. I didn’t tell you ( ) a sister of my’

3. → **(0.9) compañera de la iglesia que estaba muy ( )**
   ‘friend from church who was very’ ( )

4. (1.1)

In one turn, Ana has excused her poor performance in the role of the student while simultaneously transitioning to the role of narrator. She positions herself in this role and claims authentication of her rights to tell the story because of her relationship with the people in it. Where much of the talk time in the English lesson had previously belonged to Natalie in the role of the teacher, Ana initiates this segment and dominates the rest of this conversation as the narrator. This section also shows Ana taking on the role of the teacher in addition to her narrator role, positioning herself in two powerful roles at once. These role-reversals will be discussed in greater depth in a later section, but we can already see how participants position themselves in fluid roles in relation to one another in discourse; these positionings allow for various identities to be taken up or discarded at will.
We draw on linguistic repertoires.

By virtue of knowing more than one language, multilingual speakers have a much wider array of linguistic repertoires to draw from than monolingual speakers. The value of the depth of linguistic repertoires that language learners possess is being increasingly recognized in language-learning environments, as may be exhibited by an increased amount of research that demonstrates the value of L1 use in the L2 classroom, particularly for specific purposes like giving instruction and checking for comprehension. Cook (2008) notes that the dangers of forbidding L1 use are that a “pretend monolingual situation” is constructed, and the valuable resource of the L1 becomes “an invisible and scorned element in the classroom” (181). Rather, allowing for specific L1 use in language learning serves to validate the learner, and provides a richer learning experience.

Drawing on linguistic repertoires is another way that L2 speakers can position themselves as knowledgeable participants. Even if unable to reach the correct target phrase, L2 speakers nevertheless display their awareness of linguistic structure and competence. The following example demonstrates how Ana uses her L1 knowledge of Spanish to infer elements of her L2, English. In this example, Ana and Natalie are beginning an exercise that involves asking and answering questions about common kitchen items based on a picture they have in front of them: one speaker asks a “wh” question (Where is/are ______?), and the second speaker is to use the provided picture to locate the item in question and describe its location.

Ana and Natalie, excerpt 2:

1 N: So, (1.0) where are (0.8) the glasses?
2 A: The glasses…
3 A: (1.0)
4 N: imagina. hahaha
imagine

5 A: Okay my glasses-

6 (0.5)

7 N: Or the glasses.

8 (0.5)

9 → A: No?

10 (0.6)

11 N: I think (. ) so gla- Oh, (. ) so glasses?

*Can I- I have my glasses here.*

13 N: Mmhmm

14 → A: Puedo, can I say, my glasses, (1.4) my glass?
*Can I,*

15 (1.4)

16 N: Solo es- (0.6) interesante porque glasses (0.7) tiene dos
*It’s just- interesting because* has two

17 significados(0.6) So glasses (0.4) is (0.5) oculo- oculos?
*meanings.*

18 A: Lentes.
*Glasses (spectacles)*

19 N: Lentes?
*Glasses (spectacles)?*

20 A: ah hah.

21 N: Or glasses is like, *vasos* [por les bevidas
*(drinking) glasses for drinks*

22 A: [Oh, vasos!  
*Oh, glasses!*

23 N: Mm hmm

Natalie asks the first question, and Ana repeats the targeted object, the glasses, which had been modeled correctly by Natalie in line 1. After a pause, in which Ana peruses the picture, she repeats the object, but switches the determiner for the possessive my in line 5. Natalie corrects
Ana’s use of the possessive in line 7; while *my glasses* is a grammatical phrase, the possessive is not appropriate in the context of kitchen items and drinking glasses.

Next, we see something interesting. Ana typically makes some utterance of agreement or alignment after a correction and/or explanation (i.e., *okay* or *mmhmm*, even if it is not apparent that understanding has occurred). Here, however, she questions, *No?* (line 9) which may serve to challenge Natalie’s correction, or at least to indicate some discrepancy in her idea of glasses and Natalie’s correction⁷.

In the next line, Natalie exhibits what is often described as a change of state marker, *oh* (Heritage, 1984). This marker indicates that she has realized what the underlying issue of understanding is, and has thus moved from a less knowledgeable state to a more knowledgeable one. Before she can explain and share this knowledge, Ana asks a follow-up question in Spanish, modeling what she knows to be a correct use of the phrase *my glasses* (line 12). From her use of *mis lentes* (*my [spectacle] glasses*) we see that she means spectacle glasses rather than drinking glasses, confirming Natalie’s realization that a misunderstanding of terms has occurred. It is clear that Ana knows one sense of the English word *glasses* and has linked it to her Spanish knowledge of *lentes*. In this sense, the possessive *my* is correct and we can see how she draws upon her linguistic knowledge of Spanish to argue for the possessive determiner *my*.

In lines 16-17, Natalie responds with a clarification of meaning in Spanish. It is interesting that she chooses to clarify in Spanish rather than in English (which Ana had just used in the previous line). However, since both participants speak Spanish, Natalie’s choice to use Spanish for the purposes of explanation helps re-enforce the value of Ana’s L1 and helps

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⁷ Challenging a teacher’s correction is an important act of agency and identity in itself, and these elements will be taken up again later in this section.
promotes a positive bilingual identity. Using shared linguistic resources and repertoires allows Natalie and Ana to reach understanding while exploring greater depth of meaning.

