**Peer interaction in the Adult English as a Foreign language classroom: Using Social Discourse to Establish Peer Relationships**

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# Declaration

This thesis has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree at this or any other university. It is the result of my own work and includes nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated. Many of the ideas in this thesis were the product of discussion with my supervisor Dr. Jenefer Philp

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**ABSTRACT**


The purpose of this study is to investigate how adult learners of English as a foreign language mediate language learning opportunities while working together in the classroom. Specifically, the study addresses: (i) how learners use language to create *comity,* which refers to the interactional talk aimed at establishing and maintaining friendly relations and positive rapport (Aston, 1988, 1993), (ii) what types of interactional patterns students create while working together (iii) how the use of social discourse offers opportunities for language learning.

The study is classroom-based, and it was conducted in a university EFL classroom in Mexico for four weeks. Twenty-four learners (i.e., twelve pairs) participated in the study, and data were collected while they worked with five language tasks. The data comprise transcripts of audio-recorded pair talk, detailed observation notes, and interviews with participants.

Drawing from sociocultural theory, this study examines the moment-to-moment discourse to identify social discourse moves of *social inquiry*, *solidarity*, and *support* and language-related episodes produced in the interactions. Findings show how learners used discourse to express and maintain *support* and *solidarity*, allowing them to engage in pair discussions to complete the language tasks. *Social inquiry* provided a space for students to get to know each other better, thus creating affective bonds and a feeling of trust towards the partner.

The results also show that learners created four different patterns of interaction (collaborative, dominant/dominant, expert/novice, dominant/passive). The pairs predominantly established a collaborative interaction, which has been shown to be

more conducive to learning (Storch, 2001, Watanabe, 2008). The findings suggest that the students who were more likely to use discourse to express *support*, *solidarity*, and engage in *social inquiry*, created a collaborative and expert/novice pattern of interaction. Consequently, the study shows how establishing comity in the language classroom promotes a more collaborative interaction between peers and supports learning in the context of peer interaction.

INDEX WORDS: comity, patterns of interaction, LREs, classroom tasks, sociocultural theory

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# List of abbreviations

EFL    English as a Foreign Language

ESL    English as a Second language

FL     Foreign Language

L1     Mother tongue/ First language

LRE    Language Related Episodes

NfM   Negotiation for Meaning

SCT    Sociocultural theory

SDM   Social Discourse Move

SLA    Second Language Acquisition

ZPD    Zone of Proximal Development

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The prevalent focus of interaction research on second language acquisition (henceforth, SLA will be used) has been on the cognitive processes of each learner. For more than three decades, researchers have mainly based their investigation on the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1985, 1996), Output hypothesis (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005), and the Noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990). They have particularly explored the learners' opportunities to receive modified input, produce output, and notice the gaps in their language knowledge when interacting (Mackey, Abbhul, & Gass, 2012). Studies following the interactionist perspective have placed importance on the negotiation for meaning (e.g., clarification requests and confirmation checks) that occurs within interaction and thus helps to make input more comprehensible (Long, 1996). However, this cognitively oriented approach on its own is insufficient to fully explain the complex nature of peer interaction (Watanabe, 2008). Crookes (1997) indicated that much SLA research conducted within an interactionist approach was done outside the learners' social setting. He argued that the relationship between pedagogy and SLA could be improved if "SLA focused more on learning as social rather than psychological" (p. 101). Similarly, Block's (2003) critique of the interactionist perspective explains that what is required is a "more socially informed stance" (p.74) for SLA research. Following Aston (1986, 1993) and Valsiner and van der Veer (2000), Block argues that interaction not only involves the transaction of information but the negotiation of interpersonal relationships. Recognizing the importance of the social aspect of interaction can provide a better picture of how peer interaction can promote learning.

A classroom is a social space where teachers and students typically interact.  It is a place for learning, but it is also a space where different people get to know each other and establish interpersonal relationships. Swain and Deters (2007) indicate that in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), more studies are taking a sociocultural stance "that prioritizes sociocultural and contextual factors in addition to acknowledging individual multifaceted identities" (p. 820). Henceforth, in this thesis, sociocultural theory will refer to the term as it is typically employed in the field of SLA. Thus, other meanings of this term that are not related to Vygotsky will not be used. Researchers have become interested in investigating the students' interpersonal relationships during pair and group work, and they have found that certain types of peer interaction are more conducive to language learning (e.g., Storch, 2001b, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Most of this research focuses on language itself, particularly on the production of language-related episodes (LREs). What is missing is further investigation of how learners' interpersonal relationships develop in the language classroom.

This study investigates peer interaction within the context of the foreign language classroom. It explores: (a) the ways in which learners create *comity* (Aston, 1993), that is, how students establish and maintain friendly relationships while engaged in language tasks, and (b) the opportunities for learning that arise in such contexts.

## 1.1 Rationale for This Study

This study has been motivated by current research on peer interaction in SLA and my personal reasons. First of all, there is a need for more studies that are conducted in the context of the classroom (Philp, Walter, & Basturkmen, 2010; Swain & Lapkin,

2001), especially in the foreign language classroom. In this setting, students have fewer opportunities for language production since learner participation is limited inside and outside the classes (Sato, 2013). Peer interaction offers students a context for using and practicing the language. It is a valuable pedagogical resource to maximize the learners' speaking chances in a setting mainly dominated by the teacher. Thus, this study contributes to the scarce peer interaction research conducted within the EFL classroom (e.g., Davin & Donato, 2013; Kim, 2016; Moranski & Toth, 2016; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Williams, 2001) by investigating the dialogue produced among adult language learners in this natural setting. EFL teachers would benefit from understanding what happens in the classroom when learners work together to promote best practices in such contexts to facilitate the students' language learning process since, for many learners, the EFL classroom is the only place where they can learn and practice the foreign language.

Research on peer interaction has increased over the years, yet there is still a need to further investigate and understand the complexity of the nature of learners working together (for a review see Philp, Adams & Iwashita, 2014; Sato & Ballinger, 2016). Drawing from a sociocultural framework, the present study explores student-student interaction in the social setting of the EFL classroom. Sociocultural theory views social interaction as a context for knowledge construction. According to this theory, mental activities such as problem-solving, attention, and voluntary memory are mediated by language through dialogic interaction (Wells, 2000). Swain (2000) refers to this as collaborative dialogue, which "is dialogue that constructs linguistic knowledge…It is where language use and language learning can co-occur" (p. 97). Since language learning is suggested to occur through social interaction, students'

interpersonal relationships may mediate the effectiveness of peer interaction. Researchers have investigated the patterns of interaction and relationships established between learners based on the quality of engagement in terms of equality and mutuality (Damon & Phelps, 1989). This research has suggested that the collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction are more conducive to language learning (e.g. Storch, 2001, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). However, there is very little research in instructed language learning settings that provides a picture of students' interpersonal relationships and how these might provide opportunities for language development. Therefore, a second aim of this study is to explore how the learners' use of social discourse to establish *comity* relates to the patterns of interaction they create and the opportunities for language learning when they work together with language tasks.

Finally, a personal reason for conducting this research is that I am a language learner and teacher in Mexico. Being a language learner who studied in an EFL context, I recognize the important role that my classroom peers played in my process of acquiring the FL. Since I am an introverted person who feels threatened when participating in a whole class, I found pair and group work a safer space for me to use the language and experiment with it (Philp et al., 2014). I enjoyed the moments of the class when it was time to join my peers and solve the activities together. In these interactions, I had the opportunity to meet people through language, produce language, try out my language knowledge (Swain, 2000), and provide and receive feedback. What is more, once the classes were finished, my closest classmates (who had become my friends) and I continued speaking English outside the classroom. In my personal experience, I felt highly motivated by using the FL with my partners. As

a language teacher, I observed in my classes how the social environment played an essential role in the learners' participation in class. I noticed that in the groups where learners appeared to be friendlier to each other, they were also more respectful and eager to engage with one another's contributions when they worked together. The classroom environment seemed to be a safer place for them to use the language or ask questions about the language they were learning. I perceived how the students' interpersonal relationships helped them or inhibited their learning process. In some cases, these relationships also contributed to the students' motivation and willingness to continue studying the foreign language. However, I needed to investigate this thoroughly by collecting samples of the language produced during pair interaction through audio recordings, taking detailed observation field notes, and interviewing students to know about their perspectives and feelings about peer interaction and its potential benefits. Consequently, a final aim of this study is related to the pedagogical implications of peer interaction. In many EFL contexts, as is the case in Mexico or Chile, many teachers still rely on teacher-centered methodologies, such as the grammar-translation method (Kormos & Kiddle, 2013), instead of using more learner-centered approaches. This study shows how crucial it is for learners to build *comity* in the classroom since it represents the foundation for greater mutuality and equality when they work together with the language tasks. Teachers ought to provide an optimal classroom environment where they foster positive peer relationships that support collaborative interactions, which are suggested to be more conducive to language learning.

**1.2 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized into eight chapters. This first chapter provides a brief overview of the study and the rationale for conducting the investigation of pair interaction in the context of the FL classroom. Chapter two reviews the literature related to peer interaction research. It provides a recount of the theoretical framework for this study, namely sociocultural theory, and its main tenets. It also describes the notion of *comity*, and it presents the research questions.

Chapter three presents the methodology followed in the study and explains the research paradigm. It describes the context, participants, and research tools used for data collection. The fourth chapter explains the data analysis procedures. Chapters five, six, and seven present and discuss the findings of the research questions. Finally, Chapter eight concludes the thesis with a summary of the findings. It also includes the implications for classroom pedagogy and proposes directions for future research.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter reviews the theoretical background for the study presented in this thesis. The first part provides an overview of the general education research on peer interaction and peer learning. Then it discusses the role of peer interaction in second language acquisition (SLA). The third section of the chapter focuses on how interaction contributes to second language development seen from a cognitive perspective. It includes its key components and limitations. The next part examines interaction from the theoretical framework of this study, which is sociocultural theory (SCT), and its central tenets, including mediation, ZPD, and scaffolding. Finally, it discusses the notion of *comity* for peer interaction and reviews the research that has focused on interpersonal relationships between students in the classroom.

**2.1 Peer interaction in First Language Acquisition**

Group and pair work have been widely studied and described in the fields of education and in social, developmental, and educational psychology (e.g., Chiriac, 2014; Cohen, 1994; Damon, 1984; Damon & Phelps, 1989; Gillies & Boyle, 2011; Hmelo-Silver, Chinn, Chan, Carol & O'Donnell, 2013; King, 2010; O'Donnell, 2006; Webb & Palincsar, 1996). Researchers have focused on the pedagogical and social advantages that learners have when they work together. They have acknowledged the positive effects that group work has on students' learning (see reviews by Rohrbeck, Ginsburg-Block, Fantuzzo, & Miller, 2003; Slavin, 2013; Webb, 2008).

Cooperative and collaborative work are two areas of peer learning that have been widely studied (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Kershner, Warwick, Mercer, & Starman, 2014; Tsay & Brady, 2010), and they are crucial for understanding how learners work together in the classroom and the benefits they can obtain from peer

interaction. Before moving into the research on cooperative and collaborative learning, it is necessary first to define these terms following Damon and Phelps' (1989) notion of learners' quality of engagement based on the dimensions of equality and mutuality. Equality refers to the degree of control that learners have over the direction of the task, and mutuality indicates the level of engagement with each other's contributions. Damon and Phelps (1989) argue that when learners work in cooperative groups, their engagement is high in equality but low in mutuality. They believe that since cooperative learning involves a division of task work, intergroup competition, and extrinsic rewards, there is not much mutuality between learners or there is a low degree of involvement with each other's contribution. In contrast, Damon and Phelps (1989) see peer collaboration as high on both equality and mutuality. Here peers work together on the same task rather than individually on separate parts of the activity. A collaborative group is characterized by learners sharing ideas, providing feedback, and "discovering learning" (p.13) together. In the field of second language acquisition, Storch (2001a) developed a framework of patterns of peer interaction based on Damon and Phelps' (1989) dimension of equality and mutuality. She classified the relationships that learners established in the language classroom in four different patterns. This point is further explained later in this chapter.

Researchers have recognized the potential of collaborative and cooperative group work to promote learning (Gillies, 2014, 2016; Gull & Shehzad, 2015; Nichols, 2002), to foster positive attitudes to learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2008), and to improve interpersonal relationships in the classroom (Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Riese, Samara & Lillejord, 2012; Tolmie et al., 2010). Both collaborative and

cooperative learning have been investigated across educational levels, including elementary schools (see review by Slavin, 2015), junior high school (e.g., Gillies, 2004), high school (e.g., Nichols, 1996), and university (e.g., Hahra & Das, 2015; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2014) and across school subject areas such as mathematics, social studies, chemistry, and reading (e.g., Adeyemi, 2008; Apugliese & Lewis, 2017; Durukan, 2011, Tarim & Akdeniz, 2008; Warfa, 2016).

Several meta-analyses have compared the use of cooperative learning to traditional classrooms where no group work is included, and they have found positive effects of cooperation (Bowen, 2000; Kyndt et al., 2013; Lou et al., 1996). For example, Gillies (2004) compared junior high school classes using cooperative learning to classes where cooperative learning was not included in the lessons. She found that in the cooperative learning classes, there was more elaborate assistance between peers. Similarly, Webb (2008) explains that when working together, both learners may benefit from the interaction since the peer providing help and the one receiving it share information, work with the tasks given in class, and find solutions to problems. She explains that students who benefit most from working cooperatively are those who provide elaborated explanations to their peers. Mercer (1995) also highlights the importance of exchanging ideas and having effective communication skills for group work. He categorizes three forms of talking and thinking during peer interaction: *disputational talk*, which is characterized by being individualized and competitive; *cumulative talk*, which is constructive and aims at building common knowledge, but there is no critical engagement; and *exploratory talk*, which involves the exchange of ideas, explanations and criticisms when appropriate, and it may lead to joint construction of knowledge. According to Mercer (1996) and Blatchford,

Kutnick, Baines, and Galton (2003), teachers need to allow learners to develop social and communication skills which can foster positive relationships of support and trust in the classroom.

Regarding the social factors involved in pair and group work, researchers have focused on the impact of peer relationships on interaction and learning (Gülay & Önder, 2013; Riese, Samara, & Lillejord, 2012; Rotenberg & Boulton, 2013; Zajac & Hartup, 1997). Following a meta-ethnographic approach, Riese et al. (2012) analyzed seven qualitative studies conducted in different educational settings (from elementary school to university) to examine how interpersonal relationships influence interaction in peer learning. Based on their analysis, they conclude that peer interaction is mediated through the language, the negotiation of the task, and the roles adopted by the learners. They also claim that peer interaction allows learners to convey disagreement. However, Riese et al. (2012) explain that expressing disagreement depends on a safe social environment and whether or not learners trust each other. An interesting finding of this synthesis is that peer interaction is mediated by relational knowledge. They understand relational knowledge as what a learner knows about his/ her peers, including personality and background and their shared histories. According to Riese et al. (2012), it also involves the way peers behave based on what they learned about each other through interaction over time. Researchers have also identified positive effects of friendships for cognitive development (Hartup, 1994, 1996, 1998; Kutnick & Kington, 2005; MacDonald, Miell, & Mitchell, 2002; Zajac & Hartup, 1997) and for group/pair collaboration (Brennan & Enns, 2015).

There is extensive research in general education of peers working together in

classrooms across educational levels. As previously explained in this section, researchers seem to have found positive effects for learning when students engage in pair and group work. These results not only show benefits for academic achievement but also for the learners' social and affective behavior and how this behavior, in turn, influenced interaction and learning. In contrast, second language acquisition research adopting theories of learning informed by cognitive psychology has focused primarily on the linguistic interaction between peers, and only a limited number of studies has considered the social implications of peer interaction, including the relationships established between learners and their influence on language learning (Carolyn, 2015; Martin-Beltrán, Chen, Guzman, & Merrills, 2016; Storch, 2001b; Storch & Aldosari, 2012; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). The following sections of this chapter cover the topic of peer interaction from the perspective of applied linguistics. It starts by explaining the cognitive accounts of second language acquisition, including the Interaction hypothesis and its main constructs such as comprehensible input, corrective feedback, and modified output. Then the chapter moves into the sociocultural perspective, which views learning as a process that is socially constructed (L. S. Vygotsky, 1978). The following section discusses the social factors of peer interaction that have been identified as an essential part of the research in this area (Mackey, 2012; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Philp & Mackey, 2010). Finally, the chapter reviews task-based language teaching (TBLT) and language tasks in peer interaction research.

**2.2 Peer interaction in Second Language Acquisition**

Over the past 30 years, peer interaction and its role in the language learning process have been researched in the field of second language acquisition (Watanabe, 2014).

Interactions between learners and between native speakers and learners have been widely researched in laboratories and in the context of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms (for a review, see Sato & Ballinger, 2016). Researchers are becoming more interested in investigating the interactions that occur when learners work together in the second and foreign language classrooms (see review by Philp et al., 2014). Peer interaction has been studied from both cognitive and sociocultural perspectives, and each theory has enriched the existing knowledge on the topic. Researchers have focused on the types of interactional moves produced by learners (e.g., García Mayo & Pica, 2000; Sato, 2015), the patterns of interaction (e.g., Storch, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2009, 2013), the learner's proficiency (e.g., Davis, 2009; Shin, Lidster, Sabraw, & Yeager, 2016; Watanabe & Swain, 2007) and the influence of the task type and task modality on interaction (e.g., García Mayo & Azkarai, 2016; Rouhshad & Storch, 2016). There are several reasons for language teachers to consider including peer interaction as part of their daily routine in the classroom. These involve linguistic and pedagogical implications for learners.

### 2.2.1 Linguistic reasons for peer interaction.

Peer interaction provides a context for learners to communicate in the second language since it allows them to receive input, notice language forms, produce modified output, experiment with the language, and co-construct language knowledge (Philp et al., 2014; Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Research investigating peer interaction and native speaker-learner interaction has found that when peers work together, they tend to produce more interactional moves and receive more feedback (e.g., Alcón, 2002; Fernández Dobao, 2012; García Mayo & Pica, 2000; Sato &

Lyster, 2007). These interactional moves promote language learning since learners negotiate for meaning, make interactional adjustments, produce language, and test new output hypotheses. (e.g., Long, 1996; Mackey, Gass, & McDonough, 2000; Pica, 1994; Swain, 1985; Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

Swain (2000) explains that when learners produce language either by writing or speaking, they have opportunities to test their hypotheses. That is, they use what they know about the language and try out how this knowledge works when they write or speak. Peer interaction enables learners to formulate and test their language hypotheses. This process of experimenting with language also helps learners to give and receive corrective feedback. Research has shown that learners are also capable of providing each other with corrective feedback (Adams, 2007; Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos, & Linnell, 1996; Sato & Lyster, 2007). Pica et al. (1996) studied Japanese students learning English, and they compared learner-learner with native speaker-learner interaction. The researchers found that when interacting with a peer, learners tended to provide more instances of feedback (than the NS-learner pairs) by indicating that they had not understood what was said. To do this, they repeated segments of the phrases and words produced by their peers. However, compared to the feedback provided by native speakers, learners scarcely offered alternatives for the unclear utterances. Despite the positive evidence, research has also indicated that corrective feedback among learners tends to be infrequent and inconsistent (Philp, Walter, & Basturkmen, 2010; Sato, 2013; Williams, 2001).

Research has demonstrated that learners produced more modified output when they work together than when they work with a native speaker (Mackey, Oliver, &

Leeman, 2003; McDonough, 2004; Pica et al., 1996; Sato & Lyster, 2007). McDonough (2004) investigated whether the production of corrective feedback and modified output in the pair interaction improved the production of real and unreal conditionals. She conducted her research with adult Thai students who were learning English as a foreign language. McDonough (2004) found that only the learners who got involved more with negative feedback and produced modified output either other-initiated (in response to negative feedback from peers) or self-initiated (reformulating their utterances) benefited from peer interaction by improving accuracy during oral production. She also noted that the majority of the instances of modified output were self-initiated.

### 2.2.2. Pedagogical reasons for peer interaction in the language classroom

A language classroom that includes peer interaction allows the learners to participate and to get involved in the lessons, as opposed to the teacher-centered classroom where the instructor was the one in charge of transmitting the knowledge, and the learners were just the recipients (e.g., the grammar-translation method). Researchers who have investigated teachers' talk time and students' talk time in the classroom have found that teachers tend to dominate most of the interaction (e.g., Antón, 1999; Incecay, 2010; Liu & Zhu, 2012; Pica & Doughty, 1988; Zare-Behtash & Azarnia, 2015). Nunan (2003) pointed out that teachers produce 50 to 80% of the classroom talk. Teachers have control of the class, and they frequently decide who participates. An example of this episode is the production of the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) talk pattern where the teacher is the one who initiates the conversations, then chooses who will speak, and finally provides comments on the student's response. Consequently, not all learners can participate in class, and their talking time is limited.

One way of affording learners more opportunities to use the L2 in the second/foreign language classrooms is to include group and pair work (Long & Porter, 1985). By using language tasks where students work together, teachers increase the learners' chances of speaking in class.

Another reason for using peer interaction in the ESL/EFL classroom is that it provides a context where students may feel less anxious when using the L2 (see Philp & Mackey, 2010). Philp et al. (2014) explain that when adult learners work together and recognize each other as equals, they may feel more willing to seek assistance and experiment with the L2, and they may be less concerned about making mistakes. Long and Porter (1985) also explain that group work offers learners a less stressful atmosphere, and it "provides a relatively intimate setting, and usually a more supportive environment" (p. 211). In a study conducted to compare the feedback provided between native speaker-learner and learner-learner, Sato and Lyster (2007) also found that peers felt more comfortable, less stressed, and more willing to talk about the language when they interacted with a peer than with a native speaker.

In teacher-centered classrooms, learner-learner interaction was minimal or did not occur at all (e.g., Grammar translation method). If peer work did happen, the interaction was limited, and there was no free practice of the language (e.g., Audiolingualism). Unlike these contexts, peer interaction offers learners the opportunity to work within pairs or groups, and teachers can include language tasks to enhance communication between learners in the L2. Batstone and Philp (2013) explain that peer interaction not only occurs in pairs or groups but within the whole classroom. In their research, they found instances where learners used *private speech* while the teacher was presenting the lesson to the whole class. The researchers explain

that students produced *private speech* when something that the teacher said was not clear for them, or when they were not following the lesson, they sought for the assistance of another peer sitting near them. When this happens, learners tend to whisper, or they use their mother tongue.

The following section expands on the research regarding psycholinguistic accounts on peer interaction. It starts with a review of the Interaction hypothesis (Long, 1981) and its main components. Then it focuses on the research based on the interactionist perspective and concludes with the limitations of the cognitive accounts on interaction research.

## 2.3 Cognitive approaches to interaction

Research on interaction has developed extensively over the past 30 years. The way in which interaction can assist the acquisition of a second language has been widely investigated through the cognitive approach. In this view, interaction triggers the cognitive processes necessary for acquisition, and it is through negotiation of meaning that second language acquisition occurs.

In the early versions of the Interaction Hypothesis, Long (1983) included Krashen's assertion about input being necessary and sufficient for L2 development. However, researchers such as Sato (1986) and Swain (1985) claimed that input alone was not enough for language acquisition. Swain (1985, 1995) then proposed the *output hypothesis,* and she indicated that besides receiving comprehensible input, learners need to produce and use language to develop their linguistic resources in the L2. According to Swain (2000), producing output helps learners notice the gaps between their interlanguage and the target language, and it allows them to test hypotheses in the L2. Swain later shifted her theoretical stance to include a more

socially informed interpretation of the output hypothesis based on sociocultural theory (Swain, 2000, 2005; Swain & Lapkin, 2008; Swain & Tocalli-Beller, 2005). She viewed "output not only as a product or message to be conveyed but also as a cognitive tool that mediates second language learning" (Swain & Tocalli-Beller, 2005, p. 5). Swain no longer ascribes to the Output Hypothesis since she has moved *beyond* its product-like implications to include a more process-like perspective in what she termed *collaborative dialogue*. She defines *collaborative dialogue* as "dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building" (Swain, 2000, p. 102). *Collaborative dialogue* will be further discussed in section 2.4.4.

It is in interaction where learners can notice their language difficulties when understanding their interlocutors or producing output using language structures. Noticing this gap between their non-target-like production and the target language (Schmidt, 1990; 1995) is crucial for second language development since it helps learners evaluate and restructure their own knowledge. Long (1996) then proposed his revised version of the Interaction hypothesis: "Negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation that triggers interactional adjustments by the native speaker or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (p. 451). In this view, Long (1996, 2015) stresses the important role of feedback for acquisition. While learners are involved in interaction, they have the opportunity to negotiate for meaning when miscommunication problems emerge. It is in this negotiation that learners receive feedback (e.g., clarification requests, confirmation checks, comprehension checks, recasts) as a response to their erroneous language production, allowing them to focus their attention on their deficiencies in the

language.

Research based on the interaction hypothesis has developed substantially, and there is extensive empirical work in this area. Researchers have typically investigated essential constructs such as the provision of feedback (e.g., Gass, Mackey, & Ross-Feldman, 2005; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Mackey & Goo, 2007), task type (e.g., Fernandez-Garcia, 2007; Gass, & Varonis, 1986; Pica & Doughty, 1988; Pica, Holliday, Lewis, Berducci, & Newman, 1991), and learners' variables (e.g., Azkarai & García Mayo, 2012; Kim & McDonough, 2008; Mackey, 2012; Ross-Feldman, 2007). Originally, studies of interaction focused on the negotiations between native speakers and non-native speakers; however, this research has expanded to include the interactions between learners (peer interaction).