**We take up styles.**

Style is defined as "a semiotic meta-activity, which endows every human activity with sociocultural meaning" (Bucholtz, forthcoming: 3). Style may be performed linguistically, but it is not restricted to language use alone. Rather, "style concerns not simply ways of talking but more generally ways of doing things, of engaging in culturally significant activities and practices of any kind, using a range of stylistic features in both established and innovative ways" (Bucholtz, forthcoming: 5). Rampton (2013) draws on this understanding of style as a complex fusion of various semiotic resources to argue that L2 speakers are able to perform stylization to great effect. He defines stylization as “a reflexive communicative action in which speakers produce specially marked and often exaggerated representations of linguistic varieties that lie outside their habitual repertoire” (361). When doing stylization, speakers also often tend to demonstrate a metacognitive awareness of the styles being used and what those styles index (361). As such, stylization can be a powerful tool that L2 speakers may use to construct identities and perform different functions at different moments.

Rampton's (2013) article studied the L2 language use of a single participant in a variety of contexts throughout his daily life. Rampton found that his participant, Mandeep (a Punjabi man who moved to London and uses English on a daily basis) was quite skilled at shifting styles and employing different linguistic resources depending on the context in which he found himself. In addition, he found that Mandeep would often switch styles within an interaction or chunk of language, particularly when reporting the speech of his Punjabi mother, or of an Anglo boss or
friend. Sometimes, this shifting was made obvious by the presence of either Punjabi or Anglo linguistic variants, though Rampton noted that Mandeep was not often able to sustain an Anglo accent on segmentals (consonants and vowels) for long periods of time. Nevertheless, Rampton deemed Mandeep's stylization effective and claimed that L2 users can "[achieve] stylistic effects without full command of all…segmental resources"; that is to say, speakers can perform a range of stylizations by making use of various lexical, grammatical, and suprasegmental resources in addition to or rather than relying uniquely on the pronunciation of segmentals (368). Mandeep did indeed effectively employ a variety of styles for use in various contexts, and in so doing he was able to perform successfully in discursive interactions, simultaneously demonstrating his competency in English while showing solidarity with his own linguistic and cultural background, both as a Punjabi and as a multilingual speaker.

In the recorded SWAP lesson data, there are a couple of instances where Ana performs stylization. Often, her English pronunciation – while understandable – carries a heavy Spanish accent. She doesn’t often initiate phrases in English when she and Natalie are conversing as friends rather than as lesson participants, though there are a couple of notable exceptions. In the example below, Ana and Natalie are working through a writing exercise. Ana has indicated that she wants to use the phrase pie de calabaza (pumpkin pie) in her sentence, and Natalie has interrupted her writing to prompt her to put pumpkin before pie in English. Once Natalie models the correct English word, pumpkin (line 9), the sequence that follows involves negotiation of the correct pronunciation and spelling of the word:

Ana and Natalie, excerpt 3:

1   A:   Pie,
2   (0.8)
In lines 10 and 11, Ana appears to hear the alveolar nasal /n/ instead of the bilabial nasal /m/.

After several repetitions and instances of modeling the word, Ana says *okay* in line 16 and presumably starts to write the correct spelling, but she does not repeat Natalie’s exaggerated modeling of the word in line 15. Amidst and perhaps inspired by Natalie’s laughter in line 17, Ana utters *I got it, I got it* with a practically flawless American accent and an amused, confident tone. This instance, which is ‘specially marked’ and ‘exaggerated,’ falls outside of Ana’s usual repertoire and is a clear indication of stylization. While certain segmentals are problematic and difficult for Ana to pronounce (and indeed, while she struggled with pronunciation through the
majority of this example), we see that she is able to put on an effective American accent to display her competency to Natalie.

We partake in discourse.

Partaking in discourse is perhaps the most fundamental aspect of speaking a language. We speak to communicate with and to participate in the world and multiple discourses around us. Importantly, we are also able to construct identities through our discourses and interactions with others. Conversation Analysis (CA) is a valuable framework with which to examine how speakers of other languages interact and assert identity through interaction on a micro-level.

While CA in its pure sense relies solely on what is present and can be empirically demonstrated through the specific conversation being analyzed, applied CA and CA-for-SLA tend to allow for the incorporation of more sociolinguistic background. Antaki (2011) has identified six different “senses” of applied CA, one of which is “social-problem oriented,” in which the micro approach of CA may be applied to the macro-level of various social issues (1). Furthermore, as Bucholtz and Hall (2005) point out, identity cannot and should not be explored from one “analytic level” only; rather, identity “operates at multiple levels simultaneously” (586) and as should be analyzed in a similar manner. The interactional nature of CA lends itself well to analyzing how identity is co-constructed through elements like turn-taking and sequence organization, and, as Sert & Seedhouse (2011) note, CA may also shed light on how speakers construct various competencies in different contexts; competencies are fundamentally linked to what it means to be a resourceful speaker. Thus, CA is a useful tool in examining how speakers of other languages may construct competencies, demonstrate their abilities as resourceful speakers, and thus have increased opportunities for constructing acceptable identities.
**Repetition sequences and role reversals**

In order to highlight how role reversals happen, we must first identify some of the characteristics of both teacher and student roles in interaction. One of the ways we see clear roles manifested in this lesson data is through sequences of repetition. Especially in language-learning environments, repetition is often used to correct pronunciation by modeling it correctly. For the purposes of this analysis, I argue that the repetition sequence functions as a type of adjacency pair, a common sequence in CA (Scheglof, 2007; Sacks & Scheglof, 1973). An adjacency pair is a two-pair turn spoken by two different speakers immediately adjacent to one another. The turns are ordered logically in an initiation-response relationship, so that a certain type of first-pair part (FPP) makes relevant a corresponding second-pair part (SPP). There are certain types of adjacency pairs that occur often in conversation, such as question-answer, and offer-acceptance/decline (Scheglof, 2007:13). For example, consider the adjacency pair below:

**Example 1:**

1. **A:** What do you want for dinner?
2. **B:** Pasta sounds good.