### 2.3.1 Limitations of the cognitive accounts of interaction research

Despite the significant amount of empirical studies developed through the interaction hypothesis and its main constructs based on Cognitive Psychology, this field has also received some criticisms (Block, 2003; Donato, 1988, 1994; Duff, 1986; Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007). These claims have signaled that studies on interaction tend to separate the learners and their learning process from the social context. Several researchers call for expanding the interaction research by including social factors (Bayley & Tarone, 2011; Mackey, 2012, 2014; Philp & Tognini, 2009; Tarone, 2009). Tarone (2009) explains that the interaction approach needs "to move beyond a narrowly cognitive orientation to include the impact of social factors on cognition" (p.41). Mackey (2014) recognizes that by comprising a cognitive and a social

dimension within interaction and task-based approaches, researchers investigating on either side would benefit from working with each other.

Donato (1988, 1994) was one of the earliest researchers to criticize the studies based on negotiation for meaning (NfM). He indicated that in the NfM construct, the social aspect of interaction is overlooked, and the individual is seen as a mere 'input cruncher' (Donato, 1994). The importance of Donato's contribution to SLA research lies in his claim that interaction is inherently a social process and that social interaction is an essential element for the learner's cognitive growth. Donato (1988) also addressed the possible effect of interpersonal relationships in group or pair work on the nature of negotiation and opportunities for learning. This issue still needs to be further investigated, and it is the focus of the present investigation.

Firth and Wagner (1997) also critiqued the cognitive interactionist approach and urged for a reexamination of SLA research that includes within its theories and methodologies a more balanced exploration of the social and cognitive aspects of second language acquisition. They believed that social dimensions of the L2 had been relegated because there had been a bias in research towards cognitive processes of language acquisition. According to Firth and Wagner (1997), the social context is inseparable from the internal mental processes of language acquisition. Therefore, they suggested three main adjustments to SLA research: a better understanding of the setting and the interactions in the L2 that occur within it, an acknowledgment of the participant's (learner) perspective regarding important notions, and a growth of the traditional SLA repertoire. They believed that if research on SLA adopted these recommendations, the field would benefit since its theories and methodologies would be more robust and better able to explain the process of L2 acquisition. Firth and

Wagner (2007) reviewed the impact of their 1997 critique of SLA research to examine if the field had pondered their call for a reconceptualization. They considered that there is still a greater emphasis on the cognitive dimensions of L2 since the etic research perspective is prevalent. According to Firth and Wagner, learning is viewed as a cognitive and context-neutral process, and language expertise is predominately seen in "terms of the individual's grammatical competence" (p. 805). However, they acknowledged that researchers are pursuing a more socially oriented perspective that considers the social-cognitive dimensions to language learning. In a similar vein, Block (2003) expanded on the debate generated by Firth and Wagner (1997) regarding the mainstream theories and methodologies of the field. He specifically focused on the Interaction hypothesis and referred to it as the input, interaction, and output model (IIO). According to Block (2003), the IIO model fails to fully explain its core components 'second (S),' 'language (L),' and 'acquisition (A).' He explains that the IIO model roughly uses the term 'second' to indicate the context (e.g., classroom, laboratory) where the language is being acquired and the order in which an individual acquires it (second after first language). Block (2003) argues that this 'S' label is inadequately predictive of the nature of learning, and the term reduces the learner's language acquisition process as a mere following of linguistic, cognitive, and interactive universals that are not affected by the context and social variables. Regarding the term 'language,' Block (2003) explains that the IIO model conceptualizes communication as a simple instrument for exchanging information. He explains that SLA researchers need to follow a more 'socially constituted linguistics'[1] that considers interpersonal communication and includes "the social construction of

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[1] Block (2003) draws the term from Hymes (1974): "a socially constituted linguistics is concerned with contextual

self-identity, group membership, solidarity, support, trust and so on" (p. 64). Finally, in regards to the 'A' in SLA, Block (2003) explains that the IIO model views acquisition as a mechanism of information processing. He then calls for the possibility of incorporating sociocultural perspectives of mind into the more dominant information processing model.

## 2.4 Sociocultural accounts of interaction

Vygotskian accounts on education and language learning developed from the work of the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and his collaborators. In Vygotsky's view, social interaction is an essential space for the child's cognitive development, and learning is fundamentally social. According to Vygotsky's (1978) *general genetic law of cultural development*, all higher mental abilities (e.g., voluntary attention, problem-solving and logical memory) first occur on a social or *intermental* (i.e., between individuals) plane, and they are subsequently internalized on the *intramental* plane (i.e., within the individual). In Vygotsky's view, a child's development of cognition is the result of interaction with others (Gibbons, 2002).

According to SCT, the environment and the interaction among individuals are crucial for the learning process, and knowledge is co-constructed by participants in a social setting. Mental activities such as problem-solving and attention are mediated by interaction. These functions occur in the social context where the learner participates, and they are then internalized (Swain, Brooks &Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Foster and Ohta (2005) explain that in sociocultural theory, "knowledge is not owned solely by the learner but is also a property of social settings and the interface between person and social context" (p. 403). Therefore, I argue that the potential of the learners' interpersonal relationships to help second language development could be investigated

following a sociocultural approach to L2 development. Thus this study is situated within the sociocultural approach to mind framework.

Research on peer interaction, which has followed a sociocultural approach, has studied peer collaboration, peer scaffolding, patterns of interaction, and the co-construction of language knowledge. The following subsection explores the theory's central tenets, including the notion of mediation, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), scaffolding, and collaborative dialogue.

## 2.4.1 Meditation

Humans do not act directly on the physical world. Instead, we use cultural tools created over time to help us modify and control the world and the way we live in it (Lantolf, 2000). That is, we use tools or signs to create a relationship with the world. Mediation is at the core of sociocultural theory. One of Vygotsky's most important assertions is that the human mind is mediated by physical or psychological (e.g., mnemonic techniques, diagrams, language) tools created "within and through cultural activity" (Swain, 2006). Daniels (2015) argues that mediation is "the process through which the social and the individual mutually shape each other" (p. 34). That is, knowledge construction is gained through the interaction of the individual with social, cultural, and historical tools. The individual acts upon these meditational tools, and in turn, they act upon the individual (Daniels, 2015). Hereafter, 'mediation' will only refer to the term as it is used in sociocultural theory in SLA. Additional definitions of this concept in other fields such as philosophy or cognitive psychology will not be included.

Language is one of the most essential tools for mediating our understanding of the world. It is through language that we regulate our relationships with the people

around us, and we modify how these relationships work (Lantolf, 2000). In the context of ESL and EFL learning, Swain (2000, 2011) explains that language is used to mediate language learning (p.110). In other words, it is the second language that serves both the target of learning and the means for acquiring it (Gibbons, 2003). In the language classroom, learners mediate their understanding of the language through the materials they use (e.g., the language textbook, a dictionary), their interactions with others (e.g., the teacher and peers), and the language itself.

**2.4.2 The zone of proximal development**

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is one of Vygotsky's most well-known constructs. According to Vygotsky (1978), for development to occur, interactions need to arise within a ZPD (Watanabe, 2014). Vygotsky (1979) explains that the ZPD is:

[…] the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by

independent problem solving and the level of potential development as

determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with

more capable peers. (p. 86)

That is, the ZPD is the difference between what an individual can achieve independently and what she/he can achieve with the support of a more capable other. The main idea underlying the ZPD is that learning will occur only when the knowledge to be acquired is within the learner's ZPD.

The ZPD occurs between a novice (a child) and an expert (an adult parent/teacher). Ohta (2001) further developed Vygotsky's concept of ZPD to apply it to the language classroom as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development

as determined through language produced collaboratively with the teacher or peer." (p. 9). In studies of second language acquisition, researchers who have investigated the ZPD have found that peers are also capable of assisting each other by assuming the role of experts and novices during interaction (e.g., Donato, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). This assistance is frequently reciprocal, rather than having one learner as the expert and the other as the novice. Ohta (2001) claims that "each learner presents an array of strengths and weaknesses that may be complementary" (p.76). Lantolf and Poehner (2008) also recognize the potential for the ZPD to be created through expert and novice (or peer) collaborations as they use "meditational means to achieve jointly constructed expertise" (p. 15). They argue that when learners are involved in pair or group interaction, they create a natural context where they adapt the zone to the needs and abilities of each peer.

### 2.4.3 Scaffolding

Strongly related to the notion of the ZPD is the construct of *scaffolding*. Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) coined the term to describe the assistance provided by an adult or parent to help the child complete a task. They argue that scaffolding occurs when the adult controls "those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence." (p. 90). However, Wood et al. (1976) used the term scaffolding specifically to describe the actions or functions that an adult or parent does to help a child complete a task. Cazden (1979) expanded the metaphor to the classroom and teacher-student interactions and connected it to the ZPD. In the classroom context, scaffolding is the temporary assistance offered by a teacher to help a learner understand how to do a task so he/she can later accomplish a

similar task alone (Gibbons, 2002). This assistance is gradual and decreases as the learner takes more responsibility for the task. These constructs of scaffolding denote an asymmetrical interaction either by the adult-child or the teacher-student. Donato (1994) and Ohta (2001) argue that learners can also assist each other when engaged in joint activity despite their level of competence in the language. For instance, Donato (1994) analyzed "collective scaffolding" of learners of French and found that students were able to offer guided support in ways that mediated linguistic development for each learner.

### 2.4.4 Languaging: Collaborative dialogue

Vygotsky (1978) claims that language is an essential tool that mediates cognitive development. Based on this premise, SLA researchers have investigated the use of language as a meditational tool for second language learning. Following Vygotsky's work, Swain (2006) developed the concept of *languaging*. In Swain's (2006) view, *languaging* is the "process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (p. 98). When learners engage in *languaging*, they use language as a tool to think and talk about language, and by doing this, they build new language knowledge. It has been suggested that *languaging* is conducive to language learning, and it is through *languaging* that learners have the opportunity to think about language, seek for help and receive timely assistance (Rouhshad & Storch, 2016; Swain, 1998, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2013; Swain & Watanabe, 2013).

Swain and Watanabe (2013) explain that *languaging* occurs when learners use private speech (intrapersonal communication) or when they talk with another person (collaborative dialogue) in order to find solutions for the complex cognitive problems encountered when working with language tasks. From a SCT point of view, social

interaction plays a crucial role in the process of language acquisition. Collaborative dialogue occurs within a social context where learners mutually pool their knowledge and resources for joint problem solving and decision-making to achieve a common task objective. In contrast to NfM, in collaborative dialogue, it is not miscommunication problems that guide the students' focus on form, but the collaborative effort for mutual knowledge construction (Zeng & Takatsuka, 2009). Swain (2000) argues that collaborative dialogue represents both a social and a cognitive tool that mediates learning. This study will focus on collaborative dialogue and its role in mediating second language learning and development. As research has shown, when learners engage in collaborative interactions where both mutuality and equality of engagement are high, learners benefit more from peer interactions.

Research suggests that collaborative dialogue mediates the construction of knowledge as interlocutors work together on problem-solving, which contributes to L2 development (Ahmadian, Amerian, & Tajabadi, 2014; Swain 2000, 2010; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). It is during collaborative dialogue that learners produce language-related episodes (LREs). Swain and Lapkin (1995) define LREs as the discourse where participants "talk about the language they are producing, question their language use or correct themselves or others" (p. 326). LREs have been widely investigated, and research has shown that these episodes promote L2 development (García Mayo & Zeitler, 2017; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Researchers have used LREs as a unit of analysis for second language development in several classroom interaction studies (e.g., Kim, 2008; Swain & Lapkin, 2001; Watanabe & Swain, 2007; Williams, 2001). For instance, following a sociocultural perspective, Kim (2008) focused on vocabulary acquisition by adults studying Korean as a second language. She compared

the effectiveness of collaborative (pair work) and individual tasks in the classroom. She found a positive relationship between LREs and learning for the learners who worked collaboratively. Williams (2001) investigated the learners' focus on language by producing LREs when involved in oral tasks in the adult ESL classroom. The students in her study participated in both structured and unstructured tasks during the lessons. Williams (2001) found that the more structured tasks produced a higher incidence of LREs, and most of these were related to lexical items. She explained that, "what learners notice is that they need words" (p. 339). Research has also demonstrated that learners tend to focus more on grammatical LREs when they work with more pedagogic tasks such as text reconstruction (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 2002). Pair and group work dynamics and the student's language proficiency level are other factors that have influenced the production of LREs (e.g., Choi & Iwashita, 2016; Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Young & Tedick, 2016 ). In this study, LREs will be operationalized as a unit of analysis for *languaging* (Fernández Dobao, 2016; Mozaffari, 2017; Rouhshad & Storch, 2016; Swain & Lapkin, 2003).

**2.5 Focusing on social aspects in peer interaction**

While research has revealed advantages of interaction for second language acquisition (Keck et al. 2006; Li, 2010; Lyster, & Saito, 2010; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Russell, & Spada, 2006), the essential nature of interaction still needs to be further investigated (Philp et al., 2010; Storch, 2008). Studies on peer interaction have indicated the need to examine social factors such as the interpersonal relationships between learners and how these might affect the way students interact (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Pica, 1987; Storch, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). This is particularly important since most studies do not consider the crucial role

that interpersonal relationships play in the construction of meaning and the development of knowledge  (Moll, 2014).

There is limited research that has focused on social factors and learners' relationships with their peers and their sociocultural context (Block, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 2007; Swain & Deters, 2007). Instead, researchers have typically investigated relationships between learners in terms of the patterns of interaction, partner familiarity or acquaintanceship, and students' perceptions towards working with a peer. This section will outline peer interaction studies that have explored the social factors involved in interaction and language development.

## 2.5.1 Patterns of interaction

The patterns of interaction that learners establish when they work together have been regarded as an important factor that impacts L2 development (Storch, 2001a, 2001b). Research has shown that the extent to which learners can benefit from interaction depends significantly on the social dynamics of their pair or group work (Sato & Ballinger, 2016). Storch (2001a, 2001b, 2002) investigated peer relationships of adult language learners when they worked together in the ESL classroom. Based on Damon and Phelps' (1989) definitions of equality (degree of control or authority over the task) and mutuality (level of engagement with each other's contribution), Storch (2002) identified four patterns of pair interaction: collaborative, dominant/dominant, dominant/passive and expert/novice.  She found that the collaborative pattern was the most conducive to learning since learners shared ideas, helped each other, and worked together during the task. Both collaborative and expert/novice patterns generated more knowledge transfer than the non-collaborative ones.  In the dominant/dominant pair and dominant/passive dyad, the learners did not engage with each other's contribution

to the task. This study provided an insight into how peers interact while using tasks. When learners work together, they share ideas and encourage each other (e.g., collaborative and expert/novice pattern). Consequently, they have more opportunities for language learning. Subsequent research has followed Storch's (2001, 2002) framework for categorizing peer interaction patterns (Storch & Aldosari, 2012; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007;). Watanabe (2008) explored the interactions among adult Japanese ESL learners at different proficiency levels while they worked with problem-solving tasks. Similar to Storch (2002), Watanabe (2008) found that the pairs in her study developed different patterns of interactions. However, the author did not find any instances of the dominant/dominant pairing. Watanabe (2008) also found a new pattern: expert/passive. In this dyad, one learner assumed the passive role, while the other encouraged his peer to get involved with the task instead of dominating it. The researcher described the expert/passive pair as non-collaborative since there was low equality and mutuality (Storch, 2002). Watanabe (2008) indicated a need for more studies that explore the impact of the interpersonal relationships established between peers when working with tasks on the nature of interaction and language learning.  Watanabe and Swain (2007) investigated the relationship between patterns of interaction and frequency of LREs within adult Japanese ESL learners. The researchers found that the pairs who established a more collaborative relationship produced more lexical and grammatical LREs, and consequently showed more evidence of learning.  Watanabe and Swain (2007) concluded that it is the pattern of interaction what seems to have a more important effect on the frequency of LREs, rather than the proficiency differences among learners.

## 2.5.2 Peer familiarity

Based on the premise that knowledge and cognition are constructed through social interaction, it would be essential to consider how interpersonal relationships influence the nature of interaction and, consequently, learning. An essential issue in peer relationships is related to acquaintanceship or the shared histories between learners. Only a few studies have explored the role of peer familiarity during peer interaction (O' Sullivan, 2002; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Philp et al., 2010). O'Sullivan (2002) studied the effect of partner familiarity (acquaintanceship) over pair-task performance in tests. The researcher investigated 32 adult Japanese English learners who worked with three tasks, first with a friend and then with a person they did not know in the laboratory context. The results showed that students who worked with a friend achieved higher scores. O'Sullivan (2002) concluded that participants' accuracy was influenced by interlocutor familiarity or by the affective reaction of the learner towards his/her peer. In the language classroom, Philp and Mackey (2010) explored the interactions of university students taking a class of French as a foreign language in pairs and small groups. They observed that some learners did not work collaboratively or they were involved in uncomfortable interactions. According to the researchers, this occurred either because participants were not acquainted with each other or knew each other very well and had developed negative relations in previous situations. Provision of feedback was also influenced by familiarity between peers. When participants had already established friendly relations and shared experiences of helping each other, they tended to give feedback without feeling embarrassed and appreciatively accepted it. Philp and Mackey (2010) concluded that there is a need for more research that investigates how interpersonal relationships among peers and other social factors (e.g.,

motivation, identities, past histories) mediate interaction, consequently having a direct or indirect effect on language learning.

### 2.5.3 Learners' perceptions of peer-peer interaction

The role of emotions in interaction and their impact on learning outcomes still needs to be further investigated since this has been generally ignored in SLA research (Swain, 2013). Only a small number of studies has explored learners' perceptions and attitudes towards their peers and their experiences during interaction (e.g., Fernández Dobao & Blum, 2013; Philp et al., 2010; Sato, 2013; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). In Watanabe's (2008) study described above, she also investigated the learners' perceptions and feelings towards pair work interaction. She found that the co-constructed interpersonal relationships during pair interactions affected the way students collaborated, and consequently, they had an impact on learning. Particularly, participants mentioned that regardless of their peer's language proficiency, they preferred working with someone who "shared many ideas" (p. 627). This indicates that learners appreciated when their peers engaged in collaborative dialogue with them irrespective of their proficiency level.

Philp et al. (2010) explored the factors that influenced learners' attention to form while working with role-play and discussion tasks through the use of Language Related Episodes (LREs) as a unit of analysis. Philp et al. (2010) found that the task characteristics and social factors determined the students' disposition to focus their attention on language forms. Learners explained feeling more relaxed and less worried about making errors when they worked with peers than when in whole-class interactions. However, since students felt less anxious about language accuracy, they were more hesitant to correct one another.

Fernández Dobao and Blum (2013) explored the learners' perceptions and attitudes towards collaborative writing during peer interaction in the Spanish as a foreign language classroom. Most of the participants had positive perceptions towards pair and group work, and they enjoyed the experience of working together. The learners involved in pair work explained that they had more opportunities to participate in the interaction, while the students who worked in groups felt that they could share more ideas and knowledge. Consequently, there were more possibilities for language development. Interestingly, almost a third of the learners felt that the collaborative writing tasks could not help them develop vocabulary or grammar knowledge because they thought they could not learn from other students at their same proficiency level. However, the analysis of their interactions demonstrated the opposite as learners created opportunities to construct linguistic knowledge together. Hence, the researchers concluded that teachers should make learners aware of the benefits of peer interaction when working with tasks in the classroom.

### 2.5.4 Summary of social aspects of peer interaction

Research on peer interaction suggests that social aspects such as the patterns of interaction created among learners, the peers' relationships and shared histories, and the learners' perceptions of their partner and their partner's language expertise may have a more significant influence on collaboration between learners than proficiency differences (Philp & Mackey, 2010; Philp et al., 2010; Watanabe, 2008). The studies presented above indicate that there is still a need to investigate these social factors that are an essential part of peer interaction. Philp et al. (2014) explain that there is little research on peer interaction that has studied the influence of the interpersonal relationships established between students in the language classroom. In the same

vein, Ohta (2001) highlights the importance of viewing language learning as a process that develops from "relationships between individuals and their sociointeractive environment" (p. 21). Therefore, the present study aims to investigate how learners establish interpersonal relationships in the language classroom. Aston's (1988, 1993) notions of *comity*, *solidarity,* and *support* are explained and proposed as a baseline for analyzing how interlocutors use social discourse for building relationships. The concept of *social inquiry* developed by Martin-Beltrán, Chen, Guzman, and Merrills (2016) will also be included to explore interactional speech.

## 2.6 Using language to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships

We use language for a diverse range of functions, e.g., expressing our ideas and feelings, conveying and receiving messages, and establishing relationships. Brown and Yule (1983) make a distinction between the *transactional* and *interactional* functions of language. The *transactional* function refers to the transfer of messages, information, or content. Brown (1981) states that in *transactional* speech, "the main reason for speaking is that the speaker should transfer information to the hearer" (p. 166). The *interactional* function of language allows speakers to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships: "what is most at issue is the establishment and maintenance of social relationships" (Brown, 1981, p. 167). According to Brown and Yule (1983), when speakers are involved in *interactional* speech, they share the negotiation of feelings and attitudes. When referring to *interactional* speech, Brown and Yule (1983) indicate that the transfer of information is not the most important and that "the emphasis is on ritual displays of agreement and mutual appreciation" (p. 12).

Following Brown and Yule's (1983) notion of interactional speech, Aston (1988) adopts the concept of *comity* (p.18) to refer to the establishment and

maintenance of friendly relations. Aston (1993) drew the term *comity* from Leech (1983), who sees it as the "ways in which speakers can establish and maintain satisfactory social relationships, negotiating rapport as an outcome of their talk" (p. 19). In the language classroom, students not only exchange information (e.g., linguistic features), but they also establish interpersonal relationships with their classmates. Aston (1988) emphasizes enhancing *comity* in this context and claims that acquisition may be facilitated when teachers promote satisfactory learners' relationships. He argues in favor of encouraging the negotiation of *solidarity* and *support* in interaction. The following section focuses on the concepts of *solidarity* and *support*, which occur when learners negotiate for *comity (*Aston, 1988, 1993)*.

**2.6.1 Solidarity and support to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships**

Based on Brown and Yule's (1982) notion of *interactional* speech, which is characterized by the speakers' shared emotions, attitudes, and mutual appreciation, Aston (1988, 1993) develops the concepts of *solidarity* and *support*. By *solidarity*, he understands the way participants express similar concerns about their common world, reality, and experience (p. 225). For example, negotiation of *solidarity* occurs when speakers share similar feelings or opinions towards the news (recent events) or the weather.

Speakers show *solidarity* when they express similar attitudes and feelings towards a particular experience. Negotiation of *solidarity* is characterized by agreement routines. Agreeing with the addressees, repeating part of their utterance, and topic shifting (which can reflect interlocutors' desire to identify shared concerns) are ways in which speakers negotiate for *solidarity*.

Aston (1993) defines *support* as "sympathizing, or feeling for the other" (p. 232). In other words, *support* refers to a person's ability to demonstrate affiliation towards the other speakers' feelings and experiences. In contrast to *solidarity,* when interlocutors express *support*, they are not sharing an experience in common. Instead, one speaker shows interest and concerns for his/her peer's individual world (emotions and experience). When speakers negotiate for *support*, they show affiliation routines such as appreciation of the other speaker's contribution to the discourse (e.g., joint laughter, appropriate emotions in response to anecdotes), compliments and apologies. According to Aston (1993), *support* is based on the relationship between speakers rather than on the shared experience. Therefore, when negotiating for *support*, participants share a personal involvement and a relationship of caring and knowing each other (p. 235).

Aston (1993) contrasts *solidarity* as "largely characterized by routines of agreement" (p. 232) and *support* as characterized by affiliation routines. When exploring the interactions produced by peers in the language classroom, the notions of *comity*, *support*, and *solidarity* can be used as a baseline to systematically analyze how learners use these social discourse moves to mediate the relationships established between speakers. This analysis affords opportunities to observe how interpersonal relationships impact the learners' co-construction of language knowledge during peer interaction.

## 2.6.2 Using social inquiry discourse moves to negotiate for comity

These three concepts of *comity, solidarity*, and *support* are explored in Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) investigation of social discourse among adolescent learners. The

researchers conducted a study with high school students to investigate how the learners mediated language learning through social discourse moves to establish relationships in peer interactions. In the case of *solidarity*, the researchers expanded this concept by including the sharing of similar struggles in peer interaction. For the negotiation of *support*, Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) incorporated instances when learners "encouraged their peers to talk, opened a new space for peers to participate, co-constructed utterances and when they recognized each other's expertise" (p. 326).

Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) proposed the term *social inquiry* to describe discourse moves where learners ask peers about their academic and social identities to make connections with a larger social context and know what language to use. The following examples from their study show how learners ask each other questions about their identities to understand their peers' academic and social context (e.g., family, ethnicity, heritage, membership or affinity with academic or extracurricular activities, etc.)

Excerpt 1:

S1: So, um what grade are you in? Like grade… are you a senior?

S2: I'm… 9$^{th}$?

S1: How old are you?

Excerpt 2:

S3: where are you from?