Speaker A initiates a question as the FFP, and speaker B responds with an answer as the SPP. I would like to posit repetition sequences as an additional type of adjacency pair, where, prompted by an incorrect student utterance, the teacher may step in to initiate a FPP of a repetition sequence, making relevant the student’s SPP repetition of the problematic word. This pattern, (T initiates FPP; student responds with SPP), may also serve as an indicator of which participant fills which role at the time. As repetition sequences are prompted by an error, I argue that they

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8 This pattern, however, may occasionally be reversed, which will be addressed in a later section.
are also a type of repair sequence, in which participants work to repair errors made in conversation.

Ana and Natalie frequently employ repetition sequences in the data, as seen in the excerpt below. The lesson has been focused on various English expressions; here, the phrase *make yourself at home* is under discussion. Arrows are used to mark the beginning of a new repetition sequence:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 4:*

1. N: So, make yourself at home is what you say in English.
2. (0.6)
3. A: Make. (1.7) May you,
4. (0.5)
6. (0.6)
7. A: Make. (0.5) your self at home. (0.9) May yourself
8. a- I (.)
10. A: Make,
11. N: Yourself
12. A: Yourself
13. N: At
14. A: At,
15. N: home.

By the initiation of these sequences, we can clearly see that Natalie is acting in the role of the teacher, and Ana the role of student. In line 1, Natalie summarizes the target phrase in English (the pair had previously been using Spanish to get at the meaning of the phrase), and Ana
attempts to repeat the phrase in line 3. After bouts of intermittent silence and the incorrect pronunciation of *make* [mei], Natalie steps in in line 5, initiating the FPP repetition sequence by modeling the correct pronunciation. Ana completes the SPP, correcting her previous pronunciation of *make*. She then continues with the full phrase, though in her second repetition (after a 0.9 pause in line 7) she struggles with the pronunciation of *make* again. Lines 9-16 show the succession of four repetition sequences, one for each individual word in the phrase.

We also see the repetition sequence at work in the following excerpt. The lead-in to the repetition sequence is a different type of adjacency pair: question-answer. Ana initiates the question-answer sequence in line 1 as she asks an explicit question about the pronunciation of the English word *yesterday*:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 5:*

1. A:  Yes- (1.0) **Pero**, [jesturdeɪ] o [jesterdɛɪ].
   
2. N:  Yesterday  [jestʊrdɛɪ]
   
3. A:  Yes (. ) ter? [jestʃ]
   
   
5. A:  Yesterday. Yes- T?
   
   
7. A:  Yester
   
   

Natalie models the correct pronunciation in line 2 in direct response to Ana’s question (thus providing the SPP of the question-answer adjacency pair). Ana attempts to correct her pronunciation in line 3 but is not fully successful, prompting Natalie to model the pronunciation a second time in line 4, initiating the FPP repetition sequence. In response to Natalie’s modeling,
Ana is able to correct her own pronunciation in line 5. She then asks a follow up question regarding pronunciation and spelling, Natalie responds in line 6, and Ana once again attempts to pronounce the word, though is not able to finish. Natalie initiates one last repetition sequence in line 8, and Ana completes the sequence with her SPP in line 9.

In the next example, we see that Natalie and Ana switch roles. Here, Ana fills the role of the teacher by initiating the repetition sequence:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 6:*

1  N:  Como, a ver. (2.0) Si... es como, si alguien- si-si te invito
    Like, let’s see. If...it’s like, if someone-if-if I invite you

2  para cenar (0.5) a mi casa. (0.5) Y entras. (0.7) Yo voy a
to dinner at my house. And you enter. I’m going

3  decir, make yourself at home. Como, siente en casa.
to say, Like, [ ] at home.

4  ⇒  A:  Siéntete en casa.
    Make yourself at home.

5  N:  Siéntete en casa. (0.5) Es igual. [Significa la misma cosa
    Make yourself at home. It’s the same. It means the same thing.

Natalie fills the role of the teacher initially by explaining the meaning of the phrase in Spanish, until she utters an incorrect phrase *siente en casa* in line 3. Ana steps in to correct the grammar of the phrase in line 4, effectively switching into the teacher role with her initiation of the repetition sequence. Natalie’s SPP repeats the correct phrase in line 5, demonstrating that she accepts Ana’s role switch and plays the role of the student in this sequence. Interestingly, though, she swiftly switches back to the teacher role as she continues her explanation.

This role-reversal is most often conditioned by the language the participants are using.

When speaking English, Natalie tends to fill the role of the teacher; when speaking Spanish, Ana
often fills the teacher role. A similar example is presented below where Ana fills the role of the teacher and narrator, though the repetition sequence functions in a different manner:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 7:*

1. **A:** Como, (1.2) Como el se tiró por la ventana. (1.5) Como
   Like, Like he threw himself out the window. Like
2. **si tu vas en su carro y abras su ventana ( )**
   *if you’re going in your car and you open your window*
3. (4.0) No? (0.6) [Okay
4. **N:** [El esposo de ella fue a un- un fiesta
   Her husband went to a party
5. → **A:** Con la señora.
   *With his wife.*
6. **N:** Con la señora.
   *With his wife.*
7. → **A:** Y sus hijos.
   *And their children.*
8. **N:** Y sus hijos.
   *And their children.*

This sequence occurs as Ana attempts to help Natalie understand a problematic construction, *se tiró*, in the story she is telling (lines 1-3). Ana’s explanation is characteristic of many other explanation attempts in the data, from both Ana and Natalie. She first uses the problematic term in a different way in a completed sentence: *Como el se tiró por la ventana* (line 1). When that receives no uptake, she attempts to set the scene: *Como si tu vas en su carro y abras su ventana* ( ) (lines 2-3). When that is followed by a 4 second silence, she questions for understanding. Then, interestingly, she switches into English, potentially to try another tactic and explain the problematic term in English.

At the same time, however, Natalie rephrases the parts of the story she understands. Ana adds a detail, *con la señora* (line 5), which is immediately repeated by Natalie in line 6. Her
repetition of Ana’s detail suggests that Natalie positions herself as the student here by completing a repetition sequence SPP when one was not obviously required. The same sequence occurs a second time in lines 7-8: Ana adds an additional detail (y sus hijos), and Natalie immediately takes up the SPP and repeats.

Normally, this repetition sequence functions to correct pronunciation or grammar. Here, we see that it may also be employed in clarification of meaning. Natalie fills the role of the student by repeating the target phrase in the SPP, rather than expressing a form of agreement or indicating that Ana should move on with the story. In addition to casting herself in the student role, Natalie may possibly also be indicating her understanding of the added information.

**Power and sequential organization**

Within CA studies of institutional classroom data, teacher-initiated questioning sequences have been typically agreed to be the “basic interactional structure in the classroom” (Jacknick, 2011:39). These sequences have been described by a variety of different names, the most common being Initiation-Response-Feedback or IRF (McHoul, 1985; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and Initiation-Response-Evaluation or IRE (Mehan, 1979). These sequences begin with a teacher-initiated utterance (generally a question or request), followed by a student response, and closed with the teacher’s evaluation of the student’s performance or a request for more information.

Markee (2011) suggests that these sequences often present an unequal power relationship between the student and the teacher, as they tend to pre-allocate the majority of interactional turns to the teacher and allow for limited student involvement. Teachers are privileged in that they are able to ask questions of students and evaluate their responses. Furthermore, teachers
have the option of closing a sequence at the end of a traditional question-answer turn, or keeping it open by asking for more elaboration (71). As such, these sequences are not ideal for the construction of student identity as students are rarely given ample interactional time to speak. A similar sequence may be initiated when students ask questions of the teacher; though we may expect the student to be privileged and allotted more turns as the question-asker, Markee (2000) notes that even in student-initiated questions, students generally do not have the same evaluative options that are available to teachers. He suggests that for teachers, the preferred sequence for student-initiated questions is Q-CQ(D)-A-C:

Table 1. Q-CQ(D)-A-C turn description. Adapted from Markee (2000: 75):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question turn</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Question turn</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQ(D)</td>
<td>Counter question (display) turn</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Answer turn</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Commenting turn</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rather than provide a simple answer after the student’s question, Markee (2000) suggests that a teacher’s counter-question allows the teacher more opportunities to retain “topical and sequential control” (75).

Since some of these initial findings, however, more researchers have explored sequencing in language classrooms and agree that there are ways for students to exert more power and take control of more turns in teacher-initiated questioning sequences. Similarly, Heritage and Heritage (2013) show, through their discussion of teacher-initiated questioning sequences in the context of formative assessment, that some teacher-initiated questioning sequences can both allow student identity to emerge and foster it. In formative assessment, the teacher’s role is primarily to elicit data and responses from students to check their understanding, and to adjust the lesson and direction of learning if needed (Heritage & Heritage, 176). In the authors’
example, the teacher, Ms. Olvera, has been extensively trained and is able to apply her training very successfully in the classroom. All of the students in her fifth-grade writing class are Spanish speakers, and half of the students are designated as English learners, or ELs (Heritage & Heritage, 181-82).

In Ms. Olvera’s first interaction with the student in this example, she asks to hear Maria’s progress with an assignment. The authors note that Ms. Olvera “accounts for her request” within her initial turn *just so I understand what it is that you’re...* (line 2). In doing so, Ms. Olvera “registers the child’s agency in the work and her own role in the formation of the argument” (185).

*Maria 1 (from Heritage and Heritage, 2013, 185):*

1  Ms.O:  Read me your argument first, just so that I understand
2        what it is that you’re…
3  Mari:  I think people should recycle because like you,(1.0) you could
4        help the earth get well clean and healthy.
5  Ms.O:  (1.5) Okay. And your reasons?