S4: My mom, she's from West Africa and my dad is from Illinois. Where are you from?

S3: I'm from El Salvador

S4: oh, Okay, I always wanted to go there.

<div align="right">(Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016, p. 328)</div>

The notion of *social inquiry* as described by Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) expands the analysis of the social discourse-moves used by learners to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships. The following section will focus on studies that have investigated *comity* in the context of the classroom.

## 2.7 Previous research on the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships in the language classroom

In the field of second language acquisition, there is very little research that has focused on *comity* or the *establishment and maintenance of friendly relations* (Aston, 1988, 1993; Leech, 1983). The concept of *comity* has not been pursued in research adopting a cognitive perspective of SLA since it is difficult to operationalize within the context of an experimental or quasi-experimental design. Nevertheless, it is essential that *comity* be studied through a sociocultural lens to better understand the complex nature of peer interaction. This section describes two research studies that have followed Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *comity* as part of their framework for investigating peer interaction in the second language classroom. To my knowledge, no study has focused on this in the context of the foreign language classroom.

As described in the previous section, Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) investigated how high school English learners and Spanish mediated language learning through the discourse moves of *social inquiry, solidarity*, and *support* and by producing language-related episodes when working in pairs or small groups in the classroom. Following a sociocultural framework, the researchers explored *languaging* in peer interaction.

Swain and Deters (2007) define *languaging* as "the use of speaking and writing to mediate cognitively complex activities (p. 821). Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) examined language-related episodes (LREs) as units of analysis for *languaging* or "thinking in progress" (Swain, 2006, p. 89). Their objective was to investigate how language learning occurred during peer interaction. The researchers also studied the negotiation of interpersonal relationships by applying Aston's (1993) notions of *comity, solidarity*, and *support.*

Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) found that peers used social and relationship-building discourse to mediate their interactions. The researchers found a positive relationship between the frequency of social discourse moves and the LREs produced. In other words, learners tended to focus more on aspects of the language they were learning (e.g., asking questions about the language, using new vocabulary, evaluating word choice, and doing metalinguistic analysis) when social discourse was also involved. In some cases, it seemed that participants were more interested in getting to know each other than in working with the task. According to the researchers, their study contributes to Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *comity* by analyzing how students find "shared experiences and establish affective ties" (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016, p. 342). Based on their findings, they recommend that in the language classroom, learners should get to know their peers well to be willing to use the target language during interactions and provide feedback to one another. The authors explain that social discourse moves help students establish a collaborative context in which language use is facilitated, and learners feel confident about taking risks.

Martin-Beltran et al. (2016) echo Aston's (1988) views on the importance of fostering *comity* in the language classroom. Based on their research, they identify three implications for teachers in the classroom. Firstly, they explain that teachers need to include tasks where learners share personal experiences while working together. They also recommend teachers to provide students with opportunities that help them get involved in *social inquiry*. Finally, Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) advise teachers to push students to ask questions and talk about the foreign language in pair and group work.

Victoria (2011, 2017) studied a group of adult immigrants in Canada who were taking a course that prepared them for the labor market. The students had one class of "English for Employment" and another one of "Employment preparation." In these classes, participants were involved in-group discussions where they learned rapport-building skills with co-workers and employers and how to make small talk in the workplace. The researcher analyzed the peer interactions in the classroom using Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *comity*.

Victoria (2011, 2017) focused on the way learners used English as a lingua franca to establish interpersonal relationships and in-group membership to share attitudes and feelings. The researcher used classroom observations, audio recordings of classroom interaction, semi-structured interviews, and the students' handouts and textbooks used in class as data sources. Following the framework of linguistic ethnography (Rampton, 2007; Tusting & Maybin 2007), she studied how immigrants negotiated communication and established interpersonal relationships in the classroom. She found that the participants of the study used the second language to negotiate for

*comity* and establish in-group membership. The researcher explained that the interactions between learners were usually collaborative, and peers tended to support each other and created a space for *solidarity*. Participants used apologies, shared laughter, and provided advice to one another as social speech moves to negotiate for *comity*. The researcher observed that the language for *comity* was used from the first day of classes until the course ended three months later. Victoria (2011) concluded by echoing Aston's (1988) suggestions for including the teaching of social discourse strategies to establish *comity* in the language classroom. According to Aston (1988), learners benefit from positive rapport, which helps them trust and respect each other. Consequently, students feel more motivated and willing to take risks with language (p. 38).

Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) and Victoria (2011, 2017) explored how adolescent and adult language learners use the second language to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships in the classroom context. The investigations provide an insight into how the negotiation for *comity* provides opportunities for learners to co-construct language knowledge.

**2.8 Tasks and peer interaction in the language classroom**

Tasks have been widely used in peer interaction research. They are used either as an instrument or as the focus of investigation. Tasks have been defined in numerous ways in the literature (e.g., Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004; Samuda & Bygate, 2008; Skehan, 1998; Willis & Willis, 2007). For instance, Willis and Willis (2007) view tasks as activities in which interest and interaction are encouraged. Skehan (1998) explains that a pedagogic task is an activity primarily focused on meaning, has a relationship

with the real world, involves learners solving communicative problems, and requires completing a task outcome. Ellis (2003) characterizes tasks as focused and unfocused. Unfocused tasks do not intend to target a specific language form, whereas focused tasks are designed to target the use of a particular linguistic feature.

Ellis (2003) and Ellis and Shintani (2013) proposed the following criteria to be met by any instructional activity to be considered a task:

1) A primary focus on meaning: learners use the target language to convey meaning by encoding and decoding messages without concerning about linguistic features.

2) Some sort of gap: learners use the language to express their opinion, convey information, infer meaning, etc.

3) Learners depend on their own resources (linguistic and non-linguistic) to complete the activity.

4) A clearly defined outcome other than the use of language: learners have to accomplish a goal when working with tasks. Language is used as a tool that helps them achieve this objective.

Aston (1988) explains that *comity* in the language classroom can be enhanced by using tasks or "*comity activities*," which are designed to develop interactional speech. According to Aston (1993), these tasks help learners negotiate rapport through the second language. The author recommends the use of role-play tasks to motivate the use of interactional speech. Teachers need to establish "contexts where the participants' relationship is at issue" (Aston, 1988, p. 196).

Aston (1988) explains that role-plays are useful since (a) they mirror realistic situations where learners deal with problems similar to those of the "real world," and

(b) students are required to play a role or behave the way people would in a real situation: realistic behavior (p. 200).

Rixon (1979) recommends the use of opinion gap tasks (built-in disagreement) where participants negotiate for meaning, and they have to reach an agreement. This interaction helps them to develop *solidarity* when working together in pairs or groups. The tasks designed for this study followed Ellis' (2003) and Ellis and Shintani's (2013) criteria, and they were created following Aston and Rixon's work.

## 2.9 Summary

This chapter begins by reviewing the theoretical foundations of peer interaction in the areas of education, educational psychology, and second language acquisition. As argued above, research has revealed collaboration to be beneficial in fostering learning, promoting positive attitudes towards learning, and improving interpersonal relationships (Gillies, 2014; Johnson & Johnson, 2008; Riese et al., 2012). In the field of second language acquisition, peer interaction research has suggested that the relationships between learners, namely patterns of interaction, impact the outcome of their interaction, and consequently, the opportunities for language learning (Storch, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Research has shown that the collaborative and expert/novice are more conducive to learning (Storch, 2001a, 2001b).

Even if research has indicated the importance of investigating social factors such as the interpersonal relationships between learners, only a couple of studies have focused on this issue (e.g., Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Victoria, 2011, 2017). Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) and Victoria (2011, 2017) described how learners used relationship-building discourse to establish *comity* in the classroom. As explained

above, the researchers studied these relationships in terms of *support* and *solidarity* following Aston's (1988, 1993) definitions. The study conducted by Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) is significant for second language acquisition research as they showed how the students' use of social discourse to create *comity* afforded opportunities for co-construction of knowledge and second language learning. Victoria (2017) highlights the role that language plays in peer interaction to create *comity* and establish a socially cohesive group. She suggests that teachers create a space for learners to use their pragmatic resources to establish friendly relationships. Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study will be used as a guide for the present investigation.

The chapter also presented the theoretical support for peer interaction from the perspective of sociocultural theory. In this view, learning is fundamentally a social experience that develops from the interaction between individuals and is mediated by language. This theory holds that social interaction assists cognitive development and the construction of new knowledge. Within the SCT framework, second language acquisition research has shown that collaborative dialogue mediates the construction of knowledge as learners work together, and this co-construction contributes to language development (Swain, 2010; Watanabe & Swain, 2007).

The studies reviewed in this chapter indicate that there is still further research to be conducted in the language classroom to gain a deeper understanding of how learners exactly work together and how interpersonal relationships influence the effectiveness of peer interaction. Investigating the students' interpersonal relationships, their perceptions and feelings about their mutual interactions and their peer, and the evidence of opportunities for language learning can offer pedagogical implications for the language classroom. What is more, this type of investigation

contributes to the area of second language acquisition by expanding on the knowledge of the complex nature of peer interaction. Therefore, following a sociocultural framework, this study explores how learners use social discourse to create *comity* while working with language tasks in the classroom and the opportunities for language learning.

The present classroom-based research attempts to answer the following questions:

a. How do learners negotiate for *comity* during peer task-based interaction?, and What types of social discourse moves do they use?

b. How does the passing of time affect *comity*?

c. How does the use of social discourse moves to build *comity* relate to the patterns of interaction established between peers?

d. How do the learners' social discourse moves relate to language learning opportunities to engage in *languaging?*

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research study. It begins with an overview of the research design. Then it describes the study's context, the participants, the research design, and the data collection instruments. It describes the ethical issues, including the process of getting informed consent. Finally, the methods of data analysis are presented.

**3.1 Overview of the research design**

This study is characterized by several important features. First of all, since there is a need for more studies that focus on the language classroom (Nunan, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2001; van Lier, 1988), and research in foreign language settings is scarce (Davin & Donato, 2013; Moranski & Toth, 2016; Philp et al. 2010), this study was conducted in an authentic EFL classroom context. Studying peer interaction and the context in which it occurs could provide insightful information regarding its influence on second language acquisition (Leslie, 2015). I designed the tasks used for analyzing discourse in peer interaction following the task-based language teaching and learning (TBLT) framework, and their content was directly related to the units of the course.

Second, since one of the study's main aims is to explore how learners use social discourse to establish and maintain friendly relationships in the language classroom, I collected the data longitudinally for four weeks, which was the duration of the EFL course. Gathering the data over the entire four-week duration of the course allowed me to identify any changes in the learners' relationships and the patterns of interaction they established. Third, due to the qualitative nature of the study, I used a variety of research instruments to collect the data, and qualitative approaches as a primary method to analyze the data. The main source of data came from the audio

transcriptions of peer task-based interaction in the classroom. This information, together with the observation field notes, allowed me to explore how the language of *comity* (*solidarity*, *support*, *social inquiry*) was used in the students' conversations and how *comity* developed from the daily interactions. The interviews were another tool that I used for data collection, and they provided crucial information about the learners' interpersonal relationships and their perceptions and feelings about peer interaction. The study is descriptive and exploratory in nature. The qualitative analysis rather than testing hypotheses, allows for a better understanding of the complexity of peer interaction and a greater interpretation and description of the processes involved in the classroom setting (Croker, 2009; Ivankova & Creswell, 2009). I also used a quantitative approach to data analysis to complement the qualitative approach. This analysis applied descriptive statistics in order to make comparisons of the pair interactions across the data.

**3.2 Research paradigm: epistemological and ontological stances**

Since this study explores the learners' behavior within their natural setting of the EFL classroom, a constructivist paradigm is more suitable for the investigation. Research within this paradigm acknowledges that multiple realities exist, and they are socially constructed. Based on this assumption, researchers interpret and try to understand the participants' points of view, and they cannot be distant and objective in their investigations (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Research involves the mutual engagement of the researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) to construct a subjective reality (hermeneutical). By assuming this paradigm, I followed a methodology that allowed me to understand and explain the different experiences of my participants and the way they view their reality. As I briefly explained in the previous section, this

study is framed within a qualitative research design. This decision was motivated by the nature of the investigation. Qualitative researchers try to understand the process of what happens in a natural setting (Croker, 2009) and interpret the people's experiences in terms of the meanings they bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Since sociocultural theory is the framework that guides this research, I will discuss my stances from the ontologies and epistemologies of this perspective. In SCT, the interaction between learners and teachers and between learners is a crucial component for knowledge construction. Learning is fundamentally social, and it occurs in social interaction (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

### 3.3 Research context

The study was conducted at a public university in northern Mexico in the department of foreign languages. The English classes are taught from basic to advanced levels. Table 1 shows the organization of the four English levels and the courses given in each one of them.

**Table 1** *English Levels and Their Corresponding Courses*

| Basic level | Intermediate level | High intermediate level | Advanced level |
|---|---|---|---|
| English 1A | English 3 | English 6 | Conversation |
| English 1B | English 4 | English 7 | Advanced grammar |
| English 2 | English 5 | Reading comprehension 3 | TOEFL Preparation |
| | Reading comprehension 1 | Reading comprehension 4 | |
| | Reading comprehension 2 | | |

The academic year is divided into three terms. The first one is from August to December and the second one from January to May. The summer term typically starts at the end of May, lasting four weeks. The courses taught in the department of foreign languages are available for the students enrolled in any of the majors and graduate programs offered by the university. People who are not registered in the university and wish to take English classes are also eligible to enroll in these courses. All new students must take a placement test when they first register for the English courses. The placement test used in the school is the Michigan Placement test.

Since qualitative research involves a process of exploring, describing, and explaining how individuals construct their social world in their natural setting, I conducted this investigation in the English as a foreign language classroom where learners study the language and develop interpersonal relationships that are also part of their language acquisition process. I collected all the data in an intensive summer course at a public university in Mexico. The course is English six, and it is classified within level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages. English six is an intermediate class based on the Communicative Language Teaching approach, and it mainly focuses on developing listening and speaking skills as well as grammar and vocabulary. Reading and writing are also integrated into the course syllabus. English six is structured following a task-supported syllabus (see Ellis, 2003). Content is presented in the traditional Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) teaching method, and tasks are seen as free practice where learners use the linguistic forms and vocabulary previously taught in class. The syllabus is based on the textbook that is used in all the lessons. Each unit usually starts with a speaking activity related to the unit's topic, followed by a listening exercise, which can be a dialogue where the

grammatical structure to be used is presented. After that, the teacher explains the grammar, and then the students complete the book's exercises individually or in pairs to practice the linguistic form presented earlier. Finally, learners are given structured tasks where the vocabulary and grammar previously seen in class are used to complete these activities. Pair work and group work activities are usually conducted in the classroom. However, including tasks in the language classroom depends on the teachers. Most instructors incorporate language tasks as part of their classes, but others only focus on the book to plan their lessons.

The classes were taught five days a week for four hours a day (20hrs/week), with a 20-minute break. The course covered a total of eight units of the book distributed in two units every week. Students were assessed weekly on the material seen in classes. Evaluations occurred on Wednesdays and Fridays. Every Wednesday, learners had two exams. The first one was a written spelling test with all the vocabulary of the two units. The second one was an oral exam.  For this test, students were given a guide with several questions to prepare them for the evaluation. On the day of the exam, the teacher asked the learners to self-select a partner to work with during the test. Once they had chosen their peers, each dyad sat together with the teacher and started the exam. Finally, on Fridays, learners had the written test that included grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading, and writing.

**3.4 Participants**

The participants were 24 learners of English as a foreign language and their teacher. The learners' age range is between 18 and 57 years old. There were 12 males and 12 females, and they were all Spanish native speakers. The students' learning experience ranged from five to nine years of studying English. They had received English instruction in public and private institutions in Mexico before taking this course. Half of the participants had previously taken classes in the same institution where the data were collected. Twenty-two participants were enrolled in one of the university's academic areas, and the other two were members of the community. Table 2 shows the participants' background information. It is important to note that pseudonyms are used to protect the participants' privacy.

**Table 2** *Participant's Background Information*

| Pair number | Name | Gender | Age | Years studying English | Public/ Private | Occupation/Academic major |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Juan | M | 24 | 9 | Both | Mechatronics |
| | Alejandro | M | 33 | 9 | Public | Master's student |
| Pair 2 | Alma | F | 20 | 5 | Both | Plastic Arts |
| | Oscar | M | 20 | 5 | Private | Medicine |
| Pair 3 | Gloria | F | 31 | 7 | Private | Master's student |
| | Carlos | M | 32 | 5 | Both | Industrial engineering |
| Pair 4 | Carla | F | 31 | 9 | Public | Housewife |
| | Martha | F | 20 | 10 | Private | Industrial engineering |
| Pair 5 | Alberto | M | 19 | 9 | Private | Mechatronics |
| | Luis | M | 19 | 6 | Public | Mechatronics |
| Pair 6 | Sarah | F | 36 | 9 | Both | Master's student |
| | Flora | F | 19 | 6 | Public | Physics |
| Pair 7 | Marcos | M | 23 | 6 | Public | Mechatronics |
| | Patty | F | 23 | 5 | Public | Master's student |
| Pair 8 | Ricardo | M | 23 | 5 | Public | Master's student |
| | Gabriela | F | 26 | 9 | Both | Master's student |
| Pair 9 | Andrea | F | 20 | 9 | Both | Industrial engineering |
| | Gustavo | M | 55 | 9 | Public | Teacher |
| Pair 10 | Isabel | F | 21 | 7 | Both | Architecture |
| | Ana | F | 57 | 6 | Public | Retired teacher |
| Pair 11 | Daniel | M | 22 | 8 | Private | Industrial engineering |
| | Felipe | M | 24 | 5 | Public | Industrial engineering |
| Pair 12 | Abril | F | 18 | 9 | Private | Nutritional science |
| | Carlos | M | 23 | 5 | Public | Master's student |

The teacher is a Mexican Spanish speaker who holds a bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching (ELT) and a master's degree in the same area. She has been teaching English for more than twenty years. She has experience teaching English in elementary and adult courses. The teacher has taught the courses given at intermediate and advanced levels.

**3.5 Classroom tasks**

This study included four different types of tasks (see appendix A) that were used in the language classroom during peer interaction. Following Ellis' (2003) and Ellis' and Shintani's (2013) criteria for tasks, I designed two decision-making tasks, one role-play, one sequencing/narrative task, and one problem-solving task. Aston's (1988) and Rixon's (1979) suggestions for creating tasks that encourage learners to develop interactional speech were also included while designing the tasks.

Table 3 provides an overview of each task. It briefly describes the materials and procedures used as well as the name of each task, the time it took participants to complete them, and the date when they were administered during the lessons.

**Table 3** *Overview of the Tasks Used in the EFL Classroom*

| Task type | Name | Date administered | Materials | Procedure | Time to complete |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Decision-making task | Visiting Hermosillo | First week of classes | Video<br><br>Itinerary worksheet | Watch video Create an itinerary Outcome: written and oral | 50 minutes |
| Decision-making task | Planning a party | Second week of classes | PowerPoint<br><br>Party layout design | Read the PowerPoint/ descriptions. Decide seating arrangements Outcome: oral | 20 minutes |
| Sequencing-narrative task | Story | Second week of classes | Pictures | Arrange the pictures in order/create story Outcome: written | 40 minutes |
| Role-play | Making complaints | Third week of classes | PowerPoint<br><br>Worksheet with pictures | Make complaints about the problems Outcome: oral and written | 25 -30 minutes |
| Problem-solving | Becoming Hermosillo's mayor | Fourth week of classes | Worksheet with example | Create a poster of a political campaign Output: oral and written | 50 minutes |

The tasks are based on the students' textbook, cover topics that are seen in class, and seek to mirror situations that occur in real life. Two tasks include situations that are familiar to the learners since they focus on their hometown (Planning a trip to Hermosillo/ Becoming Hermosillo's Mayor). Participants worked in dyads in all the classroom tasks.

I administered the tasks according to the units seen in class. It is important to note that learners carried out the tasks while the teacher worked with the dyads during the oral exam. As explained earlier, there was a weekly oral exam every Wednesday. During that time, I assumed the role of the teacher's assistant and implemented the tasks with the whole class. Otherwise, the students would have only been working individually with their textbook as the teacher applied the oral exam with each pair.

Before administering the first task, I asked participants to self-select a partner to work with during the activity. The peer selection was based on seating arrangements. The learners selected the persons who were sitting closer to them. All the students were told they would be working with the chosen peer in all the tasks used in the course (fixed-pairs). The following subsections will describe each task in more detail.

### 3.5.1 Decision-making tasks

I used a decision-making task since it is a collaborative task, which allows learners to interact with one another by exchanging ideas, agreeing or disagreeing, giving suggestions, and trying to reach a decision through negotiation. Another reason for using this type of task is based on Rixon's (1979) recommendation of including

tasks where learners reach an agreement since they help students negotiate for *solidarity* when working with peers.

I created two decision-making tasks for this study. The first decision-making task was labeled as Visiting Hermosillo, and it was administered during the first week of classes. As explained in section 3.5, it is important to indicate that it was before starting with this task when learners were asked to self-select their partner. The language objective of the task was to practice the simple future and modal verbs. However, learners were not told to use the grammatical structures but rather to follow the instructions provided in the handout (Appendix A). In this task, students had to plan a four-day schedule for a person who wanted to visit their hometown. They first watched a video of the foreign visitor where she explained what she wanted to do on her trip, and they were asked to take notes. After that, they had to decide on what activities to do to create an itinerary for the tourist. In this task, students had to write the itinerary together. Dyads took approximately 50 minutes to complete the task. In this task, the participants were familiar with the topic since it was about their hometown. They had to talk about the places they knew and made suggestions based on their own experience.

In the second decision-making task, participants had to plan a party to make decisions about seating arrangements for the guests. Each pair was given a list of 10 guests with a description of their personality and interests. Based on the information provided, they had to decide where to seat each person according to their characteristics. The language objective was to review the adjectives seen in their textbook in order to describe people. The task was administered during the second week of classes, and it took each pair approximately 20 minutes to complete it.

Students were not required to write as in the previous task. This task also follows Ellis' (2003) and Ellis and Shintani's (2013) task criteria since peers had to use their own resources and make a decision (seating arrangements). The task also involves a situation based on real-life experience.

### 3.5.2 Sequencing-Narrative task

The sequencing/narrative task was administered in the second week of classes, and it took each pair approximately 40 minutes to complete. In this task, learners had to write a story based on the pictures given. I gave each dyad a set of seven images that followed a certain sequence. Peers had to agree on the order of the illustrations and then write a short story. The language objective for the task was to practice the past tense, which comes in unit 4 of their textbook. Thus, the task was used as a review after the students had seen the grammar point. However, they were not explicitly told to use the past tense but rather to describe what had happened to the person in the pictures. Each pair was given only one set of pictures, and they were asked to create the story together.

### 3.5.3 Role-play

Based on Aston's assertion that role-plays enhance negotiation for *comity*, I used a role-play that resembled a real-life situation. This task was used in the third week of classes. One student had to pretend to be the tenant, and the other learner had the role of the landlord. Each participant was given the same handout (see Appendix A) of the apartment that showed problems with the furniture and the building (leaking roof/sink, torn sofa, broken TV, etc.). The objective of the task was for the tenant to contact the landlord and complain about all the malfunctions in the apartment. Both

students had to agree about the apartment's problems. The task's language objective was to describe problems with past participles as adjectives and with nouns, but learners were only told to look at the pictures in their handout and create a conversation. This task did not require writing, but learners decided to write the role-play script when working together. The pairs completed the task within 25 to 30 minutes approximately.

### 3.5.4 Problem-solving task

The problem-solving task was based on the last unit of the textbook, which focuses on different problems that occur within a society (e.g., corruption, crime, unemployment, transportation, and environmental issues), and it was used during the final week of classes. The objective of the task was to create a political campaign to become Hermosillo's mayor. I first asked students to read the example of an election campaign from their book (see appendix A). Then the pairs had to decide who would be the person running for mayor and who was the campaign manager. They had to think of solutions to solve the city's problems, and they had to create a poster where they publicized their resolutions in order for their candidate to win. Students completed this task in approximately fifty minutes.

### 3.6 Data collection

### 3.6.1 Getting informed consent

The first step was to contact the head of the department and the coordinator of the EFL courses to ask for permission to conduct the study in the classroom. Then I talked to the teacher before the classes started to explain her the study. I informed her about what she and the students were going to do during the investigation. On the first day

of classes, I informed the learners about the project and what their participation consisted of if they agreed to join. I gave them the information sheets and talked them through the material, answering any questions or comments they had about the study. Learners were allowed to take the information sheets and consent forms back home to read them in detail, and they were asked to return the forms the next day. Fourteen students signed the consent forms that same day, and they returned them to me. Once the rest of the volunteers had signed the corresponding consent forms, I started the classroom observations and video/audio recordings. It is important to note that only two students did not sign the consent forms before the first task, but they still completed it. However, they were not audio and video recorded until they agreed to participate from the second task onwards. The following section will describe the data collection procedures and data collection instruments used during the study.

**3.6.2 Data collection procedures and instruments for data collection**

I collected the data during the summer term for a period of four weeks inside and outside the language classroom. I used a questionnaire, detailed classroom observation field notes, audio and video recordings of the peer interactions, teacher's interview, and stimulated recall interviews with the learners to gather all the data. Table 4 shows the data collection instruments.

**Table 4** *Data Collection Instruments*

| | Tasks: audio-recordings of peer interaction | Classroom observations | Interviews | Questionnaire |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Description** | Decision-making task: Visiting Hermosillo (50 min.)<br><br>Decision-making task: Planning a party (20 min.)<br><br>Sequencing-narrative task (40 min.)<br><br>Role-play: complaining (25-30 min.)<br><br>Problem-solving: Hermosillo's mayor (50 min) | A chart of the seating arrangements of the class<br><br>Detailed descriptions of what happened inside the language classroom | Students' interviews<br><br>Teacher's interview | Learners' background information<br><br>Students' beliefs about peer interaction, group cohesion, and their experience of working with their peers during the language course. |
| **Application date** | Two tasks during the first week then a task every week | Daily | Students interviews: second, third, and fourth week of classes<br><br>Teacher's interview: last day of classes (40 min) | During the last week of classes (20 min to complete) |

*Questionnaire*

I used a questionnaire for two purposes. The first aim of the questionnaire was to gather data about the participants' background information, including their language learner history as they explained where and for how long they had studied English as a foreign language. The second reason for including a questionnaire was to complement

the data from the interviews regarding the students' beliefs about peer interaction, group cohesion, and their experience of working with their peers during the course.

The questionnaire was written in Spanish (see Appendix B) and based on Sato's (2013) study in which he investigated learners' perspectives regarding peer interaction and corrective feedback. It is structured in three sections. The first part consisted of 21 items organized in a Likert-scale format. The first 14 questions aimed at measuring beliefs about peer interaction and group cohesion. The second part consisted of eight open-ended questions, which targeted information about establishing *comity* in the classroom. Participants were asked to express their opinion concerning what they liked and/or did not like about working with a peer, to explain if they preferred working individually or in pairs, and to describe the characteristics they considered essential in a partner when performing the tasks in the language classroom. Three questions were based on items used in sociometric procedures (Moreno, 1960) in which students in a classroom nominate other classmates with whom they have (or have not) established friendly connections. One question asked learners to select three people they wanted to invite to the movies. The other two items required them to choose three classmates with whom they had enjoyed working during the classes and three people they would like to have as classmates in future courses. They were also asked to explain the reasons for their choices.

Finally, the third part included background information such as age, occupation, and details about the participants' English learning process (years studying the language, schools where they had studied English). This section provided relevant data to describe the participants. I administered the questionnaire almost at the end of the course on day 19, and it took 20 minutes to be completed.

***Classroom observations***

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), "observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting." (p. 143). The social setting of this study is the English as a foreign language classroom in a Mexican university. Initially, my role as a researcher was that of a non-participant observer since I was not going to engage in the tasks that students performed during the lessons. However, I became a participant-observer by getting involved in the language course. For once, as previously mentioned, I administered the language tasks while the teacher was working with dyads for the oral exam. Students asked me for help when they had questions about grammar or vocabulary, and I tutored some of them before the written and oral exams. The teacher included me as part of the class, and she asked me to share with the learners my experience of being a postgraduate student and living abroad. Later in the interviews, some participants told me that they felt they identified with me since they were also students in a postgraduate course. I was also involved in the course by aiding the teacher with class material, which included extra activities for the learners.

According to Cohen, Lawrence, and Keith (2011), this type of observation allows the researcher to gain a closer look at the context and the people involved in it by discovering how a group is organized through its everyday interactions and relationships. Being able to engage with the class was an opportunity to familiarize me with the participants and to create a feeling of trust. Participants perceived me as a teacher in their group, and at the same time, they recognized my role as a researcher. Gass and Mackey (2015) explain that a participant observer is less obtrusive and reduces the effects of the observer's paradox.

Classroom observation started before administering the first language task. I usually sat on the right side of the classroom. This location allowed me to see all the students in class. I used two types of field notes to gather data from the observations. I first used a chart of the seating arrangement of the classroom (see appendix C). In this map, I drew the whole classroom, which included the desks' position and the teacher's location around the room. I used different charts to indicate whom the students worked with during the tasks and activities in every class and to specify whom they usually spoke to every day. I also included sociometric diagrams to indicate the interpersonal relationships in the classroom.

The second type of field notes was detailed descriptions of what happened inside the language classroom. I described the lesson and the everyday dynamics of the English six course. These records outline the class's daily routines, including how the teacher greeted the students, the warm-ups used, the normal activities (e.g., dialogues, written exercises, videos, interactive platform, etc.), and any other events that occurred in this context.

In the field notes, I made comments about the relationships between students and how they constructed *comity* in class. I also included a description of body language and expressions of emotions (e.g., laughter) displayed during the peer interactions. The descriptions of these situations later helped me as a guide to ask questions in the interviews.

### *Audio and video recording classroom interaction*

I used audio and video recording daily to record the naturally occurring data in the language classroom. I started video recording the classes two days before students participated in the first task, so learners could adjust to being videotaped. I placed the

camera in the left front corner of the classroom since this location provided a view of the whole classroom. I used 12 audio recorders throughout the study and gave each pair its own digital recorder to be used every time they worked together with the language tasks.

I classified each audiotape with the name of the participants and the date, and I also included the task's name. I placed each recorder on the desk between the two participants. Once the classes finished, I collected each digital recorder and transferred the information to an encrypted laptop and external hard drive.

### *Introspective interviews*

I used introspective interviews to fully understand the learners' perceptions of working with their peers and to know more about what happened during their interactions. According to Gass and Mackey (2000), introspective methods allow researchers to recall participants' thoughts or experiences about what was happening in their minds when performing a task.

In this study, I interviewed each student individually in a separate classroom the next day or two days after having participated in the language tasks. I audio recorded all the interviews and later transcribed them for analysis. The head of the department and the coordinator of the language school provided the space for the interviews. I decided to use this room because it is located in a quiet area where the interviews were not interrupted by noise or other classes.

I started with the interviews at the beginning of the second week of classes, once participants had completed the first task. As mentioned before, the interview sessions occurred one or two days after the learners had completed the tasks. I organized them this way based on the participants' agendas. On the day that each task

was performed, I scheduled a meeting with the students. Each participant chose the day when they were available to have the interview.

Once I had arranged the interview schedule, I met with each participant individually after class in the assigned space. Before starting with the interview, I asked learners about the language they preferred to use during the session. Seven students chose to speak Spanish since they felt more comfortable talking in their native language. The rest of the participants wanted to have the interview in English because they considered the session an opportunity to get more practice speaking in the foreign language.

I used the recordings obtained from the video and audiotapes as *stimulus* (Gass & Mackey, 2015) to help students recall their thoughts while working with their peers. I selected specific excerpts of the peer interactions where learners focused on the language they were using (e.g., lexical or grammatical LREs), provided feedback to one another, or used social discourse moves for establishing *comity* in the language classroom.

I divided the interview into two parts. I based this decision on a similar study by Storch (2001a), where she used retrospective interviews to learn more about the participants' perspectives concerning their experience of working in dyads. In the first part of the session, I started by asking questions that helped students reflect on their experience of working in dyads with the language tasks. These questions included the learners' opinions about the tasks and perceptions regarding working with their peers (Appendix D). I also encouraged participants to share additional thoughts about the course or their classmates. I did not use the audio and video recordings in this part of the interview.

I organized the next section of the interview following a stimulated recall format (Gass & Mackey, 2000). I told students that they were going to listen to segments of their interaction in the classroom and that they were going to be asked questions about what they were thinking at the moment. I also explained that they could stop the recorder whenever they wanted to share any thoughts or comments about that specific situation.

Based on a similar study by Philp and Mackey (2010), where they focused on the effects of social factors in interaction, in this part of the interview, I also asked participants questions to prompt them to reflect on what happened when they were working with their peers. I asked them general questions about the interactions (e.g., what was happening at this moment?) and specific questions such as "why did you use Spanish to explain/say that?".

**Teacher's interview**

The teacher is an important source of information since she knows her students' strengths and weaknesses. She is aware of the interpersonal relationships that are established in the language classroom. She is also an observer of the situations that occur in every class. I interviewed the teacher on the last day of the course, once the lesson had ended. The session was 40 minutes long, and it was audio recorded to be later transcribed.

**3.7 Transcribing spoken data**

Twelve digital recorders and a video camera allowed me to record and transcribe the peer interactions produced during the five language tasks, the daily interactions in the classroom, and the interviews. I saved and encrypted all the audios and video

recordings in an external hard drive and a password-protected laptop to be later transcribed. Finally, I transcribed all the audios once I finished the data collection.

The transcription of peer discussions attempted to display the interactive nature of talk as it occurred in the foreign language classroom. In order to transcribe this interaction, I used transcription symbols to indicate features of speech, such as pauses, intonation, or emphasis used by the participants. I adapted these symbols from the codes used in previous studies of peer interaction (Huang, 2013; Jefferson, 2004; Martin-Beltran et al., 2016; Roberson, 2014; Storch, 2001; Victoria, 2011; Watanabe, 2014; Young & Tedick, 2016). The complete list of transcription symbols is provided in the appendices section as appendix E.

Since the process of transcribing spoken data is not objective, and it involves the researcher's interpretations (Green, Franquiz, & Dixon, 1997; Storch 2001), I attempted to transcribe all the words which were produced in a non-standard way as approximately as they were pronounced. I also transcribed all vocabulary or grammatical mistakes as participants produced them.  The use of the native language during the interactions was similarly included in the transcripts.

## 3.8 Summary

This chapter described the research design and the rationale for using a qualitative methodology. It provided information about the context and participants of the study. The research was longitudinal in nature, and conducted in the adult EFL classroom in Mexico. It involved different instruments for data collection. The sources of data included audio recordings of pair interactions while learners worked with the tasks, interviews (students/teacher) classroom observation field notes, and a questionnaire. All these data collection tools were carefully described in this chapter.

**Chapter 4: Data Analysis**

Qualitative research often involves a process of exploring, describing, and explaining how individuals construct their social world in their natural setting. It can apply various approaches and methods depending on the contexts studied and the reasons for studying them. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) describe qualitative research as "effective ways to investigate language acquisition in the classroom" (p. 119). The current study, conducted in the EFL classroom, followed a qualitative approach. Data were collected employing different instruments that allowed for a closer look at what occurs in this setting where students learn language together.

This chapter describes the process implemented for data analysis. It is divided into four main sections: learner-learner interaction data analysis, interview analysis, classroom observation analysis, and data triangulation. It provides a detailed explanation of the process followed for analyzing and coding the data to answer the study's research questions.

**4.1 Learner-learner interaction**

I analyzed the learner-learner interaction data following the literature on qualitative research (Mercer, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Saldaña, 2016). I implemented a micro-genetic approach (i.e. close study) as a tool to analyze the spoken interaction. Micro-genetic analysis helps researchers to examine change as it occurs or, in Vygotsky's (1978) words, "to grasp the process in flight" (p. 68). Wertsch (1985) describes it as a "very short-term longitudinal study" (p. 55). Micro-genetic analysis is a useful tool to investigate and understand a specific event within interaction (Gánem Gutiérrez, 2008). Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, a micro-genetic analysis was used to examine pair talk in detail as it developed

utterance by utterance (Donato, 1994; Platt & Brooks, 2002) to document how the discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* were used to build *comity* in the students' interactions and how *comity* evolved and was maintained when learners worked together.

Adopting micro-genetic analyses of the quality of the interaction of peers working together allowed me to do an in-depth exploration of how adult language learners used language to build *comity* and establish different interactional patterns in the classroom. Moreover, this analysis permitted a closer observation of how the peers' relationships changed during the summer course over time. Finally, the micro-genetic approach enabled me to trace the production of LREs and how the students resolved (or did not resolve) the language problems encountered in the conversations. Previous research on learner interaction has also used this data analysis method to observe in detail how learners help one another through co-construction of language and to support L2 production (e.g., Brooks, Swain, Lapkin, & Knouzi, 2010; Donato, 1994; Gánem Gutiérrez, 2008; Ohta, 2000). Lavelli, Pantoja, Hsu, Messinger and Fogel (2008) explain that micro-genetic analyses have the advantage of gathering an extensive amount of different types of information about the *process* of change compared to studies investigating effects by using pre- and post-test designs. In this study the information came from the peer interactions transcripts, interviews, and detailed classroom-observation notes.

My first encounter with data analysis of the spoken interactions occurred when I listened to the conversations of the core participants after finishing each task to make questions for the prompted interviews. Listening to these audios helped me get a general idea about what was happening when learners worked together. Once I had

collected all the data, I transcribed the peer interactions and made some written notes. Transcribing allowed me to identify how students approached the task, focused their attention on language features, and interacted with one another. After finalizing the transcription of all the audio files, I exported them to Atlas.ti where I analyzed all the information. I used the software to insert codes, make digital notes of parts of the conversations that were relevant to answer my research questions, and create memos as I analyzed the data.

I analyzed the spoken interaction data in two stages. In the first stage, I started by segmenting the data and quantifying oral production. I followed a micro-genetic analysis to focus mainly on the production of social discourse moves *(solidarity, support,* and *social inquiry*) to build *comity* over time and the occurrence of language-related episodes. The second stage of data analysis sought to identify and describe the patterns of interaction formed between peers. A micro-genetic analysis was also used in this phase to closely observe the process of creating the different patterns of interaction. Finally, this first section of data analysis describes the approaches followed to check inter-rater reliability. Figure 1 shows the data analysis process that I followed for the study.

First stage of coding cycle

Data segmentation

On-task talk

Off-task talk

Microgenetic data analysis

LRE's          SDM's

Second stage of coding cycle

General qualitative analysis for patterns of interaction

Microgenetic data analysis for patterns of interaction
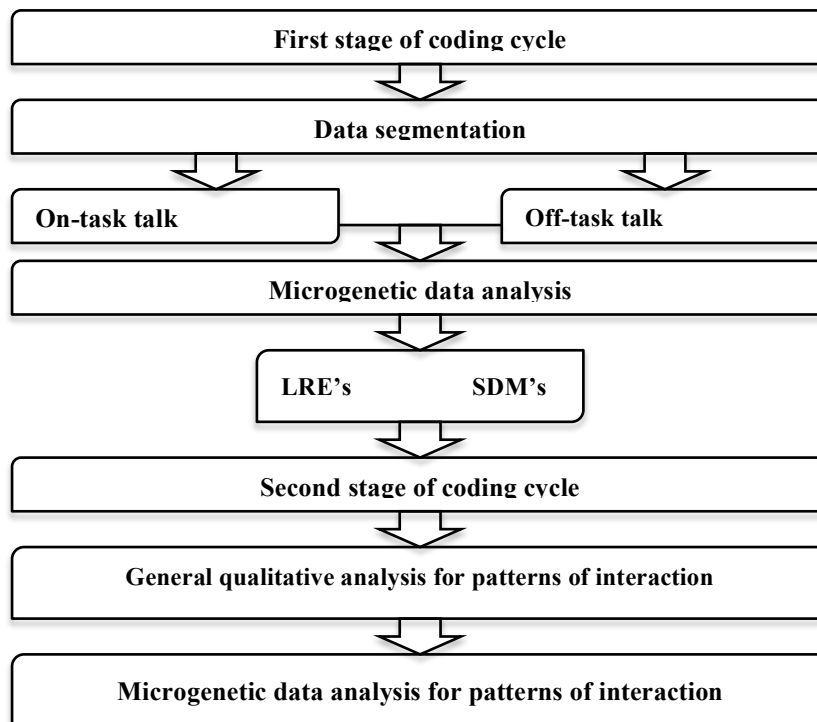
**Figure 1** *Stages Followed in the Coding Cycle*

## 4.2 First stage of data analysis: learner-learner interaction

Saldaña (2016) explains that the process of analyzing data in qualitative research is cyclical and involves a method of recoding the information. As previously mentioned, I started the process of analyzing the data by listening and taking notes of the interactions of all participants before, during, and after transcribing the audios. Then I coded the data by recursively reading through each transcript by focusing on the moment-to-moment interactions to identify the production of social discourse moves and LREs. It is important to indicate that in order to code the social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support,* and *social inquiry*, I used pre-selected categories based on the available research on *comity* (Aston, 1988, 1993; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Victoria, 2017). That is, the classifications did not emerge post-hoc from the qualitative analysis, but were developed from Aston's (1988, 1993) categories of *solidarity* and

*support* and Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) analytical framework for social discursive moves. The first stage of data analysis began by segmenting the data and quantifying the oral production.

**4.2.1 Segmenting the data**

Before segmenting the data, I first started by quantifying the oral production, which was based on the number of turns produced by each participant over the five tasks (see Table 5). Based on Philp et al. (2010), I counted the number of turns to measure the duration of the interaction. I decided to use the number of turns rather than word count since the peer talk also included learners reading task instructions, and eliminating these would obscure the interactions. I also tallied the turns that involved phatic utterances (Leslie, 2015; Storch, 2001) such as "ok," "yeah," "mmm" since they contributed to the flow of the interaction, and in some episodes, they were used to establish *comity*.

**Table 5** *Number of Conversational Turns Produced Across the Five Tasks*

| Pair | Name of student | Total |
|---|---|---|
| | Alex | 483 |
| Pair 1 | Juan | 463 |
| | Alma | 351 |
| Pair 2 | Oscar | 336 |
| | Carlos | 433 |
| Pair 3 | Gloria | 436 |
| | Carla | 436 |
| Pair 4 | Martha | 471 |
| | Luis | 444 |
| Pair 5 | Alberto | 440 |
| | Flora | 378 |
| Pair 6 | Sarah | 386 |
| | Patty | 310 |
| Pair 7 | Marcos | 302 |
| | Gaby | 230 |
| Pair 8 | Ricardo | 243 |
| | Andrea | 336 |
| Pair 9 | Gustavo | 343 |
| | Ana | 355 |
| Pair 10 | Isabel | 330 |
| | Daniel | 425 |
| Pair 11 | Felipe | 416 |
| | Abril | 305 |
| Pair 12 | Javier | 309 |

Following Storch's (2001) study, I segmented the data according to the type of talk (on-task and off-task talk) and into episodes. On-task talk involved learners engaged in working with the task and completing it (Storch, 2001). Learners used Off-task talk as casual talk that was not related to the task. It was mainly in these segments of the

conversation where students produced more social discourse moves of *social inquiry*.
For this reason, I included off-task talk in the analysis, as it provided insightful
information about how students negotiated interpersonal relationships and created a
space for *comity*.

I further segmented on-task talk and off-task talk into episodes where learners
talked about the language they were using and produced social discourse moves. The
following section describes these episodes in detail and will provide examples from
the data and from other studies.

### 4.2.2 Analyzing on-task talk

I first started analyzing on-task talk, and I further segmented it into (a) task-related
episodes, (b) social discourse moves, and (c) language-related episodes (LREs). Task-
related episodes included participants talking about the task at hand, such as reading
instructions, planning how to do/complete the task, generating ideas, deciding on
language choice, assigning roles, describing characters, among others. The excerpt
below shows an example of a task-related episode. Ana and Isabel (pair 10) were
creating a role-play in task 4. The episode shows the learners deciding on the roles to
play in the conversation.

*Excerpt 1*

1   Ana: and what, role did you play? (.) did you::, want to play? (.) mmm land::,
     landlady?
2   Isabel: tenant
3   Ana*: aja,* [tenant] (0.5)

### 4.2.3 Analyzing comity: Establishing interpersonal relationships

In order to answer RQ1 (establishing *comity* and building rapport), I started with a
deductive or *a priori coding* (Miles et al., 2014) to label the episodes where learners

used language to negotiate peer relationships by producing discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*. I coded discourse moves based on Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *comity* that is the speech used to establish and maintain friendly relations and positive rapport between interlocutors. Speakers can build *comity* by using discourse moves of *solidarity* and *support*. In order to code the data, I adopted the analytical framework developed by Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) since it expanded the notions of *solidarity* and *support*. Additionally, the researchers included the speech turns used for *social inquiry* that was also found in the data of this study.

Following Martin-Beltran et al.'s (2016) coding framework, social discourse episodes started when a learner asked questions to know more about her/his peer (*e.g., what are you studying?*), shared a personal experience (*e.g., I got my driver's license yesterday*), asked for peer's opinions (*e.g., what do you think? Do you agree?*), recognized similar feelings/experiences (*e.g., it is really difficult, I barely speak it*), appreciated or encouraged the peer's contribution/the joint work with the task (*e.g., I like this*), and showed agreement. The episode finished when learners changed the topic.

I followed a micro-genetic analysis (i.e., close study) to carefully observe how learners built *comity* over time through discursive moves of *solidarity*, support, and *social inquiry* within the peer interactions. Siegler and Crowley (1991) indicate that one of the characteristics of a micro-genetic design is that the observed data must be *intensively analyzed* (both qualitatively and quantitatively) to identify the processes that originate change. For the purposes of this study, the process of establishing *comity* is the *change* under observation. In order to do this, I repeatedly read each transcript utterance by utterance and reflected carefully on the assigned

codes for each discursive move of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*. As I was re-reading the transcripts, I took notes to understand the interpersonal relationship established by each pair. The discourse moves produced by the learners were consistent with previous research on *comity* (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Victoria, 2017), and it was evident that the learners used language for *solidarity*, *support,* and *social inquiry*. The opposite of support also occurred within the interactions. The analysis of the learner-learner interactions was triangulated with the participants' own words from the interviews to compare what they do in the interactions to what they say they do. I also triangulated the spoken interaction transcripts and the interviews with the detailed observation notes of every lesson. This issue will be further explained in section 4.7.

The micro-genetic analysis also included some quantitative features to support the qualitative observations. However, this analysis only involved frequency counts of the discursive moves. I tallied each time an episode of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* that appeared in the interactions. Social discursive moves episodes were counted for each pair across the five tasks. In the following part, I will further describe the concepts of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*.

*Coding social discourse moves*

I coded episodes where learners used language to negotiate interpersonal relationships and establish *comity* through discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* (Aston, 1988, 1993; Martin-Beltran et al., 2016).

*Discourse moves to express solidarity*

Aston (1993) explains that speakers express *solidarity* when they share "attitudes towards features of common experience" (p. 237). Based on Aston's (1993) notion of

solidarity, I coded social discourse moves to express *solidarity* when learners talked about similar experiences and shared related feelings toward a particular experience. I expanded this definition by including instances where a student agreed with his/her peer on how to do the task. Following Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), I coded instances of *solidarity* when learners acknowledged common experiences and struggles as language learners. Table 6 shows examples of the codes.

**Table 6** *Episodes of Discourse Moves Used for Solidarity*

| Codes | Examples of episodes |
|---|---|
| Shared or common experiences or feelings | S1: I was born here, but my mom is from El Salvador<br>S2: Me too, I mean my mom is from another country *(taken from Martin-Beltrán et al. 2016, p. 328)* |
| Agreeing on how to do the task | Sarah: *hacemos así las oraciones, como algo:: pasivo, y luego ya ponemos la solución? por ejemplo* (0.3) *ponemos* problems *y luego* solutions<br>[we can do the sentences in passive voice, and then we put the solutions? For example (0.3) we put the problems and then the solutions]<br>Flora: *aja (.) podemos poner lo de los baches*<br>[yes (.) and we can put the thing about the pot holes] |
| Acknowledging common struggles as language learners who make mistakes | Carlos: *ahh nos salvamos de hacer el pinchi ridículo allá en frente* (hhh) [we're lucky that we didn't make a fool of ourselves in front of the class]<br>Gloria: (hhh) *ya sé* [I know]*,* (hhh) you are level 1, *nos va a decir* [she is going to tell us]<br>Carlos: *si* [yes] (hhh) |

*Social discourse moves to express support*

Episodes where students expressed appreciation, sympathy, or feeling for the other (Aston, 1988, 1993) were referred to as discursive moves of *support*. I adopted Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) framework and segmented the data according to instances where learners (a) showed encouragement or positive feedback, (b) encouraged/allowed a partner to have a turn or continue speaking, (c) recognized each other's expertise (d) co-constructed language which occurred in two ways: (1) learners helped a peer finish his/her sentences by providing ideas to complete them or (2) learners helped a peer by offering word choices, repairing syntax, recasting and explaining a grammatical, lexical, or phonological LRE. It is important to note that the second form of *co-construction* overlaps with LREs. Therefore, for clarity purposes, these episodes will not be included statistically as a predictor of LREs in chapter seven since they are, in fact, a kind of LRE. Table 7 exemplifies the coding of the social discourse moves to express *support*.