As the exchange continues and Maria makes a slight language error, Ms. Olvera at first attempts to raise Maria’s awareness of the error for self-correction. She rephrases Maria’s utterance in line 9 in a way that both models the correct form, but also allows Maria the chance to reformulate her sentence without directly asking her to do so. When Maria does not reformulate, however, Ms. Olvera changes tactics in line 11 and formulates her request as an error of her own hearing.
Maria 1 (from Heritage and Heritage, 2013, 185):

6   Mari:    To save the earth, (2.5) you can provide people by getting
7        injured when they are picking cans, bottles from the
8        street or in the trashcan.
9   Ms.O:    (2.5) Are you saying you could provide for people?
10      (2.0) ((slight nod from Maria))
11      Read that last one again, I missed that one word.

The authors note that the main goal of this sequence was to gauge Maria’s progress in forming arguments and counter-arguments, not grammar or vocabulary. As such, Ms. Olvera eventually drops pursuing the linguistic issue any further, in favor of focusing on the larger lesson goal (187). Heritage and Heritage state that with Ms. Olvera’s careful questioning, students are treated not so much as students, but as “collaborators” (187). This distinction is noteworthy, as it allows the students more opportunity to construct themselves as worthwhile participants in the learning process.

These types of sequences are not common in the data collected for this study, perhaps in large part because the student giving English lessons is not a trained teacher. Nevertheless, a wealth of opportunities still exists for identity construction in interaction. While some teacher-initiated sequences by skilled and respectful teachers can thus be effective in the co-construction of meaningful classroom roles, much research has recently focused on student-initiated classroom sequences, which overwhelmingly place interactional control in the hands of the students (Waring, 2009; Jacknick, 2011; Walsh & Li, 2013, among others). In these sequences, the student initiates with a question to the teacher. The teacher responds, and the third part of the sequence then belongs to the student, as such sequences tend to have a bias for the prior speaker to speak in the third-pair part (Sacks et al., 1974). These pairs are called post-expansions, and
may be linked to power and how student-teacher roles are exhibited in the classroom. Citing Thornborrow (2002), Jacknick (2011) notes that power in talk can emerge on two levels: structural and interactional. Structural power “relates to the number and type of turns speakers are able to secure” (50); thus, students engaging in student-initiated sequences tend to exhibit power in talk from the greater number of turns that this sequence allocates. On the interactional level, “power manifests in the actions speakers can accomplish with those turns” (ibid). Interactional power in talk acts differently depending on the type of expansion employed: according to Schegloff (2007) post-expansions may be both minimal and non-minimal. Minimal post-expansions allow the student to control or evaluate the teacher’s response, while non-minimal post-expansions allow students to do various actions like challenging the teacher’s response and displaying their own stance.

According to Schegloff (2007), the most common types of minimal post-expansions involve either oh, okay, and assessments, or some combination of these three. These exchanges happen often in the data recorded for this study, as in the examples below. Here, Natalie and Ana are working through a question/answer activity together. One partner looks at a picture of a kitchen and asks for the location of an item. In this example, the items are (drinking) glasses. This example comes after Natalie has helped explain to Ana that in English, glasses has two different vocabulary senses: spectacles and drinking glasses.

Ana and Natalie, excerpt 8:

1 → A: **Okay. Pero aqui es hablando de lentes o de vasos?**
   *But here, is it talking about spectacles or (drinking) glasses?*

2   N: **De vasos.**
   *It’s about (drinking) glasses*

3   A: **Okay**
In line 1, Ana initiates a question sequence, asking for further clarification about the sense of the word in this particular example. Natalie responds with the answer, and Ana accepts it with *okay* in line 3. This is a very straightforward example, but we see that Ana is taking direction for her learning in asking for clarification. Natalie’s answer was clear and understandable, so Ana expressed agreement and the two moved on.

In this second example, Natalie and Ana have been talking about expressions and are working to understand the English expression *make yourself at home*.

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 9:*

1 → A:  Como, siéntete bien en casa? (0.9) Es un expresión?
Like, feel at home? Is it an expression?

2 N:  It’s like that, yeah.

3 (0.7)

4 → A:  Si.
yes.

Here, we see that Ana initiates a question sequence in Spanish. She asks two questions: the first is a translation check of the English phrase with a similar phrase she knows in Spanish. With the second question, Ana checks to be sure she understands *expression*, which has caused some difficulty for her throughout the first part of the lesson. Natalie responds with an affirmation in line 2, which Ana then evaluates with in Spanish in line 4. It is interesting here that Ana uses *Si* (*yes*) in her third-pair part, rather than *okay* (above), which she commonly uses in other similar sequences. Why might this be? *Si* could be functioning the same way as *okay* does in these minimal post-expansions: as an acceptance of the provided answer. However, I think that *si* could also be doing something different. It is possible that Ana is already fairly certain that her suggested Spanish phrase (line 1) is correct. She asks for Natalie’s confirmation; when she gets it, *si* could be acting to confirm her own correct knowledge of the phrase.
The other type of post-expansions, non-minimal, may do a variety of actions. Notably, however, they may be used to challenge, reject, or disagree with the second pair part (Schegloff, 2007). Importantly, Jacknick (2011) suggests that non-minimal post-expansions helped students exhibit more agency and direction in their own learning by “securing interactional spaces for themselves” (43) and Waring (2009) similarly concluded that non-minimal post expansions are an effective way for students be heard. As identity is co-constructed through discourse, it follows that students who can secure interactional space for themselves may also secure opportunities to construct their identities. The following example demonstrates the use of non-minimal post-expansions as Natalie and Ana negotiate meaning:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt 10:*

1  A:  Okay my glasses-
2       (0.5)
3  N:  Or the glasses.
4       (0.5)
5  A:  No?
6       (0.6)
7  N:  I think (. ) so gla- Oh, (. ) so glasses?
8  A:  *Puedo- tengo mis lentes aquí.*  
9      *Can I- I have my glasses here*  
10 N:   Mmmmm
11  A:  *Puedo,* can I say, my glasses, (1.4) my glass?
12      *Can I,*
13  N:   Solo es- (0.6) *interesante porque* glasses (0.7) *tiene dos*  
14      *It’s just- interesting because has two*  
15  N:   significados (0.6) So glasses (0.4) is (0.5) *ocu-oculos?*  
16  A:   Lentes.  
17      *Glasses (spectacles)*
Here, Ana displays multiple non-minimal post expansions in which she clearly challenges and disagrees with Natalie. The first comes in line 5, when Ana questions Natalie’s correction of her initial utterance. Natalie attempts to provide an explanation in line 7, but Ana persists throughout two turns with her own idea of the utterance. In doing so, Ana exhibits agency in her student role. Interestingly, once Natalie provides a Spanish description of the word’s multiple meanings, Ana steps into the teacher role to provide the correct Spanish word, lentes (line 14). Natalie repeats the word in the SPP in line 15, and Ana positively evaluates her response in line 17.

Informing identity studies by exploring turns and sequence through Conversation Analysis thus helps us see how Ana and Natalie construct the roles of student and teacher interactionally. These roles shift often throughout the data, thus providing Ana with many opportunities to show herself as an elder and an expert of Spanish even as she engages in learning English. Furthermore, we have seen that students may also employ questioning sequences and evaluate the teacher, thus carving out more interactional space for themselves. As Manke (1997) notes, power roles in the classroom are “shifting” and “relational” (138 in Jacknick, p50), just as identities are shifting and relational (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005); power, roles, and sequence come together well to inform identity construction.

**We do genres.**

Hyland (2007:149) refers to genre broadly as “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language.” Studies of genre are typically concerned with how language is used in institutions and among the members of those discourse communities. The beginning of genre theory is credited
to Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993); while its traditional application is to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), genre theory is increasingly used to study other institutions and professional workplaces as well (Bhatia, 2012). Deng et al (2014:4) summarize that genre language tends to be “governed by rules and conventions which could be social, linguistic, cultural, academic, or professional” and that insider members of these communities are more aware of these conventions at work than are newer members. As such, raising the genre awareness and fostering genre competence of students is a powerful resource in helping prepare them to succeed not only linguistically, but also socially and interactionally in a variety of contexts. Indeed, recognized as an integral part of discourse competence, genre competence “plays a critical role in initiating EFL learners into the discourse community of the target language” (Deng et al, 2014:1).

The structure of the recorded SWAP lessons is not based around genre theory, though many of the materials that Natalie and Ana use were created to teach and encourage language use for specific purposes in the larger community, giving students the skills they need (intercambio.org). The importance of this type of need-based English teaching is widely recognized by teachers and students alike. For example, Norton (2001) surveyed a group of immigrant English language learners in Canada about their preferences for English class structure. Students were presented with short descriptions for three courses and asked which one they felt would be most beneficial to a new arrival learning English. Students were provided with more detailed descriptions during the study, but the broad lesson types presented were as follows: course A focused on acquiring linguistic structures, course B had a communicative focus, and course C was defined as English for Specific Purposes (168). Initially, three of four learners expressed a preference for course A, with a strict focus on language structure and grammar, what many view to be the traditional language course. After six months of language
lessons, however, all four learners agreed that a course with more real-life applicability would be more helpful. One of the learners, Eva, provided the reason as follows:

Practice is the best thing to learn. When we were by the school we were in a lot of contact with English, but when I had to go out to work and speak the language, I was so scared. You don’t have the practice, just the structures. (168)

Thus, for students who are living within the community of the language they study, course designs that focus on teaching real-life skills in conjunction with linguistic structure are perhaps the most useful and conducive to learning. In a questionnaire regarding Ana’s language learning background and goals, she indicated that the main reason she wished to learn English was to better communicate with her co-workers. Unfortunately, there was very little in the recorded lessons that focused clearly on this goal or worked on specific communication structures that might help her to do so. Certain activities were relevant, however, as we see below:

*Ana and Natalie, excerpt II:*

1 N: Okay. Where are the plates?
2 A: Mmmmm, yeah. That? The plates (. ) are (. ) (   )
3 N: Mm hmm.
4 A: On the table.
5 N: Mm hmm.
6 A: Good?
7 N: That’s good. (. ) What else? Are they, next to anything?
8 A: Si. Next to the (. ) (What is this?)
9 N: Looks like a pie.
10 A: Pie? Next to the pie.