**Table 7** *Episodes of Discourse Moves Used to Express Support*

| Codes | Examples of episodes |
|---|---|
| Encouragement or positive feedback | S1: Good try!<br>S2: Thanks for your help *(taken from Martin-Beltrán et al. 2016, p. 329)* |
| Encourage and allowed a peer to have a turn or participate in the interaction | Gabriela: what do we do on the second day?<br>Ricardo: maybe dinner at the night I think she's, dinner and free time to go to a bar or something like that free ti::me to:: go: to:: the:: ba::r for anything she likes |
| Recognition of each other's linguistic or academic expertise | Oscar: after, she decided: go, go to, to run in the park, suddenly, it rained, it rained, so Claudia get wet while she jogged? jog?<br>Alma: mmm, you have reason, <u>you're better than me::,</u> in, in the order of the words, yeah! (hhh) |
| Co-constructed utterances by offering ideas to help each other finish their sentences | Juan: this is a story<br>Alex: (hhh) this is the story of::<br>Juan: a guy<br>Alex: and his television! (hhh) ahh, they're, they're like a marriage? |
| Helping a peer resolve language problems: providing a recast, repairing grammar/vocabulary and explaining a grammatical or lexical LRE | S5: Yo viajo…viajo, right? viajo?<br>S6: Viajé… viajaste? Viajé<br>S5: Yeah, I went to France …*(taken from Martin-Beltrán et al. 2016, p. 329)* |
| Helping a peer by explaining a grammatical, lexical, or phonological LRE | Juan: from a (.) lot of lo::cal di-(.)local dishes?((seems not to understand the word))<br>Alejandro: *dishes es como platillos* [it's like dishes] but you eat different types of dishes<br>Juan: ahh ok per:fect |

*Social discourse moves for social inquiry*

As explained in the literature review chapter, Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) labeled *social inquiry* as instances where learners talked about their academic and social identities. Based on their study, I coded *social inquiry* episodes when peers asked each other questions or shared information regarding their school, family, or any other

personal issues. Excerpt 2 was taken from Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), and it illustrates how learners engage in discourse about their personal selves.

*Excerpt 2*

S1: So, um, what grade are you in? Like

grade… are you a senior?

S2: I' m…9th?

S1: How old are you?

*Opposite of comity: dissension*

Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study, the data also showed that there were episodes where students expressed the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*. I coded these instances as *dissension*. *Dissension* included instances where learners did not allow the peer to talk, made fun of the partner, disrespected the peer's linguistic knowledge, and did not acknowledge the partner's contribution. The following excerpt (3) was taken from Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), and it provides an example of one student being disrespectful as he laughed at his peer's pronunciation.

*Excerpt 3*

S5: '[high school name] es muy divertido y tenemos…

S4: ((laughter making fun of S5's pronunciation))

S5: Stop making fun of me((laughter))

S6: Stop…no, don't

S5: Oh my goodness.

## 4.2.4 Coding language-related episodes

The last research question investigates the opportunities for *languaging* (Swain, 2006) in relation to relationship-building discourse. Language-related episodes were used as a unit of evidence for *languaging.* Consequently, I coded segments of the data where learners talked about the language they use as language-related episodes (LREs)

(Swain & Lapkin, 1995). I coded the LREs produced during peer task-based interaction following Swain and Lapkin's (1995) definition as "any part of the dialogue where learners talk about the language they are producing, question their language use or correct themselves or others" (p. 326), and "reflect on their language use" (Swain & Lapkin, 2002, p. 292). An LRE began when one of the learners first opened a space for discussing language, either by asking a question or making a suggestion/comment, and it ended when the students either resolved the problem or changed the topic. An LRE could consist of one or many turns related to language use. I further classified LREs according to their linguistic focus as grammatical, lexical, or phonological (see Philp, Walter & Basturkmen, 2010).

I followed the same micro-genetic analysis as with the discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*. I re-read each pair's transcript in detail by focusing on the moment-by-moment utterances to trace the occurrence of LREs. I tallied each time a grammatical, lexical, or phonological LRE appeared in the interactions. The language-related episodes were counted for each pair across the five tasks. The production of language-related episodes was consistent with previous research since learners mostly generated lexical LREs (Philp et al., 2010; Williams, 2001). The examples below were taken from the data and illustrate the different types of LREs produced during the pair interactions.

*Grammatical LREs*

Grammatical-based LREs comprised episodes where learners discussed features of the target language such as word order, verb tenses, use of plurals, prepositions, and articles, omission of verbs, subject-verb agreement. Excerpt 4 is an example of a

grammatical LRE taken from task one, where learners had to plan a four-day itinerary for someone who was going to visit their hometown. Once they had decided they would visit Kino Bay, Daniel started the sentence by using the future with *will*, then Felipe suggested using *going to*, but Daniel explained the reasons for his choice. When Daniel uttered the complete sentence, he omitted the verb, and his peer corrected him and explained what was wrong. They continued discussing this grammatical LRE until Daniel used the correct structure, and Felipe agreed with this. This grammatical LRE takes a total of 10 turns.

*Excerpt 4*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 79 | Daniel: ok (.) we:: will | |
| 80 | Felipe: we are going to | |
| 81 | Daniel: *pero le voy a poner* we will *para cambiarle* (.) we will to Kino beach | I am going to write we will to avoid repetition |
| 82 | Felipe: go to Kino beach (.) *el auxiliar para futuro* will *y el verbo ir a Bahía de Kino* | the auxiliary verb for the futute wull and the verg go to Bahía de Kino |
| 83 | Daniel: ehh? | |
| 84 | Felipe: *o sea nosotros mas el auxiliar* will *de futuro y el verbo* | that is we plus the auxiliary will of future and the verb |
| 85 | Daniel: we will go to *Kino* | |
| 86 | Felipe: *aja* go to *Kino* | Yes |
| 87 | Daniel: we will go to *Kino* | |
| 88 | Felipe: ok | |

*Lexical LRE*

A lexical LRE was produced when learners talked about word meanings and word choices. It also included participants talking about the correct spelling of a word. Excerpt 5 was taken from Task 5, where learners had to create a political campaign where they had proposals to improve their hometown. This lexical LRE is completed in four turns, and the students are talking about the meaning of *pipes*. Sarah is the one who asks for the meaning of the word, and Flora solves the lexical LRE by using the L1.

*Excerpt 5*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 44 | Flora: or the pipes? They're always | |
| 45 | Sarah: *que es* pipes? | What are the pipes? |
| 46 | Flora: mmm *las tuberias* | the pipes |
| 47 | Sarah: ahh ok | |

*Phonological LRE*

A phonological LRE occurred when a learner mispronounced a word and was helped by the peer who provided the correct pronunciation or when a participant asked a partner for the pronunciation of a word. Excerpt 6 was taken from Task 2, where learners had to decide about the seating arrangements for a party. Marcos has problems pronouncing the word sociable, so Patty helps him by providing the correct pronunciation.

*Excerpt 6*

13  Marcos: vegetarian? ((peer nods in agreement)) "He is socia-, sociab-"

    *como?* [how]

14  Patty: sociable

15  Marcos: sociable "and a little bit temperamental"

Finally, all grammatical, lexical, and phonological LREs were classified as correctly resolved, unresolved, or incorrectly resolved (Fernández Dobao, 2016). Excerpts (4), (5), and (6) above illustrate examples of correctly resolved LREs, grammatical, lexical, or phonological. Excerpt 7 shows a grammatical LRE incorrectly resolved. In this episode, Juan asks his partner if he can use the verb see in the past after the modal verb can. Alex says that it is correct and repeats the incorrect utterance.

*Excerpt 7*

49  Juan: the(.) the view (.) there you can sa:w?
50  Alex: *aja* [yes] you can saw, you can saw the combination between the
    desert and sea

Excerpt 8 represents an example of an unresolved lexical LRE. This episode consists of two turns where Carla asks Martha about the word that the teacher used to say *baches* (potholes) in English, to which she simply responds that she does not know, and they continue with the interaction without solving the language problem.

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 245 | Carla: *como dijo que se llamaban los baches?* | what is the name she used for the potholes (*baches*)? |
| 246 | Martha: *la neta que no sé* | I really don't know |

### 4.2.5 Analyzing off-task talk

Teachers generally consider off-task talk as an undesirable form of participation and try to discourage it in the classroom. In interaction research, off-task talk is often neglected (Barkaoui, So, & Suzuki, 2008; Markee, 2005; Platt & Brooks, 2002) since it is considered irrelevant or that it reflects students' low engagement with the task. However, when analyzing the interactions, I found that the off-task talk offered insightful information about learners' use of social discourse to establish *comity*, and in some instances, some students even engaged in languaging during these episodes. Consequently, I coded all the episodes of SDMs and LREs produced during off-task talk, following the same procedure as with on-task talk.

Finally, in this first stage, I included both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data (Storch, 2001). Although the approach of the study is qualitative in nature, some components of quantitative analysis were also applied in order to support the qualitative results. This quantitative analysis included elements of descriptive statistics. That is, I quantified the frequency of language-related episodes and social discourse moves across the five tasks and over the course of time in order to compare the interactions between pairs from the beginning to the end of the course. For instance, incorporating frequency counts allowed me to examine how the production of social discourse moves evolved over time and across the tasks.

The first stage of analysis aimed to answer research questions one, two, and four about the types of language-related episodes and social discourse moves produced by the participants. The next stage will focus on the patterns of interaction and the relationships formed between peers.

## 4.3 Second stage of data analysis: Patterns of interaction

The second stage of data analysis sought to describe the relationships established by learners in each pair during the language course. In order to examine these relationships, I adopted Storch's (2001) model of dyadic interaction (Figure 2) for the analysis. This model represents four patterns of interaction: collaborative, expert/novice, dominant, and dominant/passive based on the dimensions of mutuality and equality. Storch (2001) explains the nature of peer interaction based on the extent to which learners share control over the direction of the task (equality) and engage with each other's suggestions (mutuality). When coding her data, Storch (2002) located each interaction in the quadrant, which best described the most common pattern reflected in the pair talk.
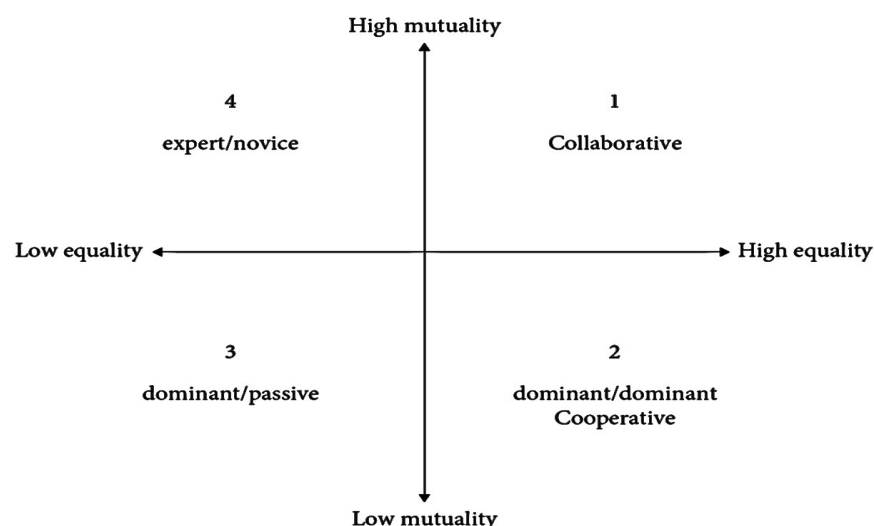


**Figure 2** *A Model of Peer Interaction (Roushad & Storch, 2016; Storch, 2001)*

Similar to Storch (2001, 2002), when coding the data, I relied not only on the coding scheme presented in tables three and four but also on the broader dimensions that characterize each pattern based on the indices of mutuality and equality. Table 8 explains in detail each one of these relationship types.

**Table 8** *Detailed Description of Each Pattern of Interaction*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Collaborative* | This pair shows a high degree of equality and mutuality. That is, both learners equally contribute to the task and engage with each other's contribution. They work together in all parts of the task, create and maintain a "joint problem space," and reach resolutions that are acceptable for each person. |
| *Dominant/dominant* *Cooperative* | This pair displays moderate to high equality but moderate to low mutuality. Learners contribute equally to the task, yet they are reluctant to fully engage or accept each other's contribution. The pair reflects traits of cooperation since there is a division of work. |
| *Dominant/passive* | One learner takes control of the task while the other stays compliant. There is little negotiation since the passive peer can not or does not contribute to the task or challenge the dominant participant. |
| Expert/novice | This pair shows a moderate to low level of equality, but mutuality is high since the expert encourages the peer to participate and engages with the contributions made by the novice. |

### 4.3.1 Analyzing learner-learner talk for patterns of interaction

In order to describe the patterns of interaction formed by each pair across the five tasks, I started with a general qualitative analysis by creating analytical memos of each interaction. I re-read every transcript and used Atlas.ti to make notes or

quotations of salient features involving the patterns of interaction developed by Storch (2001). Once I finished examining a transcript, I studied my notes and created an analytical memo. That is, I described the interaction explaining the roles that each learner assumed, their contribution to the task, and their engagement with each other and the task. I also compared the participants' behavior in every task over time. In this first stage, I did not code the data. Instead, I produced detailed memos of everything that was happening in the interactions.

This second step of data analysis for patterns of interaction involved a more detailed examination of the transcripts. Each of the episodes (task-related episode, language-related episode, social discourse moves) was segmented during the on-task talk and the off-task talk, and they were assigned to one of the patterns of interaction described in table 8 (Storch, 2002; Roberson, 2014; Zheng, 2012).

I started this part of the data analysis with a list of predetermined categories (Miles et al. 2014; Saldaña, 2016) based on previous studies that investigated patterns of interaction using Storch's (2001) coding framework (Kos, 2017; Mozaffari, 2017; Roberson, 2014; Watanabe, 2008; Zheng, 2012). These categories were imposed on the data and further analyzed. The list included the traits of the interaction in terms of decision-making behavior, nature of the assistance, pattern of contribution, and discourse. Table 9 below explains each one of these categories.

**Table 9** *Characteristics of Each Pattern of Interaction*

| *Categories* | *Characteristics for each pair* |
|---|---|
| Decision-making behavior | Collaborative<br>  - Learners pool each other's resources in a process of co-construction of the task and language knowledge.<br>  - Learners negotiate disagreements until consensus is reached. |
| | Dominant/dominant (cooperative)<br>  - Characterized by recurrent disagreements.<br>  - Learners struggle to reach an agreement. |
| | Dominant/passive<br>  - The dominant learner makes most of the decisions.<br>  - There is little or no involvement from the passive learner. |
| | Expert/novice<br>  - At the beginning of the interaction, the expert learner is the one who makes most of the decisions.<br>  - After a while, the novice learner gets more involved in the decision-making process. |
| Nature of assistance | Collaborative<br>  - Each learner provides assistance to one another.<br>  - Assistance is co-constructed between learners. |
| | Dominant/dominant (cooperative)<br>  - Even if assistance is provided during interaction, it is often discarded without discussing or considering it. |
| | Dominant/passive<br>-There is little or no assistance provided. |
| | Expert/novice<br>  - Assistance is usually offered by the expert |

|  | (unidirectional). |
|  | - The assistance provided serves as a model for the novice. |
| Pattern of contribution | Collaborative |
|  | - Equal contribution to the task. |
|  | - If one learner's contribution is slightly higher, the active peer tries to include the other student, so both learners are involved in all parts of the task. |
|  | Dominant/dominant (cooperative) |
|  | - One peer contributes more to the task in order to dominate the interaction. |
|  | - The other peer resists domination. |
|  | Dominant/passive |
|  | - There is an unequal contribution where the dominant peer makes long monologues. |
|  | - The passive learner's participation is minimal, and it is reduced to repetitions and phatic utterances. |
|  | Expert/novice |
|  | - The expert participant contributes more to the task but tries to include the novice learner to participate in the interaction. |
| Discourse | Collaborative |
|  | - Learners produce requests, questions, explanations, repetitions, instances of collaborative completions, simultaneous talk, and use of phatic utterances. |
|  | - Use of first-person plural pronouns (we). |
|  | Dominant/dominant (cooperative) |
|  | - Low frequency of requests and explanations. |
|  | - Predominance of self-repetitions to emphasize one's point of view. |
|  | - Few instances of collaborative completions and |

| | simultaneous talk. |
| | - Predominance of first-person singular and second-person pronouns. |

| Dominant/passive | |
| --- | --- |
| | - Few requests and questions, many being self-directed. |
| | - Not many instances of collaborative completion and simultaneous talk. |
| | - Predominance of self-repetitions. |
| | - Predominance of second-person pronouns |

| Expert/novice | |
| --- | --- |
| | - Learners produce a high frequency of requests and questions that elicit lengthy explanations. |
| | - High frequency of other repetitions, collaborative completions, simultaneous talk, and phatic utterances, which represent a way of encouraging the novice to contribute to the interaction. |
| | - Production of the first-person singular is initially high, but after a while, the use of the first-person plural increases. |

*Adapted from Storch (2001) p. 279-280*

The four categories (decision-making behavior, nature of the assistance, pattern of contribution, and discourse) described above were adapted from Storch's (2001a) study, and they were imposed on the data of this investigation since they indicate the extent of mutuality and equality between peers. Damon and Phelps (1989) indicate that interaction is high on equality when both learners have an equal degree of control over the direction of the task instead of one participant succumbing to a unilateral flow of direction from the other. Mutuality is high in interaction when learners frequently get involved with each other's contributions, provide rich reciprocal

feedback, and share ideas (Damon & Phelps, 1989). The following section will provide examples from the data:

a) *Decision-making behavior:* excerpt 9 shows a dominant/dominant pair making decisions about where to sit different famous people. Students had to work together to solve the task, but they did the activity separately, and then they checked their answers (cooperative behavior). As seen in the example, each learner made different decisions about where to sit two famous artists and gave their own reasons. They keep interrupting each other from line 37 to line 40. Finally, instead of resolving the problem in this episode, Martha starts talking about other people in the task.

> *Excerpt 9* (translated from Spanish)
>
> 36   Martha: but let's see (.) next to who? (0.4) well I put Kim Kardashian and
>        Taylor Swift because, well they are (.) like to party and I don't know
> 37   Carla: I put them like this, but the thing is that they don't like each other,
>    do they? (.)  I don't know if they could-
> 38   Martha: well mmm "she is noisy, talkative and likes to dominate the
>        conversation" Kim also likes to-
> 39   Carla: yes, she's noisy-
> 40   Martha: to (.) dominate the conversation (.) Taylor Swift because, well (.)
>    they can talk (.) and  Brozo the clown, here it says he respects Carmen
>        [Aristegui]
> 41   Carla: [Aristegui]

b) Nature of assistance: Alejandro (excerpt 10) is guiding his peer on how to write the word sea in this episode. He first spells it, and his peer produces a confirmation check to verify if he wrote sea correctly. Alejandro spells it again and provides positive feedback.

> *Excerpt 10*
>
> 73   Alejandro: and sea s-e-a that's good

74    Juan: sea? ((pronounces the word as in Spanish))

75    Alejandro: s-e-a aja (*yes*) that's good mmm

c) Pattern of contribution: this category refers to the individual's contribution to the task and the learners' willingness to engage with each other's contribution (Storch, 2001). As shown in excerpt 11, there is unequal participation of the peers in the task. Alma, the dominant peer, produces a long monologue and Oscar (passive learner) just repeats a word and laughs.

*Excerpt 11*

9  Alma: Madero Park?? mmmm but well well yeah yeah (.) "piece of Hermosillo" ((she is talking to herself)) in uni dogos no hay chilli? (there isn't any chili) no, it doesn't (0.3) no? (hhh) no hay  (there isn't) ehhm (0.2) no hay comida frita ( (.) [ papas? (fries) (hhh)]

10  Oscar:  [(hhh) papas  (fries) (hhh)]

11  Alma: papas (ahhh) hay well (.) we ca:n (.) let her mmmm (0.2) what about? ohh well (.) we:: ca::n go:: to Madero (.) Park (.) a::nd (0.4) a::nd (0.2) show you (.) you ahhh!! las fiestas del Pitic!! Pitic Parties!!

d) *Discourse*: Excerpt 12 shows how both learners worked collaboratively. There is a high incidence of questions produced to decide how to go on with the task. Participants used the first-person plural pronoun *we*, which indicates mutuality between peers and joint ownership of the task (Storch, 2001).

*Excerpt 12  (translated from Spanish)*

13  C: let's see, what are we going to do? (.) we are going to create the party of what??

14  G: I don't know … mmm (.) the party of the:::: mmm

15  C: mmm, let's see what word we can take from here ((points at the textbook)) party? (0.5) party of?

13   G: we can say it's the party of the poverty [(hhh)]

14  C: [(hhh)] so, do we use that name? party of the poverty? [(hhh)] are there
      poverty parties?

15  G:          [(hhh)] maybe there are (hhh)

16  C:  (hhh) poverty es pobreza?

17  G: yes

These examples describe how each interaction across the five tasks was analyzed for patterns of interaction. In the second stage of the learners' interaction analysis, I again followed a micro-genetic approach. As previously explained, in this method, the data is analyzed *intensively* to trace the process of change. For the purposes of this thesis, in this step, the process of change involves learners creating different patterns of interaction. I also observed how these patterns developed while students worked with the tasks in the lessons.

I revisited in detail all the peer task-based interactions several times and analyzed talk as it developed utterance by utterance (Donato, 1994). The careful analysis allowed me to trace how the patterns of interaction developed. This was not an easy task since, in some cases, the pattern was difficult to classify. In order to understand the interactions better, I triangulated the assigned codes with the analytical memos and the students' interviews. This process involved going back and forth between the data to compare the coding and the notes from previous phases of analysis to the later stages. In the last part of the learner-learner interaction analysis, I will describe the process followed to check inter-rater reliability.

## 4.4 Inter-rater reliability

Once I had analyzed and identified the codes in each transcript, I asked three independent raters to double code the spoken data. The three raters are experienced language teachers who work in EFL contexts. The first rater has more than 40 years of

experience in the field and holds a master's degree in bilingual education. The second rater holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics and has ample experience in qualitative research. The third rater was a Ph.D. student who has worked for more than twelve years in the same university where the data were collected. He is familiar with the context, and he has taught the language course on several occasions. All the raters were also selected because they speak English and Spanish, and the interactions between peers occurred in both languages.

The first rater coded the language-related episodes (LREs), the second rater focused on the social discourse moves, and the third rater revised all the codes and examined the data for patterns of interaction. I first had an independent training session in which I explained the rater the study, and we practiced rating one of the transcripts together. Following this, we jointly checked the transcript and reviewed any disagreements. After that, each rater independently coded 20% of the transcripts (11 transcripts in total). Once they had finished coding the data, I calculated the inter-rater reliability for both the LREs and the social discourse moves. I compared their codes with mine using the formula presented by Miles and Huberman (1994, pg. 63), where the total number of agreements is divided by the total number of ratings. The results are shown in table 8. Then we had a second meeting where we discussed the cases of disagreement until consensus was reached regarding final coding.

Once the first and second-raters double-coded the data and consensus was reached, I had a training session with the third rater where I followed the same procedure as with the other two raters. Then the third rater coded the 56 transcripts independently. After he had coded all the data, I calculated the inter-rater reliability,

and the results are shown in Table 10. Finally, we had a meeting to discuss the analyses.

**Table 10** *Inter-rater Reliability*

|  | Rater 1 | Rater 2 | Rater 3 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percentage of data coded | 90% | 83% | 85% |

## 4.5 Interviews with participants

The interviews were used to investigate the learners' perceptions about their experience of interacting with a peer in the classroom, especially the interpersonal relationships established with their peers during the four weeks of class. The analysis of the interviews also complemented the data from the spoken interactions and expanded the information on the interpersonal relationships established by the peers.

Due to injury, I did not transcribe the interviews, but a trained research assistant worked with the 45 prompted interviews. The assistant was an M.A. student in applied linguistics in Mexico with previous transcription experience. We first had a training session where I gave her an overview of the research project and explained her the purpose of the interviews. Then I showed her an example of an interview transcript, and we discussed any questions that she had. After this training session, she independently transcribed the audios. While doing the transcriptions, the assistant contacted me any time she had questions about the audios. Once she had finished the transcriptions, she sent me the files as Word documents. Finally, I carefully checked all the interview transcriptions against the audio recordings of each interview.

In order to analyze the interviews, I adopted some of the coding methods presented by Saldaña (2016) during the first cycle of coding. I specifically used the

elemental (descriptive coding, in Vivo coding, process coding) and affective methods (emotion coding, values coding). I decided to apply these coding methods to better understand the learners' perceptions about peer interaction, their classmates, and the tasks used in the classroom.

I first started analyzing the interviews when I checked the transcripts. I did a preliminary exploratory analysis (Creswell, 2014) of all the transcripts and took notes of any interesting information that I found. I did this exploratory analysis to identify the main themes and issues emerging from the interviews. Then I uploaded the documents to ATLAS.ti software, where I coded each prompted interview. I started the analysis by extensively reading and re-reading the transcripts. I added codes using gerunds, nouns, and phrases that described each segment of the data (Saldaña, 2016). I also coded the learner's actual words that expressed their emotions and perceptions about working with the same peer during the five tasks. Then I generated a preliminary list of codes, and I grouped similar or redundant codes (Creswell, 2014). After that, I revised all the data using the coding categories previously created.

## 4.6 Researcher's observation field notes

I observed all the lessons (n=20) of the EFL course and created detailed field notes from each class. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, I created two types of field notes: seating charts and detailed field notes of the lesson and interactions between peers.

I followed the same approach as with the interviews' data. I started with a preliminary exploratory analysis (Creswell, 2014) of all the observations, and I made some written notes about interesting or important information. Then I started revising the field notes in detail and created elemental and affective codes (Saldaña, 2016). I

focused on the patterns of interaction displayed by the pairs and the way they established *comity* during the interaction

## 4.7 Data triangulation

According to Mertens (2010), "triangulation involves checking information that has been collected from different sources or methods for consistency of evidence across data" (p. 258). The final step of data analysis consisted of triangulating the information. In order to do this, I used a matrix display (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles et al., 2014). This allowed me to organize and visualize the data across the various documents (spoken interaction transcripts, interview transcripts, and classroom observation field notes). Each matrix display contains the information of one pair (see appendix F). The columns provide information about the codes found in the data (e.g., social discourse moves, LREs, etc.). The rows represent the different tasks, the interviews, and the observations. This display allowed me to make comparisons and to examine the patterns and themes found in the data closely.