In this example, Natalie and Ana are engaged in an exercise from the book. Participants are to ask and answer questions regarding the location of specific kitchen items shown on a picture
they have in front of them. Practicing kitchen-related vocabulary is a goal here, as is the use of relational terms and phrases (on top of, next to, to the left of, etc.). Ana works in dining services and presumably has a need to use many of the items in this activity as well as these relational terms. Thus, even though this exercise does not focus on communicative structures, practicing relevant terms and constructions may still help Ana in communicating with her co-workers. While these skills might not coincide perfectly with genre theory, teaching that focuses on the skills needed to navigate real-life communication and on teaching applicable genres is a worthwhile venture that helps make students more resourceful in their speaking.

Having explored each of Pennycook’s (2012) definitions of what it means to be a resourceful speaker, we are again confronted with precisely why we need to re-frame our conception of L2 speakers. Being resourceful speakers removes L2 speakers from the scrutiny of how well they can linguistically perform, and instead highlights and elevates other tools that they may use to construct identity.
A way forward: Language teaching to encourage multilingual identity construction

Scattered throughout this paper are mentions of and references to competencies that language speakers may employ. Celce-Murcia (2007) provides the following model (revised from Celce-Murcia et al 1995) of various important competencies that are integral to a speaker’s ability to effectively communicate in a language. This model puts discourse competence in the center, which is informed and influenced by the four surrounding triangles: linguistic competence, formulaic competence, socio-cultural competence, and interactional competence. Strategic competence encircles the entire model. Each competency is briefly summarized below. Above all, this model highlights the complexities of language learning and use and how these many competencies are fundamentally intertwined.

Figure 1. Competencies. From Celce-Murcia (2007:45):
Table 2. Description of competencies (adapted from Celce-Murcia, 2007: 46-50):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourse Competence:</strong></td>
<td>Includes four sub-areas: cohesion, deixis, coherence, generic structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-cultural Competence</strong></td>
<td>Includes various socio-cultural variables, including: social contextual factors, stylistic appropriateness, cultural factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic Competence</strong></td>
<td>Includes types of knowledge: phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formulaic Competence</strong></td>
<td>Includes knowledge of routines, collocations, idioms, lexical frames, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactional Competence</strong> <em>(Actional Competence and Conversational Competence)</em></td>
<td>Conversational competence involves turn-taking knowledge like: opening and closing conversations, interrupting, how to get hold of the speaking floor, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Competence</strong></td>
<td>Includes knowledge and use of language-learning and communication strategies such as: cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, self-monitoring, stalling/time-gaining, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see from the descriptions, these competencies are fundamentally linked to Pennycook’s (2012) notion of what it means to be a resourceful speaker. Each of these competencies is essential in giving speakers the various tools they need to create acceptable identities in interaction. Importantly, this model is meant to serve as a guide for language educators, and Celce-Murcia (2007) also proposes a sample lesson plan that can foster each competence. Teaching language in such a way that favors not only linguistic competence, but also socio-cultural factors and interactional competence gives language learners expanded resources for constructing identity.

How, then, can language teaching implement a higher focus on competencies? One place to start is in examining the models with which students are presented and the types of exercises they are asked to complete. Many teachers and researches alike agree that a strict native-speaker
model needs to be discarded, and language teaching has been slowly moving away from the native-speaker model alone. EIL (English as an International Language) materials tend to include a range of accents and different varieties of English in listening exercises, and more recent English language textbooks include a wider variety of multilingual models as well (McKay, 2003). This shift is a positive one: reducing the presence of language learner models that are presented as incompetent and forever asking directions to the train station helps learners imagine stronger roles and identities for themselves that are not necessarily reliant on native speakers for help. The incorporation of intelligent, independent, and successful L2 users as speaker-models is thus one very important way to start promoting an effective multilingual identity.

Similarly, Pennycook (2012) takes issue with the type of dialogue practice that is littered throughout language textbooks and student communicative exercises. In dialogue or role-play – some of the most widely used exercises in teaching – students are given a dialogue to practice with a partner that highlights a particular grammar point, pronunciation issue, or element of cultural awareness. The problem with these dialogues is that they are generally quite contrived and rarely represent real language that students would be likely to encounter. Of course, Pennycook notes, the issue of authenticity is always present in the classroom: students should be provided with authentic language whenever possible, but truly authentic language use is often messy and can be very counter-productive to learning (2012:143). As a result, many dialogue exercises attempt to deal with the authenticity issue by contextualizing dialogue around a real-life event. While not problematic in itself, Pennycook (2012) notes that these dialogues have a tendency to be too perfect and lacking in any real conflict or need to negotiate meaning. In reality, exchanges involve a great deal of negotiation, and students (particularly if they are marked as L2 speakers of English) may be met with indifference, un-accommodation, or even
hostility. Dialogues that demonstrate only obliging and polite exchanges thus run the risk of teaching students that "consensus is the norm" and that students should strive to integrate into this normative approach to interaction (143). In doing so, dialogues "construct passive, consensual roles for [students] to fill in the face of more powerful others" (146). If dialogues were instead created to help students negotiate through difficult situations, students could better practice ways in which to assert their identities and make use of communicative skills in interaction.

One way to move beyond these dialogues involves the use of CA-for-SLA to understand the roles that students can play in interaction and to better foster interactive competence in students. Waring (2009) suggests “the empirical power of CA [may be effectively used] to detail the interactional practices that either create or inhibit [students’] opportunities for participation” (798). He (2004) similarly concluded that a better understanding of conversational patterns and structures can positively affect students. The more that teaching can be structured on and informed by real conversation and discourse, the more students can learn strategies for constructing identity.

Finally, Prior (2011) suggests that incorporating more narrative writing into the L2 classroom can be an important outlet for students to express a range of communicative competencies. Perhaps more importantly, allowing students to share their experiences as multilingual and/or multicultural persons helps students to feel validated. Language classes, however, have generally been more focused on speaking and oral communication than on written communication, often for good reason. Immigrant students who may not be fully literate in their L1 should not be expected to write proficiently in an L2, and communicative competence can be taught perfectly well without adding a written element. And yet, Pavlenko and Norton (2007)
bring up an intriguing point in that "written texts may represent uniquely safe spaces in which new identities can be invented and new multilingual voices 'tried on'" (678). For those students that are able, writing may be used to positively help students work through their own L2 identity formation and provide a 'safe space' for them to practice. For students not able to write, oral narratives may be equally beneficial.

Similarly, the incorporation of more texts written by multilingual speakers would be a positive addition to any language classroom. Using multilingual works (textbooks, articles written for a newspaper, fiction, etc.), especially those by well-established writers, showcases the success that multilingual speakers can achieve in English and presents a positive L2 image to students. Moving forward, then, it is clear that L2 students need to be presented and surrounded by positive, successful L2 models rather than the incompetent, perpetual learner. Furthermore, more focus is needed on communicative and discursive competence, thus preparing students for a life in which they can exhibit their agency and put on the required discursive identities while maintaining a strong multilingual sense of self.

Even if language teaching reaches a point where it values and supports L2 multilingual identities and teaches students how to navigate a range of discursive practices, only half of the battle is won. L2 speakers have been asserting their identities as legitimate multilingual speakers as long as there have been those who have learned a second language, and people in academia have been increasingly responsive. Outside academia, however, public perception and willingness to accept multilingual identities has often hindered the process. In order to truly embrace multilingualism and the shifting boundaries of a globalized world, a shift in indexical fields (Eckert, 2008) needs to occur and be better recognized by the public. Pavlenko and Norton (2007) suggest that the onus of this task falls on those who hold offices of high visibility:
politicians, celebrities, the general media, and writers (676). Published texts, in particular, provide a rich and important medium in which "accents are erased and voices imbued with sufficient authority" (677). Pavlenko and Norton reference a number of highly-acclaimed multilingual authors who have chosen to publish in English, and note that high-prestige awards are increasingly awarded to authors who speak English as an L2. This trend, they hope, is one that will continue, proving to audiences worldwide that multilingualism is to be celebrated and that those who speak English as an L2 can do so legitimately (676-7).
Conclusions

In summary, a number of things need to happen to create an environment in which L2 speakers can construct their identities. First, we need to always be thinking differently about how we view the world. We need to recognize that to speak a language is to navigate a range of discursive practices in which a variety of competencies are at work; linguistic competence alone is not enough to be a successful speaker of a language. Shifting our view of language competence to recognize the importance of resourceful speakers is key. Once we can conceive of language in this way, it becomes easier for L2 speakers to assert their identities in interaction in ways that index competent multilingual speakers. Finally, language teaching must continue to create a validating environment for students: successful multilingual models ought to be more widely available, fostering multiple competencies should be given more weight – possibly via methods such as CA-for-SLA – and narrative writing could be better implemented as a place for students to 'try on' new multilingual identities (Pavlenko and Norton, 2007). Finally, perception is crucial: the old and often racialized attitudes towards L2 speakers must undergo a shift to realize that ownership of English does not only belong to a select few. In our increasingly globalized world, boundaries are shifting and old notions are being challenged, and multilingual speakers have more space now than ever to construct L2 identities.
Bibliography


Lantolf, J., and Pavlenko, A. (2001). (S)second (L)anguage (A)activity theory: Understanding


Description of Transcription Conventions  
(adapted from Sidnell, 2010)

[ ]  Left square brackets indicate the onset of overlapping speech by different speakers.

] ]  Right square brackets indicate the ending of overlapped utterances by different speakers.

=  Indicates ‘latching’: no discernable silence between the end of one speaker’s utterance and the beginning of a different speaker’s utterance.

(0.5)  Numbers in parenthesis indicate the amount of silence in seconds.

(.)  A period in parenthesis indicates a silence of (0.2) seconds or less.

.  Punctuation marks are not used grammatically, but indicate intonation. The period indicates a falling or final contour.

?  A question mark indicates rising intonation.

,  A comma indicates continuing intonation (not much of a change).

::  Colons indicate an extended or prolonged sound: the more colons, the longer the sound is extended.

-  A hyphen is used to indicate a word cut-off or self-interruption.

word  Underlining represents stress or emphasis.

WORD  Capitalized letters indicate particularly loud speech.

word  Bold letters are used to indicate the use of Spanish.

hhhh  Aspiration is indicated by the letter h. The more h’s, the more aspiration present.

(word)  Parenthesis around words indicate the transcriber’s guess as to what was said.

( )  Empty parentheses indicate that something was said, but the words are inaudible.

(( ))  Double parentheses indicate non-speech sounds ((sniff)) or ((cough)).

@  Singing or an otherwise ‘affected’ voice is indicated with the @ symbol.