## 4.8 Summary

This chapter explained the process followed to analyze each data source. It described how each research question was addressed in the spoken interactions, the interviews, and the classroom observations. The procedure for establishing the inter-rater reliability of the spoken data was also presented. Finally, the chapter illustrated the approach used for triangulating the data.

**Chapter 5: Results and Discussion for Research Question One: Establishing**

**Comity in the EFL Classroom**

The previous chapter described the approach followed for analyzing the data. It explained how each data source was examined to answer the research questions. This chapter reports the findings of the first research question, which focuses on establishing *comity* in the EFL classroom and the types of social discourse moves used by the learners. The primary data used to analyze how learners created relationships were the transcripts of the spoken interactions produced in each task. The secondary data was obtained from the interviews and classroom observations.

**5.1 Creating a space for comity in the EFL classroom**

The first aim of this study is to examine the discourse processes that learners use to engage in relationship building during peer task-based interaction. Working together with the tasks afforded learners opportunities to create a space for social interaction by getting to know each other during the course and by establishing friendly bonds. Consistent with Martin-Beltrán, Chen, Guzman, and Merrills' (2016) and Victoria's (2011) studies, social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* were identified in the data.

This chapter describes how students negotiated for *comity* and built rapport during peer task-based interaction. It provides examples from the 56 peer interaction transcripts and interviews to illustrate how the discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support,* and *social inquiry* were used when peers worked together.

**5.2 Solidarity in peer interaction**

As explained in the data analysis chapter, I coded social discursive moves for *solidarity* based on Aston's (1988, 1993) definition and Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016)

coding framework. Based on the assumption that *solidarity* is characterized by agreement routines to show acceptance and approval to what a speaker says (Aston, 1993), for this study, I expanded Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) coding of *solidarity* to include episodes where a student agreed with his/her peer on how to do the task.

The coding framework developed by Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) included instances where learners acknowledged shared experiences and struggles as language learners, children of immigrants, and members of the school community and families. However, the participants in this study are all Mexican students who have the same L1, and most of them are studying a major in the same university. Moreover, a lot of these students were also born in the same region of the country. Therefore, I encountered instances of *solidarity* where learners shared similar experiences about school, related feelings towards their hometown, and talked about common struggles as language learners.

The analysis of the pair interactions showed similarities to both Martin-Beltán et al.'s (2016) and Victoria's (2011) studies. *Solidarity* was observed as learners talked about similar experiences, interests, and feelings about features of their world in common (Aston, 1993). The following section of the chapter provides examples of *solidarity* as participants worked together with the language tasks.

**5.2.1 Solidarity: Sharing experiences in common**

According to Aston (1993), *solidarity* occurs when individuals find experiences that are common to both of them.  As learners worked in pairs throughout the course, they had the opportunity to share personal experiences with one another. Some of these were familiar to both speakers. That is the case of Martha and Carla (Pair 4), who talked about real-life situations outside the classroom where they used the foreign

language. Excerpt 13 occurred during an off-task talk episode. In this example, learners shared a similar experience of how their parents asked them to use English whenever they traveled to an English-speaking country to practice the language. *Solidarity* was observed as learners talked about a personal situation that they both had in common.

*Excerpt 13*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Carla: *desde cuando sabes inglés?* | since when do you speak English? |
| 6 | Martha: *desde chiquita, mi mamá siempre me metió a, escuelas::, mmm bilingües (0.3) pues desde chiquita, o sea le agarre amor (.) me gusta (0.2) y de que cuando vamos al otro lado, es de hay! tradúceme esto, y todos de que hay:: pregunta esto* | since I was very little, my mother always got me into bilingual schools (0.3) well since I was very little, that is, it grew on me (.) I really like it (0.2), and every time we go to the United States they tell me to translate and to ask for things |
| 7 | Carla: *y tus papás saben?* | do your parents speak the language? |
| 8 | Martha: *mi papá (.) pero:: mm para que practicáramos de pregunta tu, pregunta tu (.) además yo soy la chiquita y siempre de que mandaba a mi hermana, y mi hermana de que, hay! no que vergüenza (.) y yo toda* | my dad does, but mmm he told us to ask, so we practice (.) I am the youngest one, and he told my sister, and my sister was embarrassed (.) and I was fine |
| 9 | Carla: (hhh) | |

| 10 | Martha: *ni me entendían, pero yo quería preguntar (.) pero ahorita soy de que hay no no quiero preguntar (hhh* | they didn't understand me, but I wanted to ask (.), but now I don't want to ask anymore |
| 11 | Carla: *a mi también me hacen que pregunte (.) mis papás no saben:: y de que, de que yo hay!* (hhh) | they also tell me to ask for things (.) my parents don't speak the language so I am the one to speak |
| 12 | Martha: (hhh) | |

## 5.2.2 Solidarity: Common interests and feelings

The data suggests that *solidarity* was negotiated as learners shared common interests and feelings. This afforded a space for affective convergence, which Aston (1993) regards as an essential element of interactional speech. The result goes in hand with Victoria's (2011) findings as she discovered that affective convergence was an essential part of her participants' daily interactions.

According to Brown and Gilman (1960), *solidarity* is symmetrical, and it involves a sense of "like-mindedness or similar behavior dispositions" (p. 160). Having mutual interests allowed students to engage with one another while they were involved with the task. In the following excerpt (14), Alejandro and Juan are working with Task 1. They are talking about a beach near their hometown. Both students share their opinions and feelings about the place while agreeing with each other. This episode is highly characterized by agreement routines and shared laughter. Learners negotiated for *solidarity* when they shared similar feelings towards a landmark located near their home city. This *solidarity* contributed to the learners' mutual engagement with each other's contributions.

*Excerpt 14*

303   Juan:  they, they say there's ehh there's no place like San Carlos, the view,

       the viewpoint

304   Alejandro: yeah

305   Juan: and the spectacular desert

306   Alejandro: yeah, and you also can look there is the sea and the mountain

307   Juan: yeah, everything, the sand, everything is beautiful

308   Alejandro: yeah, I want to go now (hhh)

309   Juan: (hhh)

310   Alejandro: and! also I like that is always very clean

311   Juan: we will take you to San Carlos

312   Alejand*ro: Aja* [yes] so you can look at the best viewpoint of all, one of

the  best  viewpoints,  one  of  the  best  mmm  (0.2)  according  to  mmm  best

viewpoints in the world according to National Geographic

As the excerpt showed, sharing their cultural knowledge about their home country was

a way of engaging with one another and with the task. They confirmed each other's

shared opinions as they used phrases such as *everything is beautiful, one of the best*,

etc., to describe the landmark. Each contribution to the conversation was appreciated

and facilitated the completion of the task, as seen in lines 311-312. This interaction is

characterized by instances of *solidarity* as learners talked bout common interests and

feelings.

        In contrast to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study, where the participants had a

varied background and different first languages, the learners in this study had group

homogeneity since they shared the same nationality and first language. Therefore,

there were many instances in the data where learners expressed similar feelings and opinions towards features of their common world (Aston, 1993). *Solidarity* was observed as they typically shared their views about politics, their hometown, and school. The following two excerpts (15 and 16) are an example of this. They were taken from the second task where learners had to decide together where to sit 10 famous people. In both episodes, students shared their opinions about the President of Mexico.

*Excerpt 15*

1   Juan: we're going to do the second task.

2    Alejandro: ok I, I see you (.), so we can start thinking in these sites (.) mmm Enrique, maybe only because Enrique Peña Nieto is the President and::

3   Juan: he's a joke!

4   Alejandro: yeah! He's a joke, (hhh) ahh!

As seen in excerpt 15, both Juan and Alejandro shared similar opinions towards the president of their country, and this interaction helped them negotiate for *solidarity*. Episodes like the one presented above occurred throughout the data in the interactions between these two learners. Besides working with the tasks at hand, they also shared their feelings and opinions about their common world, thus opening a space for *comity*.

In excerpt 16, Gloria and Carlos talk about the President of their country not speaking English. *Solidarity* is observed as they share similar opinions about that issue, and both peers agree that the President should speak more languages. This particular episode is also related to instances of *solidarity* where learners acknowledge common struggles as language learners, which will be further explained in the next

section. In line 79, Carlos compares their language ability to the President's as he indicates that he speaks worse than them, and Gloria agrees by laughing.

*Excerpt 16*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss<br>Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 78 | Gloria: Peña Nieto doesn't speak English? *No sabía! Como no va a hablar?* | I didn't know that! How come he doesn't speak the language? |
| 79 | Carlos: *no, lo habla peor que nosotros* | no, he speaks worst than us |
| 80 | Gloria: (hhh) *a la torre!*<br>*no, es para que hablara unos cinco idiomas* | ((colloquial phrase similar to oh my God))<br>he should speak at least five languages |
| 81 | Carlos: (hhh) *si es cierto* | you're right |

According to Aston (1993), consociates share similar experiences and attitudes, allowing them to build *solidarity.* As shown in the examples above, *solidarity* occurs as learners shared common ground with similar experiences within their own culture.

## 5.2.3 Solidarity: Acknowledging common struggles as language learners

Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) found instances where participants in their study acknowledged common experiences and struggles as language learners, children of immigrants, and members of the school community and families. However, the participants in the current study are all Mexican students who have the same L1, and most of them are studying a major in the same university. Therefore, I encountered instances of *solidarity* in the data as learners shared experiences about school and talked about common struggles as language learners.

Solidarity was observed when learners shared their personal difficulties while studying the foreign language in the interactions of three of the 12 pairs. Pair 3, 4, and 10 expressed their struggles as language learners while working together with the tasks. Gloria and Carlos (Pair 3) produced most of their social discourse moves of solidarity from Task 3 to Task 5. Carla and Martha (Pair 4) also shared their concerns about learning the language during an off-task talk episode. Finally, Ana and Isabel (pair 10) talked about having difficulties with the language while engaged in the fifth task.

Pair 3 produced the most social discourse moves of *solidarity* related to sharing their personal struggles with the language. In Task 3, Carlos and Gloria were creating a story together based on the pictures given. They produced four instances of *solidarity*, three during on-task talk and one during off-task talk. In excerpt 17, the learners have trouble constructing the story together since they are unsure about what verbs to use and how to conjugate them. In line 90, Carlos says that the teacher probably laughs when she listens to their interactions, and Gloria agrees with her peer. This episode shows how Carlos expresses his worries about their language proficiency, and he seems concerned about what the teacher thinks when she listens to him speaking in English. Gloria agrees with her peer as she shares similar concerns.

*Excerpt 17*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 87 | Gloria: and I have? *me tuve que levantar,*? I have *para llamar a la policía* (.) and I have!, sand up? (hhh) | and I had to get up? to call the police |
| 88 | Carlos: (hhh) and I, and I: (.) take a::, | |

| | and I called? | |
|---|---|---|
| 89 | Gloria: and I:: call::ed mmm | |
| 90 | Carlos: *escuche ruido y llame a la policía* (0.2) and I called (.) a police::: (.) a police (.) station? (hhh) *la profe se ha de reir de nosotros no? cuando escucha* | I heard a noise and I called the police<br>the teacher must laugh at us, right? when she hears us |
| 91 | Gloria: *yo creo que si* (.) (hhh) (.) I called the police station and:: (0.4) when the thief (.) run out the house. | I think so, yes |

In excerpt 18, both learners (Pair 3) are trying to explain an image where a man is looking for something in the bushes. Gloria opens the episode by asking her peer about what word to use to describe the scene. Carlos offers her a word choice, and they engage in a language related episode. In lines 114-115, there is an episode of *solidarity* when learners talk about their lack of vocabulary knowledge. Carlos tells his peer that they are unable to utter a complete word in English, and Gloria agrees with him, also adding that they are a disaster. In this episode, as learners are engaged with the task and the target language, they create a space to share their common struggles.

*Excerpt 18*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss<br>Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 109 | Gloria: he::, *observó, como lo podemos poner?* | observed, how can we say this? |
| 110 | Carlos: *mirar*, look, he look? | look |
| 111 | Gloria: looked, he looked | |
| 112 | Carlos: he, he looked | |
| 113 | Gloria: *hizo una ron::da o una?* (hhh) | he walked around the |

| | | place or? |
|---|---|---|
| 114 | Carlos: (hhh) *estas viendo que no completamos una palabra normal aquí* (hhh) (.) *hizo un rondín?* (hhh) | don't you see that we can't produce a complete word here? (hhh) (.) he made a guarding tour? |
| 115 | Gloria: *si, somos un desastre* (hhh) *un rondín,* (hhh) (.) *verificó:: o no sé* | yes, we're a disaster a guarding tour (.) he checked, I don't know |

In excerpt (19) below, learners are working with Task 3, and they do not know how to say the word neighbor in English. This is another episode where Carlos and Gloria shared their common struggles as language learners. In line 132, Carlos says that they are a disgrace and his peer agrees with him. Learners opened a space to negotiate *solidarity* by agreeing with each other and by sharing laughter.

*Excerpt 19*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 128 | Carlos*: o no se, o* (.) when the police officer, take ahh, my:, my, *como se dice vecino?* | How do you say neighbor? |
| 129 | Gloria: neighbor | |
| 130 | Carlos: neighborhood? | |
| 131 | Gloria: neighborhood *es vecindario* (0.2) neighbor, neighbor, no, neig::: | *i*s neighborhood |
| 132 | Carlos: (hhh) *somos una desgracia no*? (hhh) | we are a disgrace |
| 133 | Gloria: *si ya sé* (hhh) *pues ponle vecino en español* (hhh) | I know, well, let's just write neighbor in Spanish. |

Finally, the last excerpt (20) was taken from an off-task talk episode once the learners had finished the task, and their other classmates were sharing their stories. Carlos tells Gloria that their classmates will hear their mistakes, but he uses the word *horro*rs instead of mistakes to emphasize that they have problems with the language. His peer agrees with him and adds that all of the other students will laugh at them for their errors. In this episode, both learners are concerned about their language knowledge and how the rest of the class will perceive their proficiency. In lines 259-260, Carlos and Gloria negotiate *solidarity* as they share and acknowledge each other's fears.

*Excerpt 20*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 259 | Carlos: uhh! (hhh) *van a salir todos nuestros horrores ortográficos ahí no*? | All of our spelling horrors will be seen, right? |
| 260 | Gloria: *si, se van a reír todos* | yes, everybody is going to laugh |

The interactions between Carlos and Gloria were characterized by a shared recognition of their difficulties as language learners. The data seems to suggest that students felt they could trust each other, and they created an affective bond to the point that they could feel safe to express their struggles without being afraid of ridicule or criticism from their peers.

*Solidarity* was observed in Martha and Carla's interactions (Pair 4) as they shared their difficulties in the foreign language with one another. Before engaging in task 4, they started their interaction by sharing how they felt about using English. Carla asked Martha if she was embarrassed about being recorded, and she said that she was, especially when she had to speak in English. In line 3, Carla expressed similar concerns regarding the use of the foreign language. Both learners admitted feeling uncomfortable about speaking in the L2.

*Excerpt 21*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Carla: *te da vergüenza que te graben?* | Are you embarrassed to be recorded? ((smiles nervously)) |
| 2 | Martha: *si, si me da vergüenza* (0.30) *me da mucha vergüenza hablarlo* | yes, yes I'm really embarrassed, I'm really embarrassed to speak in English |
| 3 | Carla: *ahh, ya se, a mi también* | I know, me too |
| 4 | Martha: *aja, me da mucha vergüenza, o sea si lo entiendo y el escribirlo, pero me da mucha vergüenza hablarlo a mi si me gusta mucho el inglés* (0.5) *pero no se me quita la vergüenza* | yes, I'm really embarrassed, I understand it, but I am really embarrassed to speak it, I really like it, but I am still embarrassed |

In Task 5, Ana and Isabel (pair 10) were creating a political campaign together. Isabel started the episode by telling Ana they should continue with the solutions to the problems. Then Ana said in both Spanish and English that it was very hard to explain the solution in English, and her peer agreed by replying that the language is difficult.

*Excerpt 22*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 95 | Isabel: in::security:: (0.15) *ahora si la solución no*? | now the solution, right? |
| 96 | Ana: *aja* (0.20) *esta muy difícil,* very hard (hhh) | yes, it is very difficult |
| 97 | Isabel: *si::, esta difícil en Inglés::* | Yes, English is difficult |

| | (0.10) *en la primera que pusimos?* Our cities are being damaged as a result of the pollution? | what did we write in the first one? |

### 5.2.4 Solidarity: Agreement routines to complete the task

*Solidarity* is highly characterized by agreement routines (Aston, 1993). For this study, I expanded both Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *solidarity* and Martin- Beltrán et al.'s (2016) coding scheme for *solidarity* to include instances where learners agreed with one another on how to go over the task and how to accomplish it. I decided to include these instances of agreement since they represented acceptance and approval of the partner's contribution to the task and promoted *solidarity* among peers. *Solidarity* was observed in all the pairs while learners worked together solving the tasks. Most of the students complied with one another when suggestions were offered, and whenever conflict emerged, they looked for solutions.

Excerpts 23 and 24 are two examples from the data that illustrate how learners agreed with one another on how to do the task, what to include in it, and how to solve it. Example 23 was produced by Ricardo and Gabriela (Pair 8) as they worked with Task 5. Ricardo made a suggestion to the poster they were creating together, and Gabriela agreed with his ideas and also proposed what color to use in the poster. The episode ends with Ricardo's approval of Gabriela's suggestion.

*Excerpt 23*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | Ricardo:  of:: Sonora, governor of Sonora (1:42) *voy que poner algo así, mira,* a vote for (.) Regina is a vote for | I am going to put something like this, look |

| | improving public services to the citizens of Sonora | |
|----|------|------|
| 24 | Gabriela: ok (.) you're right (.) *lo voy a poner con otro color*, eh? | I am going to put it with another color, right? |
| 25 | Ricardo:  *Aja* | yes |

Excerpt 24 was produced by Patty and Marcos (Pair 7) during Task 1.  In this example, the learners made suggestions to the joint activity and agreed with one another. *Solidarity* was observed in the interaction as learners agreed with one another and mutually engaged with each other's contribution to the task.

*Excerpt 24*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 63 | Patty: what do you think? for the first day (.) I think so- (.) we we:: should specify that she stay in the hotel in the center of Hermosillo or? it's a central place to:: mm she: can stay:: in the cen:ter center of Hermosillo | |
| 64 | Marcos:  Yeah, and she can finish the first day eating. | |
| 65 | Patty: ok!, ahh! oh, dinner yeah she could go to dinner to:: *dog-* | hot dogs |
| 66 | Marco: *dogos! Ahh, exacto* | hot dogs! ahh exactly |

Episodes like the ones presented above (23 and 24) occurred throughout the data within the twelve pairs. All the learners were able to accomplish the tasks together. Some of the pairs worked more collaboratively than others, but overall they all completed the five tasks.

**5.2.5 Summary: Solidarity to promote comity**

The examples presented above showed how learners used discursive moves of *solidarity* during peer task-based interaction. Learners negotiated *solidarity* in different ways: by sharing common interests, feelings, and opinions, by acknowledging similar struggles as language learners, and by agreeing with each other on how to do the task. The results are consistent with those of other studies that focused on relationship building strategies used by learners in the classroom (Leslie, 2015; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Victoria, 2011). Although both Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) and Victoria's (2011) research were conducted in contexts where participants did not share the same L1 and came from different backgrounds, this study found similarities in the way students used discursive moves of *solidarity*.

Discursive moves of *solidarity* were used when learners shared similar feelings, attitudes, and interests. This result was also found in both Victoria's and Leslie's data. Students created an affective convergence (Aston, 1993) that helped them build friendly relationships and establish group membership. As Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) explain, *solidarity* is connected to common affiliations in the classroom (p. 331). In this study, learners' sharing similar backgrounds contributed to *solidarity* since they talked about experiences in common, places they had visited, food they liked, etc., from their own context.

Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) found that learners used discourse to negotiate *solidarity* by acknowledging common struggles as language learners and as children of immigrants. In this study, *solidarity* was observed in peer interaction as learners shared similar difficulties when learning and using the foreign language in the classroom, particularly in the case of Carlos and Gloria. (Pair 3). Three out of 12 pairs

showed instances where students talked about their problems with the L2 and their fears when producing it either by speaking or writing. For example, Martha and Carla admitted feeling embarrassed when they had to speak in English. Carlos and Gloria also shared with each other that they were afraid of being ridiculed in front of the class for not speaking English well. In these cases, learners felt that they could trust their peers to the extent that they could express their fears and weaknesses about using the foreign language, and *solidarity* was observed as peers shared their struggles as language learners. The contrasting contexts between this study and Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) may explain the different ways in which *solidarity* occurred in the interactions. The participants in this research were all Mexican students with the same L1 and similar backgrounds. In contrast, the participants in their investigation were originally from other places outside the United States and spoke different first languages.

Therefore, besides students acknowledging common struggles as language learners, they also shared their experiences of being children of immigrants. In the present study, the learners focused on similar difficulties when learning and using the language, but *solidarity* was observed when students shared experiences in common in their own context. Finally, as I previously explained I expanded the notion of *solidarity* to include instances where learners reached agreement on how to do the task. These episodes were common in the interactions as students accomplished the tasks together.

## 5.3 Support in peer interaction

*Support* involves demonstrating affiliation and sympathy for others. Aston (1993) explains that *support* can be demonstrated when a person shows appreciation for the

speaker's contribution to the discourse. For instance, interlocutors use different strategies such as providing compliments and apologies, laughing at a joke, or showing appropriate emotions to anecdotes.

Instances of *support* were observed in the data when learners allowed or encouraged their peers to have a turn in the interaction or to continue speaking and when they provided encouragement or positive feedback to the partner's contribution to the task. Students also showed *support* when they constructed language together (Foster & Ohta, 2005; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016;) by offering ideas to help each other finish their sentences and helped each other solve linguistic problems. Finally, I found instances of *support* in the interactions whenever learners recognized the peer's language expertise, provided compliments, and apologized.

### 5.3.1 Encouraging and allowing peers to contribute to the interaction

Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study, the discourse moves of *support* were used as a way to encourage the peer's participation and use of the foreign language in this investigation. Students used discursive moves of *support* as a way of encouraging their classmates to participate in the conversation. A supportive relationship provided both peers the opportunity to engage in the task and with each other's contribution to the interaction.

In the following excerpt (25), Isabel and Ana are working with Task 1. In this example, *support* is observed as both learners allowed each other to participate in the interaction. Isabel starts the episode by asking her peer's suggestions for the task. By doing this, Isabel is not dominating the conversation but rather including her peer in the interaction. In this example, the learners supported each other as they solved the task together and allowed the peer to take a conversational turn.

*Excerpt 25*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 68 | Isabel: on the second day::? | |
| 69 | Ana: ahh! where to stay? (.) in the hotel | |
| 70 | Isabel: ok, eh *a ver* "first, pick up Wendy at the airport and go to breakfast." | let's see |
| 71 | Ana: ehh mmm *ella estará en hotel o con nosotros? en hotel verdad? para mas* (.) *mas* (.) in a good hotel to spend the (.) the (.) the [money] | will she be at the hotel or with us? at the hotel right? to have more, more |
| 72 | Isabel: [money] *en que hotel?* (.) *uno que esté por el centro?* | which hotel? one that is by the city center |
| 73 | Ana: mmm *pues ya ves que por el Kino no?* | well, you see the ones by Kino, right? |
| 74 | Isabel: *si esos como que mas buenos* | yes, those are better |
| 75 | Ana: *y otro esta cerca del aeropuerto (.) en cualquiera* | and another is near he airport (.) it can be any |
| 76 | Isabel: *yo creo que en el del centro* | I think the one in the city center |
| 77 | Ana: ok | |
| 78 | Isabel: *sabe como se llama* | do you know the hotel's name? |
| 79 | Ana: ehh, no | |
| 80 | Isabel: *si creo que se llama Kino no?* | I think its name is Kino, right? |
| 81 | Ana: Kino? (.) *y ahh por mi* (.) Ibis isn't (.) a good (.) a good hotel (.) I don't like it | and ahh for me |

| 82 | Isabel: *aja* (.) *el del centro?* | the one in the city center |
| 83 | Ana: *si* | Yes |
| 84 | Isabel: *Kino se llama el hotel* | Kino is the name of the hotel |
| 85 | Ana: *si, hotel Kino, aja* | yes, Kino hotel, yes |

Allowing a peer to have a turn in the conversation and encouraging him/her to participate instead of monopolizing the interaction was a way in which students expressed *support* to one another. This helped them to build *comity* in the classroom. Such turns can potentially welcome opportunities for the partner to participate and thus strengthen their friendly relationship. However, if the opposite occurred, this could discourage a friendly relationship.

In the case of Ana and Isabel, they exhibited a collaborative behavior every time they worked together. This relates to the patterns of interaction established by Storch (2001) as learners either collaborated in the interaction or tended to dominate or assume a passive role when working in pairs. Overall, the learners in this study created different patterns of interaction throughout the language course, and this will be further explained in the following chapter.

## 5.3.2 Providing encouragement and positive feedback

Discursive moves of *support* were observed as learners provided encouragement and positive feedback. Most of the pairs used social discursive moves of *support* to create a relationship of caring for one another. They uttered phrases such as *that's good/correct*, *I like it*, *it's nice* and *very good* to show appreciation and encouragement to their peer's contribution and to the outcome of the shared task.

The following are examples from the data that illustrate how learners used discursive moves of *support* to encourage each other. Pair 5 produced both of the

following excerpts (26 and 27). The first one was taken from Task 4 and the second one from the fifth task. Excerpt 26 occurred during an off-task talk episode when all the pairs had finished the activity. In this example, learners talked about the role-play they presented in front of the whole class.

*Excerpt 26*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 273 | Teacher:  how did he solve the problem? another pair, [to pass to] the front | |
| 273 | Luis:                    [pasamos?] | |
| 274 | Alberto:  yeah! (0.2) hay Dios! | Ohh my God ((both students pass to the front to present their role-play)) |
| 275 | Luis:  good one! | ((referring to the role-play they had presented)) |
| 276 | Alberto:  I know, told ya (0.30) Luis and Alberto *otra vez*! *bien!* | Again! good! |

In this episode, Luis provided positive feedback to the joint role-play by using the phrase *good one*. Then in line 277, Alberto also acknowledged that they worked well together. The example illustrated how learners used discourse to express *support*. Both Luis and Alberto showed appreciation for the joint contribution to the task, and they felt excited about presenting what they had done together to the other students.

Excerpt 27 was taken from Task 5, where students created a political campaign. Alberto and Luis (Pair 5) were talking about the candidate's name and logo. Luis showed appreciation for his peer's contribution to the task as he praised Alberto's

logo suggestion for the campaign. Approving the logo was a way of showing *support* to the peer, which helped strengthen their relationship in the classroom.

*Excerpt 27*

302   Alberto: that's your nickname? LL?

303   Luis: yeah (.) ahh, that's nice! I like this one

304   Alberto: it's your logo

305   Luis: nice!

These two excerpts illustrate how learners in Pair 5 worked together during the language course. They had a similar behavior from Task 1 until the end of the course. Both Alberto and Luis actively collaborated in every task, and they used discourse to encourage each other; hence *support* was expressed in every interaction. During the interview, participants explained that they had known each other before taking the English class. They had seen each other since high school, but Alberto went to school in the morning and Luis in the afternoon. Now in the university, they had been studying together from the first semester. When interviewed, both learners expressed that knowing each other had helped them work together with the tasks since they felt comfortable about contributing to the interaction.

*Excerpt 28: Interview with Alberto*

Interviewer: How was your experience mmm doing the activity and working with him?

Alberto: *it was:: nice because, well I know him (.) I, I didn't have any trouble (.) working with him and (.) he knows how to speak English well too (.) and he:: (.) he express what he wants to say properly, you know? in a good way (.) it was nice, it was easy too*

Interviewer: ok, why do you think it was it easy?

Alberto: *because we know each other so:: we:: know what exactly to <u>say</u> to (.) to stay comfortable*

Both Alberto and Luis seemed confident about expressing *support* to each other by providing encouragement and positive feedback. The data suggest that the participants' shared histories contributed to creating supportive relationships. As Alberto explained in the interview knowing his partner made their interaction easier. This finding is similar to Philp and Mackey (2010), as they noticed that the learners' shared histories influenced "how much enjoyment they got out of task-based interaction" (p. 227).

Excerpt 29 shows Juan and Alejandro working on the third task. They are creating a story together based on the pictures. In this episode, Alejandro expresses appreciation for the joint accomplishment of the task. He provides positive feedback as he says that the story they are creating can be easily understood. Alejandro's discourse was a way of establishing *support* for their collaborative work.

*Excerpt 29*

180 Juan: she imagined (.) that  [it was ]

181 Alejandro:                    [it was] a thief

182 Juan: *Aja* [yes] (0.3) so: (0.2) she: (.) can't sleep (0.2) then, she took the

   phone and called her friend

183 Alejandro: *Aja* [yes] (0.4) mmm yeah, yeah (.) is, is making sense, I like it

In the following episode (30), Marcos and Patty are working with Task 1. Marcos mispronounces the word *wake,* so his peer produces a clarification request because she did not understand what he said. Marcos repeats the mispronounced word and uses his

L1 to explain it. Patty then provides a recast with the correct pronunciation, and he apologizes for the mistake.  Finally, Patty uses discursive moves of *support* to tell her peer not to worry about the error. In this way, she demonstrated that she cares for her peer since instead of criticizing him for the mispronounced word, she comforts him.

*Excerpt 30*

74  Marcos: ahh she will [wak], [wak] up ((mispronounces the words wake up)) early morning for the breakfast and:: next she going to zoologic park for example

75  Patty: ok she:: she what?

76  Marcos: she [wak] up ((mispronounces the words wake up)) *levantarse temprano* [waks] up early

77  Patty: ahh! wakes up early

78  Marcos: (hhh) perdón (.) sorry

79  Patty: ok, it's ok, don't worry ((both smile)) she wa::ke wake up: early:

This final episode (excerpt 31) shows Carlos and Gloria working with the fourth task. Carlos has trouble deciding which auxiliary verb to use. Then at the end of his turn, he produces the correct structure (*it doesn't cool*) and uses metalanguage to explain his decision. However, he is doubtful about his answer and asks Gloria if he is correct, to which she responds with positive feedback.

*Excerpt 31*

94  C: I forgot (.) say ehhh, [inaudible] the refrigerator, the refrigerator (.) Don't, don't cool? *no enfría?* [doesn't cool] don't cool? no? ahh doesn't cool *porque es el* [because is it], o *estoy mal?* [or am I wrong?]

95  G: *Esta bien* [it's correct]

### 5.3.3 Constructing language together: Helping each other

Following Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) investigation, in this study, I argue that *support* also occurs when learners construct language together. Clancy & McCarthy (2014) view co-constructions as conversational episodes where a second speaker jointly creates utterances "across turn-boundaries, in collaboration with a previous speaker or speakers" (p. 431). As mentioned in Chapter 4, this occurred in two ways: (1) helping the peer finish a sentence by offering ideas or (2) helping the peer by providing word choices, repairing syntax, recasting, and explaining a grammatical, lexical, or phonological LRE. Since the second way of co-constructions is a kind of LRE, these episodes will not be included statistically as a predictor of an LRE in chapter 7. However, they will only be used to illustrate how learners supported each other when they encountered language problems. This next part will provide examples from the data where learners expressed support as they co-constructed language.

*Helping the peer finish a sentence by offering ideas*

In excerpt 32, Alma and Oscar are working with the first task (visiting Hermosillo), and they are writing the itinerary together. At the beginning of the episode, Alma starts writing the description of the itinerary, and in line 150 her peer helps her complete the sentence suggesting the utterance *for your visit?*. Then again in line 154, Oscar aids his peer by offering word choices. Finally the episode ends with a lexical LRE when Alma asks her peer how to say *itinerario* in English, and Oscar provides the right word. As observed in excerpt 32, learners expressed *support* by offering ideas and word choices to help the peers finish their utterances.

*Excerpt 32*

149  A: ok hi Wendy, we are so excited so: ex::cited to ha::ve:::

150  O: for your visit?

151  A: ahh for your visit (0.2) we we wa::nt to sho::w you all

152  O: all Hermosillo or all the Hermosillo

153  A: Hermosillo's beauties

154  O: places?

155  A: yes.. Hermosillo's places and ha::ve a lot of fun o::f fu:::n with you: and we already al:ready ehh wr:ti a bitacora no? era itinerario? como se dice itinerario?

156  O: itinerary itinerary

*Helping a peer with grammar problems*

*Support* was expressed as learners helped a peer solve a language problem when constructing language together. This next episode (excerpt 33) shows how Sarah and Flora are engaged in a grammatical LRE. Both learners are creating a role-play (Task 4). The students discuss the conjugation of the verb *need* since Sarah is confused about when to add the morpheme –s. Flora helps her peer by explaining the difference between both sentences (*the fan blade needs to be adjusted and the walls need to be painted*) and tells her partner that the walls are plural and the fan is singular, so the verb needs the letter –s. Once Sarah understands her peer's explanation, she thanks her, and they continue working. In this way, Sarah expressed appreciation for her classmate's help when she needed it.

*Excerpt 33*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 159 | Sarah:  fa::n::: (.) bla:::de: (.) *se desajustó?* | It got loose? |
| 160 | Flora:  ahh, o (.) *Estaba pensando en* | I was thinking about |

|     |                                                                 |                                   |
| --- | --------------------------------------------------------------- | --------------------------------- |
|     | *decir,* needs to be adjusted, like, *necesito que lo ajusten,* needs (.) needs to be adjusted | saying it needs to be adjusted |
| 161 | Sarah: *Ahora si s?*                                            | with –s now?                      |
| 162 | Flora: *Aja*                                                    | Yes                               |
| 163 | Sarah: *aunque le estamos poniendo fan blade?*                 | even if we're putting fan blade?  |
| 164 | Flora: *según yo si es con s aquí*                             | I think it is with –s here        |
| 165 | Sarah: *porque aquí también le pusimos walls y no le pusimos –s* | because here we put the walls and we didn't put the –s |
| 166 | Flora: *Pero es que walls esta en plural pues (.) pero es que, es una cosa,* it's singular and you need to put –s | but walls is in plural, well (.) but it is, it is one thing |
| 167 | Sarah: ahh okay (.) needs::: (.) thank you, ok                 |                                   |

Both Sarah and Flora constantly expressed *support* in their interactions as they helped each other solve any grammatical or lexical problems and showed appreciation for the assistance. The data from the classroom observations, interviews, and audio transcripts suggests that the peers had established a friendly relationship in the language classroom, as it will be further explained in the next chapter. Learners felt comfortable enough with each other to the point that they could correct the peer or helped them solve any language difficulties without feeling embarrassed. When I interviewed Flora and Sarah, they both expressed feeling comfortable about helping a peer solve linguistic problems. For instance, Flora explained that it was really gratifying when she was able to explain either grammar or vocabulary in English to her peer since she wants to become a teacher (Excerpt 34).

| **Original utterance** | **English Gloss** |
|---|---|
| Entrevistador: *veo que tu le ayudaste con este problema a Sarah, le ayudaste en muchas ocasiones, es lo que más me fijo, como trabajan ustedes, ¿cómo se, cómo te sentiste trabajando con ella?,* | Interviewer: I noticed that you helped your peer with this problem; you helped her several times, eh.. how do you work together? How did you feel when you work with her? |
| Flora: *pues eh... me gusta trabajar con las personas no? me siento bien, porque es que estoy estudiando para convertirme en maestra también de mi carrera ¿no? y porque me gusta mucho explicar pues, y ya cuando veo que me entienden pues, es reward, es rewarding.* | well, ehh I like working with people, right? I feel fine because I am studying to become a teacher too in my area, right? and because I really like to explain, well and when I see that they understand, it is reward, it is rewarding. |

*Helping a peer solve vocabulary problems*

Learners also supported their peers by providing assistance to solve lexical problems. The examples in this section illustrate how *support* was expressed between students. Excerpt 35 was taken from Task 3 when Gustavo and Andrea (Pair 8) were creating a story together by describing the images. Gustavo used the phrase *it's raining cats and dogs,* but the peer did not understand, so she produced a clarification request. Gustavo then explained the meaning of the phrase by using the L1 and indicated that the teacher had previously mentioned it in class. In line 210, Andrea produced a confirmation check, but she inverted the order of the phrase. Gustavo corrected her and explained that the teacher had written it that way on the board. Finally, Andrea repeated the phrase and used it in a complete sentence.

*Excerpt 35*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 203 | Gustavo: *y luego?* | And then? |
| 204 | Andrea: he took his bike and started raining | |
| 205 | Gustavo: it started raining cats and dogs | |
| 206 | Andrea: what? | |
| 207 | Gustavo: cats and dogs (.) *lo escribió hace rato* | She ((the teacher)) wrote it a while ago |
| 208 | Andrea: cuál? | Which one? |
| 209 | Gustavo: *ehh, empezó a llover perros y gatos, por que dijo empezó a llover a cantaros dijo en inglés se dice cats and dogs o sea empezó a llover, pero Mucho* | it started raining cats and dogs because it started to rain very hard, she explained that in English you say cats and dogs meaning that it started to rain, but very hard |
| 210 | Andrea: it started raining dogs and cats? | |
| 211 | Gustavo: cats and dogs, *así lo escribió ella* | that's how she ((the teacher)) wrote it |
| 212 | Andrea: cats and dogs, it started raining cats and dogs | |

In excerpt 36, Juan and Alberto (Pair 5) were also working with the third task. Alberto started telling the story, and he stopped to ask his peer if he knew the meaning of the word bush. Juan did not know the answer, so Alberto explained it by translating it to the L1.

*Excerpt 36*

24  Alberto: Michael, Michael (0.2) Mickey (0.14) it was raining (.) he:::

 noticed something in the bush, do you know what a bush is? :bush?

25  Juan: bush? Mmm, what does it mean?

26  Alberto: *arbusto* [bush] (0.3) the bushes (0.3) all right

27  Juan: mmm, so next (.) he found a, a little kitty in the bushes

A supportive environment offered a safe space where learners could ask questions to their peers and receive help when needed. In the case of Pair 5, Alberto was the one who provided assistance by explaining to Juan the meaning of the word, and then they continued constructing the sentences together.

Excerpt 37 was taken from Task 1, where Isabel and Ana (pair 10) discussed the meaning of the word *landmark*. Ana asked her peer if she remembered the special places in the city (landmarks), but Isabel could not recall the name either. Once Ana found the vocabulary word she was looking for, she explained it to her peer.

*Excerpt 37*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 35 | Isabel: *ahh ok turibus y ya ahi se veria para donde* | ok, touristic bus, and then we can see where to go |
| 36 | Ana: *porque hay puntos especiales no? (.)* se llama:: mmm *te acuerdas (.) de acuerdo con el* (.) the special points (.) do you remember the special points to visit? and ehh headline?? (0.3) the principal points? *los representativos* (.) los, los (.) *te acuerdas? los lugares representativos les llaman::?* | because there are special points, right? The name is::  do you remember? according to (.) The typical places (.) the, the (.) do you remember? the typical places are |

| | | called? |
|---|---|---|
| 37 | Isabel: *ahh es cierto* | that's right |
| 38 | Ana: *cuando vimos el video, te acuerdas? Que eran los diez no?* | when we saw the video, do you remember? That there were ten, right? |
| 39 | Isabel: *si* (.) sightseeing? | yes |
| 40 | Ana: sightseeing *es turistear pero:: los puntos eran (.) como, como un headline o algo así (.)* aquí yo creo que apunte | sightseeing means to tour but:: the points were (.) like, like a headline or something like that (.) I think I wrote it down ((she starts looking for the word in her notebook)) |
| 41 | Isabel: qué palabra? | which word? |
| 42 | Ana: mmm landmark! *el* landmark, *aja* | the landmark, yes ((found the word in her notebook)) |
| 43 | Isabel: *que es eso?* | what's that? |
| 44 | Ana: *estos son los puntos principals (.)* sightseeing, the landmarks | these are the main points |

In the interviews both Ana and Isabel explained feeling comfortable about helping each other when they worked together. Ana mentioned that she enjoyed working with Isabel because she thought that they had the same English level. She felt relaxed and confident enough to ask for help or offer it whenever they encountered language difficulties.

*Excerpt 38*

| Original utterance | English Gloss |
|---|---|
| Interviewer: *como te has sentido trabajando con ella?* | how have you felt working with her? |
| Ana: *con Isabel me siento así mas mmm relajada porque pienso que mas o menos* | With Isabel, I feel like more mmm relaxed because I think we are more less |

| | |
|---|---|
| *estamos en el mismo nivel y, y nos entendemos mas, me hace sentir así mas, mas tranquila (.) le pregunto si tengo alguna duda, estamos a la mano, oye:: como dices esto? o revisarme esto, yo me siento así con la confianza de preguntarle para que me ayude no?* | at the same level, and we understand each other, and she makes me feel like more, more calm (.) I asked her if I have a doubt we are available, hey, how do you say this? or check this, I feel like that, with enough confidence to ask her, so she can help me, right |

When I interviewed Isabel (excerpt 39), she mentioned that Ana had a higher English level, and she liked to be corrected by her partner. She also explained that when it was her turn to correct her peer, she felt good about helping others.

*Excerpt 39*

| Original utterance | English Gloss |
|---|---|
| Interviewer: *¿cómo te has sentido trabajando con Ana?* | how have you felt working with Ana? |
| Isabel: *pues, Ana sabe más inglés, entonces me ayuda y yo ya ahí* | well, Ana knows more English so she helps me and I am there |
| Interviewer: *ok ¿cómo te sientes cuando te ayuda o cuando te corrige?* | how do you feel when she helps you or corrects you? |
| Isabel: *pues bien… me gusta que me corrijan y le tengo confianza* | well, fine… I like to be corrected, and I trust her |
| Interviewer: *Ah, ok, perfecto ¿y te ha tocado corregirla a ti alguna vez?* | ah ok, perfect, and have you ever had to correct her? |
| Isabel: *si* | Yes |
| Interviewer: *¿y cómo sientes cuando corriges?* | and how do you feel when you correct her? |
| Isabel: *pues me siento bien también de ayudar a alguien más* | well, I also feel good about helping someone else |
| Interviewer: *¿cuál es tu opinión entonces de que ya sea te corrijan o tu corrijas?* | so what's your opinion about being corrected or correcting someone? |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Isabel: *estoy muy de acuerdo porque pues de eso se trata de corregirnos y ayudarnos para aprender...* | I agree with that because that's what it's all about correcting each other and helping each other so we can learn | |

As seen in the episodes from the interactions and the interviews, Ana and Isabel supported each other by helping the peer whenever they encountered linguistic difficulties. They mentioned that they felt relaxed and comfortable asking their peer for help or about being corrected. This is similar to Philp and Mackey's (2010) study where the participants explained feeling relaxed and less concerned about taking risks with the language when they worked with peers in small groups. Similar to the present study, Martin-Belrán et al. (2016) found that when learners used discourse to express *support*, they created a safe space where they could take risks with the language.

*Establishing support by providing recasts*

Recasting was another way of expressing *support* to the peer (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). Although recasts were not very common in the data, some learners did provide recasts to their peers whenever they noticed a grammatical, lexical, or phonological mistake. Eight of the 12 pairs produced recasts during the interactions.

Excerpt 40 shows Martha and Carla creating a role-play in task four. In line 113, Carla made a grammatical error by saying *there a hole*, and Martha provided a recast in line 114 with the correct structure and finished Carla's sentence.

*Excerpt 40*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 110 | Martha: *hay que poner de que* (.) the air conditioner doesn't works (sic), because (.) the air conditioner, *como se dice:?* the air conditioner, not works | let's say that  how do you say? |

| | (sic) in the kitchen because the roof, *como que el techo esta [inaudible] y hace que no se refresque esa area o algo así* | it's like the roof is [inaudible] and it does not cool that area or something like that |
|---|---|---|
| 111 | Carla: the roo::f has a hole? | |
| 112 | Martha: o, the kitchen, do not (.) maintain | |
| 113 | Carla: the kitchen roof (.) *podemos poner de que::* there a hole | we can say that |
| 114 | Martha: there's a hole in the kitchen roof | |
| 115 | Carla: *andale*, in the kitchen roof | that's right |
| 116 | Martha: there:: is:: a:: (.) hole (.) in the kitchen roof | |

In excerpt 40, Martha expressed *support* to her peer by providing a recast and by completing her sentence. This result goes in accordance with Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) data where they encountered similar instances of peers supporting each other.

Excerpt 41 shows another example of *support* from the data. While Patty and Marcos were creating a role-play, Marcos made a suggestion with an incorrect conjugation of the verb. Patty then provided a recast with the correct form, and Marcos uses it in the next turn.

*Excerpt 41*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | Patty: aja (.) has a leak (.) the toilet has a leak | yes |
| 10 | Marcos: it's ok | |

| 11 | Patty: ok, ok | |
| 12 | Marcos: *le podemos poner* it need | we can put |
| 13 | Patty: mmm *Aja*, it needs, it needs | yes |
| 14 | Marcos: needs a, repair | |
| 15 | Patty: oh, yes, that's ok | |

### 5.3.4 Expressing support by recognizing the peer's language expertise

The data showed that the learners also expressed *support* by providing compliments to their peers and recognizing their linguistic expertise. Excerpts 42 and 43 are examples of this supportive discourse. In excerpt 42, Oscar and Alma were working on the third task. Alma provided a compliment by saying that he was better than her when organizing the sentences.

*Excerpt 42*

109   O: ok, (hhh) ok (0.4) Claudia wake up at 8 (.) in the morning and had breakfast at 9 in the morning (.) after that she decided: go, go to, to run in the park, suddenly, it rained, it rained, so Claudia got wet while she jogged? jog?

110   A: mmm, you have reason, you're better than me::, in, in the order of the words, yeah! (hhh)

Excerpt 43 was taken from the interaction between Alberto and Luis (Pair 5) while they were engaged in the first task. Luis expressed *support* to his peer as he recognized his linguistic expertise. He did this by using discourse to praise Alberto's lexical choice and told him that his language level was advanced because he included the connector *first of all* in the task.

*Excerpt 43*

38  A: first of all

39  L: Ohh! fancy connector (hhh)

40  A: (hhh) first of all

41  L: first of all (.) that's just like upgrade your level of English, like first of all

42  A: first of all I or we?

43  L: we'll take her

**5.3.5 Summary of supportive discourse moves to build comity**

The analysis of the peer interactions showed that learners expressed *support* in different ways. Based on the literature about relationship building (Aston, 1988, 1993; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016) and the data from the study, I argue that using language to express *support* helped the students to build *comity* in the classroom.

The data showed that learners supported each other when they encouraged their peers to participate in the interaction by asking them for suggestions to the task and allowing them to have a turn in the conversation. Participating in the interactions provided the students with more opportunities to focus on the foreign language and to use it in the classroom (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). This opened a space for learners to express *support* to their peers by helping them resolve any language difficulties or by completing their sentences as they offered word choices. Encouragement, positive feedback, and recognition of the peer's language expertise were also found to promote *support* among learners. They represented a way of showing appreciation for their peers' contribution to the interaction. Similar to Victoria (2011), *support* required personal involvement and a relationship of caring between peers, as shown in the excerpts from the interviews and classroom interactions. All the discourse moves that

students used in the conversations to express *support* helped them build and maintain *comity* throughout the language course, as it will be further explained in the next chapter.

The data also suggests that when learners used social discourse moves to express *support*, they created a more collaborative relationship (Storch, 2001), as it was the case with most of the pairs presented above. This collaborative behavior is believed to be more conducive to language learning (Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Watanabe & Swain, 2007) since peers are offered with more opportunities to use the language. This issue will be further discussed in the subsequent two chapters.

## 5.4 Social inquiry

*Social inquiry* allowed learners to get to know each other when working together with the tasks or before/after engaging in task-based interaction. Some pairs used *social inquiry* to open a conversation and start working with the task. Others asked questions to each other while they were solving the tasks, and most of the *social inquiry* episodes occurred when students had finished the activity.

Students asked questions about their academic life, their family, and other activities outside school. Social inquiry offered learners the opportunity to build peer relationships during the course. In some cases, engaging in *social inquiry* provided further occasions for *solidarity* and support between peers.

Excerpt 44 occurred during an off-task talk episode before Martha and Carla started working with Task 4. Martha asked her peer about her age and told her that she looked younger. Her peer also inquired about Martha's age, and she enthusiastically exclaimed that she was really young. Then they continue talking about their classmates' age. In line 13, Carla told her peer about another classmate (Carlos) who

was her own age, and she mentioned that she had studied with him in the same elementary school. Carlos joined the interaction and joked, mentioning that she said she was 24. The three learners laughed, and Carla apologized, self-corrected, and said that she was 24. Then both Carla and Martha started working together with the task by arranging the images of the story. Carla described the story, and Martha mentioned that she did not understand the pictures and provided another suggestion to which her peer agreed. In this episode, engaging in *social inquiry* was a way of establishing rapport between peers, which in turn opened a space to start the task-based interaction.

*Excerpt 44*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Martha: *cuantos años tienes? siento que te ves bien Chiquita* | how old are you? I feel that you look very young |
| 3 | Carla: (hhh) *treinta y uno* | thirty-one |
| 4 | Martha: *treinta y uno? pero estas mas como ella, así super chiquita también* | thirty one? but you look more like her, like that very young too |
| 5 | Carla: *y tu cuantos tienes?* | how old are you? |
| 6 | Martha: veinte | twenty |
| 7 | Carla: *hay!! chiquitita::!* | very young! |
| 8 | Martha: *si* | yes |
| 9 | Carla: *y ella también Gloria? también-* | and is she also the same age, Gloria? |
| 10 | Martha: *veinti:: seis creo que tiene* | I think she is twenty::six |
| 11 | Carla: *es que: (.) la mayoría son así, veintitantos* | because (.) most of the students are like that, twenty-something |
| 12 | Martha: *el también tiene veintialgo?* | is he twenty-something too? |

| 13 | Carla: *él tiene treinta y un años* (.) *igual que yo* (.) *estábamos juntos en la primaria de hecho* | he is thirty-one (.) just like me (.) in fact, we were together in elementary school |
|---|---|---|
| 14 | Student x: *tu dijiste veinticuatro que no?* (hhh) | you said twenty-four, didn't you? |
| 15 | Martha: (hhh) | |
| 16 | Carla: (hhh) *ahh veinticuatro, perdón!* (0.2) *hay se me olvida* (0.4) *se me olvida* (.) thank you (0.3) *tenía que tocarme la* [inaudible] (0.22) *se despierta* (0.8) *desayuna,* (0.2) *sale a corer* (0.5) *le llueve* | ohh, sorry, twenty-four! (0.2) I forget, I forget (0.4) I had to get the [inaudible] she wakes up (0.8) she has breakfast (0.2) she goes running (0.5) it rains |
| 17 | Martha: *no le entiendo a esta historia* (hhh) *va primero el crack y luego se despierta, que no?* | I don't understand the story (hhh) first the crack, and then she wakes up right? |
| 18 | Carla: pues, si | well, yes |

When analyzing the conversations between Martha and Carla, I observed how their relationship changed over time. The data suggests that the students modified their interactions to make them more collaborative as time progressed and as they got to know each other better. By the end of the course, they seemed to have established and maintained a friendlier relationship, or as Aston (1988, 1993) describes it, they had built *comity*. This issue will be further described in the following chapter.

Some learners engaged in *social inquiry* while they were working with the tasks. This did not mean that they stopped working or that they did not finish the activity. Instead, it created an opportunity for peers to bond with each other, and most of the questions asked in social inquiry were related to the task.

In the following excerpt (45), Luis and Alberto were solving Task 1, and they are talking about typical food in their hometown. While they were contributing with suggestions, they engaged in *social inquiry*. They talked about food in their hometown and the fact that Luis had stopped eating a traditional dish.

*Excerpt 45*

129  L: *Tutuli* (.) it's more like a: iconic from here (.) *Bugas* are also good (.)

you know they told me that but I haven't actually tasted a *Bugas dogo*

[Bugas hot dog]

130  A: you haven't? why?

131  L: no It's been like (.) five six years I quit *dogos* [hot-dogs]

132  A: I don't know how you're alive (hhh) (.) we're taking dinner (.) taking

our last dinner

Most of the instances of *social inquiry* occurred once learners had finished the task. Learners frequently talked about school and activities they did outside of school. The following episode (46) shows how Luis and Alberto were talking about cars and driving. It occurred when they had finished their task. Alberto started the episode by explaining that he preferred driving an automatic car, and Luis mentioned that he liked manual vehicles. Then Alberto told his peer that he just learned how to drive a manual transmission car and explained his new experience.

*Excerpt 46*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 334 | Alberto: ya que! (hhh) (3.40) I'd rather drive a, an automatic | so what! |
| 335 | Luis: standard | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 336 | Alberto: *hay ya aprendí a manejar estándar, no te conté?* | did I tell you that I learned to drive a manual car? |
| 337 | Luis: nice! | |
| 338 | Alberto: *si:: me dijo una amiga, llévate el carro porque vas a manejar de COSTCO hasta Corceles, le dije, segura? si (.)y ya que, y la primera vez se me apagaba (.) y la segunda también y la tercera acá y en que la segunda ya al chile (.) me dijo vete hasta el estadio wey y da una vuelta* | yes, a friend told me, take the car because you are going to drive from COSTCO to *Corceles*, I told her, sure? yes (.) and well, and the first time it went out (.) and the second time too, and the third one it worked, and then she told me directly to go to the stadium and drive around |

The following example (47) also occurred once learners had finished the task. Alejandro and Juan engaged in a conversation about the English courses. Alejandro opened the episode by asking Juan how he got to level six, either by doing the placement test or taking the previous course. Juan explained that he first did the placement test and was assigned to level five; he studied that course and passed it to move to level six.

*Excerpt 47*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 42 | Alejandro: finish! (0.45) you, take the courses here? (.) the courses or::: or:: the exam? you take the courses or you take, took the exam? | |
| 43 | Juan: *hice el nivel cinco* | I completed level five |

| 44 | Alejandro: ohh *el nivel cinco ahh está bien* (0.2) I:: think the courses are, are good (.) the courses here are good | ohh, level five, that's fine |
| 45 | Juan: yes, *estoy en la uni,* I made the:: the:: exam and, and::: *quede en el nivel cinco* | I am in the university  I was placed in level five |
| 46 | Alejandro: ahh *quedaste bien* | ahh you did good |
| 47 | Juan: and I:: I did the course:: and I pass | |
| 48 | Alejandro: six! | |

In the interview, Juan explained that he and his peer asked questions to get to know each other better (*social inquiry*). Participants worked with the same peer throughout the five tasks. However, they could join another partner for other activities done in the classroom. Juan paired up with Daniel, but he mentioned that he did not establish a connection with him as he did with Alejandro. He said that working with Daniel was boring because he was shy and serious. In contrast, Juan and Alejandro engaged in *social inquiry* during the course. They talked about school, their family, and their interests. This helped them to develop a friendlier relationship or *comity* (Aston, 1993).

*Excerpt 48*

Interviewer: ok. That's right, you are right, and, what other things do you do when you work with Alejandro? What do you talk about?

Alejandro: maybe that we introduce ourselves::

Interviewer: you introduced yourselves?

Alejandro: yeah, it's like we ask what do you study?, what you can do?, what like it…how old are you?

Interviewer: oh that's interesting, and do you think it is important when you work together that you establish a connection with your partner or not?

Alejandro: yes, 'cause for example with Daniel, we don't have that connection...

Interviewer: ah, how so?

Alejandro: the activity is like oh yeah… more boring.

Interviewer: ok aja, yes, and… how do you feel with Daniel?

Alejandro: he is… a little serious...

Interviewer: Serious?

A: yeah, so... yeah shy

### ‹5.5 Non-supportive relationships and lack of solidarity: dissension

Even if learners established friendly relationships in the classroom, not all of the pairs created a harmonious interaction throughout the lessons. The data also provided instances where some learners expressed the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*. Impatience, ridicule, disagreement, and lack of *solidarity* and *support* were also observed in a few interactions. As explained in Chapter 4 these instances were coded as *dissension*. Four of the 12 pairs produced at least one episode where learners used language to express the opposite of *support* and *solidarity*.

Conflict was not absent in the interactions, and there was one pair in particular that produced the most episodes of non-supportive relationships. Daniel and Felipe (pair 11) got involved on several occasions that created a tense atmosphere between the peers. Episode 49 was taken from Task 5, and it shows an example of impatience between learners. Felipe seems annoyed by his peer's behavior because after he told him the correct spelling of the word street, Daniel kept asking him if he was sure

about that. In line 127, Felipe complains in a resentful and annoyed tone of voice about the peer's endless questions.

*Excerpt 49*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 120 | Daniel: fix (0.40) *cómo es* street? | how do you spell street? |
| 121 | Felipe: street? *así, como esta aquí* | as it is here |
| 122 | Daniel: *así es? que no lleva -h a lo ultimo?* | is it like that? doesn't it have an -h at the end? |
| 123 | Felipe: *no::!* | |
| 124 | Daniel*: sin -h?* | without an -h? |
| 125 | *Felipe: es así!* | it is like this |
| 126 | Daniel: are you sure? street? are you sure? | |
| 127 | Felipe: *si! a ti no te gustaría que me llevara,* are you sure? are you sure? are you sure? ((replies in an annoyed tone of voice) | you wouldn't like me telling you all the time, are you sure |

The following two excerpts (50 and 51) show how one peer ridiculed the other by criticizing him and mocking him. Both examples were taken from Task 4 (role-play). In the first episode, Daniel and Felipe argued about the spelling of the word *disaster*. In line 84, Felipe made fun of his peer, indicating that disaster is written with an –i not with an e, and he told him that he was an *animal*. Daniel replied in an argumentative tone of voice.

*Excerpt 50*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 79 | Daniel:  my apartment, apartment (.) is | |

| | a disaster. | |
|---|---|---|
| 80 | Felipe:  is a big disaster. | |
| 81 | Daniel:  disaster *es con -e?* | disaster is with an –e? |
| 82 | Felipe: disaster? mmm disaster:: | |
| 83 | Daniel: sí? | |
| 84 | Felipe:  disaster, *es* disaster wey, *es con -i, como que con -e? eres un animal wey* | it is disaster dude, it's with an –i, how come with an –e? you're such an animal dude |
| 85 | Daniel:  *una reata te voy a poner* | I am going to hit you |
| 86 | Felipe:  *no me haces nada* | you won't do anything to me |
| 87 | Daniel: disaster | |
| 88 | Felipe: is a big disaster | |

The second example shows how Felipe was disrespectful and criticized his peer. In this episode, both learners were practicing the role-play. Felipe cursed in Spanish and told Daniel that he had terrible handwriting, and he could not understand what he wrote. Daniel replied that he did not care by using profanity in Spanish. Finally, both students continued working with the task.

*Excerpt 51*

| Transcript line | **Original utterance** | **English gloss** **Researcher's comments** |
|---|---|---|
| 73 | Daniel: lord land (0.20) what can I do for, for, for | |
| 74 | Felipe: *pinche bato, que mala la letra,* no se te entiende | damn dude, you have very bad handwriting,  I can't understand your writing |
| 75 | Daniel:  *a que madre*:: (.) ok, mmm my house (.) I need | ((curses in Spanish)) |

In the interview, Felipe explained that they had known each other for two years before taking the language course. He mentioned that he felt Daniel tried to dominate the interaction most of the time, and he wanted to participate more to get more proficient in the language. When he listened to the episodes where they cursed or showed impatient behavior, he explained that they were straightforward with each other and they expressed their ideas directly. Surprisingly, Felipe said he felt comfortable when working with his partner. In contrast with Luis and Alberto, who also had a shared history and worked collaboratively throughout the course, Daniel and Felipe's interactions were characterized by arguments and difficulty to reach consensus.

Oscar and Alma also used discursive moves that expressed the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*. The following excerpt (52) is an off-task talk episode that occurred while the learners worked with the fifth task. As previously explained, the tasks were typically done while the students had their oral exams. In this example, Oscar suggests going next to do the test, but his peer responded with a subtle derogatory adjective in Spanish (*pillin*) since she does not want to do the exam at that moment, as she explains in line 21. Alma does not follow or basically ignores her peer's proposal of doing the oral exam, and she continues working with the task. In this task, students had to create a political campaign, and they had to decide who the candidate would be. As it can be seen in excerpt 52 from lines 21 to 29, Alma decides on her own who the candidate is. Oscar just inquires the reason for her choice in line 26, but then he just follows his peer's decision. This episode shows how Alma uses derisive language, and she makes the decisions in the interaction.

*Excerpt 52*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss<br>Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 16 | Oscar: *quieres pasar?* | Do you want to go next? |
| 17 | Alma: ehh?? | |
| 18 | Oscar: *quieres pasar?* | Do you want to go next? |
| 19 | Alma: *que pillín eres* | You are such a rascal |
| 20 | Oscar: *la profe dijo* ((in an annoyed tone of voice)) | The teacher said so |
| 21 | Alma: no, *yo después del examen, no tengo mucha energía (.) a ver, cual es tu* apellido? Oscar que? | No, I don't have much energy after the exam (.) let's see, what's your last name? Oscar what? |
| 22 | Oscar: Flores | |
| 23 | Alma: Flores? | |
| 24 | Oscar: *si (.) aja* | Yes |
| 25 | Alma: ok *tu vas primero* | Ok you go first |
| 26 | Oscar:  ahh! *por que yo?* | Why me? |
| 27 | Alma: *ya se eligió (.) has sido elegido* | It's done (.) you have been chosen |
| 28 | Oscar: *ohh Dios no*! | Ohh God no! |
| 29 | Alma: so: (.) tell me, with your, ehh, campaign (0.25) Flores (0.43) ahí ta (0.10) so, Oscar (hhh) next | There it is |

Pair 4 also engaged in at least one instance that was the opposite of *support* and *solidarity*. The following excerpt (53) was produced while learners worked with the first task where they had to create an itinerary for a person visiting their city.

*Excerpt 53*

39  Ricardo: go to Gallerias Mall for shopping and:: and-

40  Gloria: or see a movie?

41  Ricardo: mmm  (0.2) and walking she likes to-

42  Gloria: for see a movie maybe is a::

43  Ricardo: she likes to walk, she can go walking to the museum downtown

44  Gloria: maybe is a good idea:: in Gallerias

45  Ricardo: would take a lot of time yeah (.) and after tha:t she can go to downtown

The example shows how Gloria makes a suggestion in line 40, but Ricardo ignores it and provides another idea. Then in lines 42 and 44, she continues offering the same suggestion and is still being ignored by her partner until he finally tells her that the idea would take a lot of time. Ricardo stood by his choice and included it in the task. A lack of acknowledgment of the peer's contribution to the task can be observed in this episode. There is an absence of support on Ricardo's part since he does not show appreciation for Gloria's suggestion, and he even seems to ignore her turns in the conversation. The decisions are made unilaterally, and there is no agreement on what to include in the task, reflecting a lack of *solidarity*.

## 5.6 Using social discourse moves in interactions

Social discourse moves of s*olidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* often occurred interwoven in the conversations. When learners negotiated *social inquiry*, they had the opportunity to get to know each other, and this helped them to have friendly relationships. *Social inquiry* opened a space for learners to express *solidarity* and *support* in the interactions.

The data also showed that when learners supported their peers by encouraging them to participate in the interaction, they opened a space for engaging in *solidarity*. Producing these social discourse moves created a more collaborative environment between peers, and it strengthened their interpersonal relationships in the classroom.

### 5.6.1 Social inquiry: Opportunities for solidarity and support

*Social inquiry* afforded opportunities for *solidarity* and *support* while peers worked together. *Solidarity* was observed when students asked questions to get to know their peers better, and this helped them to maintain their friendly relationship. The following episode (54) was produced during an off-task talk episode before learners started working with the fifth task. While the teacher returned the exams from the previous week, Martha and Carla engaged in *social inquiry*. They talked about their summer vacation, Carla's children, and their pets. The learners found common ground (Victoria, 2011) as they shared a love for dogs. This common ground opened a space for *solidarity* as they had similar feelings that helped them establish affective convergence. Consequently, *comity* was strengthened.

*Excerpt 54*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 51 | Martha: *tu no vas a salir?* | are you going out? |
| 52 | Carla: *no creo (.) como es la, se va a graduar mi hija entonces estamos así como que no sabemos los tiempos* | no, I don't think so (.) it's my daughter's graduation, so we are like we don't know about the time |
| 53 | Martha: *de que se gradua?* | where is she graduating from? |
| 54 | Carla: *de secundaria (.) entonces tiene* | junior high-school (.) so |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *como que ir a un curso, una semana antes, nos trae así* | she has to go to like a course, for a week before, she is keeping us busy |
| 55 | Martha: | *nomás tienes una hija* | do you only have one daughter? |
| 56 | Carla: | *dos* | two |
| 57 | Martha: | *dos?* | two? |
| 58 | Carla: | *una niña y un niño (.) y tengo muchas mascotas en casa, dos salchichas, un pug y un pato* | one boy and one girl (.) and I have a lot of pets at home, two Dachshunds, a Pug and a duck |
| 59 | Martha: | *me encantan los pug! (.) y los salchicha también* | I really love pug dogs! (.) and the dachshunds too |
| 60 | Carla: | *yo también,* (hhh) *hay es treme::ndo!* | me too (hhh) ohh it's very naughty |

The following example (55) shows how the learners' involvement in *social inquiry* opened a space for *solidarity*. The episode occurred while learners were doing the first task, and they were planning an itinerary. The students talked about local food, and they found that they both enjoyed eating hot dogs from a specific place in their city. *Solidarity* was observed as they shared similar attitudes about features of their common world (Aston, 1993). The episode is characterized by instances where learners agree with one another and share similar opinions.

*Excerpt 55*

242 A: ehh what kind of hot dogs do you like?

243 J: the::: mmm the Unison

244 A: Unison?

245 J: are recognized, like the best in a:::-

246 A: ahh ok one of the best

247 J: yeah

248 A: the best foods ahh

249 J: snacks

250 A: ahh ok snacks!

251 J: but only in the *plaza* [square]

252 A: but here in the *plaza*? [square]

253 J: have you seen the: the: list of food the best 100 food?

254 A: it's like the 70 something yeah

255 J: but it's in snacks

256 A: mmm I like the Tutuli hot dogs

257 J: yeah me too the form but here are-

258 A: yes

The data showed similar episodes to the one presented above, where learners'
engaging in *social inquiry* was followed by instances of *solidarity* throughout the
course and across the five tasks. This finding goes hand in hand with Martin-Beltrán
et al.'s (2016) study, where they found that *social inquiry* afforded participants with
opportunities for *solidarity*, which in turn helped the process of relationship building.
As with Martin-Beltrán et al., the social strategies used by the EFL learners allowed
them to establish rapport, thus enhancing friendly relations between the peers.

*Support* also occurred while learners engaged *in social inquiry*. The following
episode (56) occurred during off-task talk before Ricardo and Gabriela started
working with the second task. Learners engaged in *social inquiry* when Gabriela
asked Ricardo why he needed to go to the pharmacy. He explained that his teeth hurt
due to his braces, so he needed a special ointment for the pain. In this episode,

Gabriela seems concerned for her peer and recommends him to use the ointment. It can be observed that she supports her peer and cares for him.

*Excerpt 56*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss<br>Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Ricardo: *aja  (0.20) ahorita si puedo me voy a ir a la farmacia* | yes (0.20) if I can I will go to the pharmacy later |
| 6 | Gabriela: *¿ por que?* | why? |
| 7 | Ricardo: *me duelen los dientes con los frenos, y necesito la pomada* | my teeth hurt due to the braces, and I need an ointment |
| 8 | Gabriela: *si cómpratela wey porque-* | yes, buy it because- |
| 9 | Ricardo: *no, ya la compré pero se me olvida* | no,  I already bought it, but I keep forgetting it |
| 10 | Gabriela: pa' que te estés poniendo (0.3) al niño ya le salieron los dientes? | so you can put it (0.3) is your boy teething already? |
| 11 | Ricardo: si ya le iba a robar su pomada (hhh) | yes, I was going to take his ointment (hhh) |
| 12 | Gabriela: (hhh) *si:: róbale y ahí está* (hhh) | yeah, take it and there you go (hhh) |

**5.6.2 Using discursive moves of support and solidarity when working with the language tasks**

The data also showed instances where *support* and *solidarity* occurred interwoven. When learners allowed their peers to contribute to the interaction, they created opportunities for *solidarity*. The following episode (57) shows Patty and Marcos engaged with the third task where they had to make a story together. This excerpt shows both learners trying to decide on a name for a character. Patty started the

episode by explaining what is happening and opens a space for her peer to participate by asking him for a name. Marcos suggested using Brian, and then they continued asking each other questions and talking about names. It can be observed in the example below that learners supported each other by allowing their peers to have a turn in the interaction instead of only one student dominating the conversation and the task. Finally, they expressed *solidarity* when they reached an agreement and decided to use the term *her boyfriend* instead of a name.

*Excerpt 57*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 63 | Patty: too::k the phone, to ca:::ll? | |
| 64 | Marcos: *al* Brian | *al* is an article in Spanish composed of a preposition (a=to) plus an article (el= masculine of *the)* |
| 65 | Patty: (hhh) just Brian? | |
| 66 | Marcos: her boyfriend *ponle* | write |
| 67 | Patty: her boyfriend? Brian? | |
| 68 | Marcos: *no, ponle otro nombre, que tal que hay un Brian y que pena no*? | write another name better, what if there is a Brian it will be embarrassing |
| 69 | Patty: her boyfriend::, el Jason (hhh) *no creo que haya un Jason aquí* | I don't think there is a Jason here |
| 70 | Marcos: *si* (hhh) | yeah |
| 71 | Patty: Brian *o* Jason? | or |
| 72 | Marcos: boyfriend nomás | just boyfriend |
| 73 | Patty: ok, her boyfriend, without nom-, name (hhh) | |
| 74 | Marcos: *que no tiene nombre*, no, her | her boyfriend who doesn't |

|  | boyfriend | have a name |
| 75 | Patty: her boyfriend | |
| 76 | Marcos: only boyfriend | |

The following excerpt (58) shows instances of *solidarity* and *support* while learners worked on the task where they had to create a poster for a political campaign. Gustavo showed *support* to his peer by including her in the interaction in lines 81, 83, and 85 when he asked her for ideas for the task. Then both learners contributed with suggestions to the activity. *Solidarity* can be observed as the peers agree with each other on what to include in the poster.

*Excerpt 58*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 81 | Gustavo: *seis, está bueno, elegir algunos también (.) cual, cuales serían?* | six, it's ok, which ones would it be? |
| 82 | Andrea: *puede ser*::: mmm | it can be |
| 83 | Gustavo: *educación?* | education? |
| 84 | Andrea: *aja* (.) lo de air pollution, ehh la contaminación del aire, por los carros | yes (.) the air pollution, due to the cars |
| 85 | Gustavo: *okey, si, las ciudades creciendo, la contaminación aumentando,* air pollution (0.2) air pollution, *otro?* | Ok, yes, the cities' growth, the pollution increase, air pollution, air pollution, another? |
| 86 | Andrea: *yo había pensado estos* (.) jobs (0.4) *trabajos* | I had thought about these (.) jobs |
| 87 | Gustavo: *si, esta bien, para:: difundir (.) hacer volantes, y cosas (0.6) mmm así como que solicitar, que, que el estado, el gobierno de apoyo a proyectos creados por los jóvenes* | yes, that's fine, to publicize (.) to make brochures and things (0.6) mmm to ask that the state, the government supports projects created by young people |

**5.7 Summary and discussion**

The excerpts presented above provided a picture of how peers used the social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* to engage in *comity* while working with the language tasks. *Comity* in student-student interactions is the key analytic focus for this chapter. The results indicate similarities to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study and Victoria's (2011) investigation in the way learners established interpersonal relationships in the classroom context.

This study describes instances where learners used discursive moves to negotiate *solidarity* while they interacted during off and on-task talk. One of them involved the sharing of experiences and feelings in common. Since all the participants had a similar background (e.g., native language and country) and lived in the same city, they talked about their shared interests regarding the places and food from their hometown. This helped them create common ground, which has been argued to facilitate interaction between individuals (Victoria, 2011). *Solidarity* was also observed when learners expressed their struggles with the language. Students felt confident enough with their peers to share their concerns and difficulties with grammar and vocabulary. Such was the case of Carlos and Gloria (Pair 3), who produced the most instances of *solidarity* by talking about their shared problems and fears when learning and using the foreign language. These learners created a relationship of trust that was reflected in their interactions—however, only three out of the 12 pairs engaged in such *solidarity* episodes. Finally, for this study, I expanded Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) analytical framework for negotiating *solidarity* as I included instances where learners agreed with one another on how to do the task (e.g., what to include in the task). These agreement routines showed acceptance and

approval of the partner's contribution to the activity and helped them to reinforce *solidarity.*

Discursive moves of *support* were observed when learners encouraged or allowed their peers to participate in the conversation.  As illustrated above, this occurred when a student asked questions or made suggestions to the task, and this opened a new space for the peer to contribute to the interaction. The example of Ana and Isabel showed that when they used discursive moves to negotiate *support*, they offered each other an opportunity to participate in the conversation. Thus, they created a more collaborative relationship. This relates to Storch's (2001) patterns of interaction that will be discussed in the next chapter. A supportive behavior between peers involves a personal involvement and a relationship of caring for others (Aston, 1993; Victoria, 2011). The data showed that other ways of negotiating *support* included learners providing encouragement and positive feedback and recognizing the peer's language expertise. Phrases such as *very good, that's correct, I like it* or *don't worry* were commonly used by students and contributed to creating friendly relationships. Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study, discursive moves of *support* were also observed when learners constructed language together (Foster & Ohta, 2005). This occurred every time learners finished their peers' sentences (e.g., offered word choices), helped them solve any language related problems, and provided recasts.

The social discourse moves helped learners build a more collaborative environment (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Naughton, 2006; Sato & Ballinger, 2012), which allowed them to co-construct language together and provide feedback. The

findings showed how learners expressed feeling more relaxed and comfortable to ask questions about the language when they worked with their peers.

The analysis also showed that not all interactions occurred smoothly since four of the 12 pairs engaged in episodes of *dissension*. That is, they used discourse to express the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*. Pairs 2, 4, 8, and 11 produced at least one instance of *dissension*, as observed in the examples presented in part 5.2. Felipe and Daniel (pair 11) criticized or mocked the partner since they used derisive language to disrespect the peer's linguistic knowledge (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). In the case of Pairs 2, 4, and 8, the learners mostly expressed the opposite of *solidarity* and *support* by not showing appreciation for the peer's contribution to the task or by not acknowledging their suggestions. The decisions were taken most of the time unilaterally. The relationship that these learners established was more of dominance over the task and each other's contribution, as will be explained in the next chapter. It is interesting to observe that the pairs who engaged in episodes of *dissension* seem to create more dominant and passive patterns of interaction (Storch, 2001). The following chapter provides more examples of *dissension* that occurred within dominant-dominant and dominant-passive pairs.

**Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion for Research Questions Two and Three:**

**Creating and Maintaining Peer Relationships in the EFL classroom**

The second research question focuses on how learners used the discursive moves of *solidarity, support*, and *social inquiry* to establish friendly relationships or *comity* over time. In order to answer this question, I analyzed how each pair's relationship evolved during the language course. The interviews and classroom observations provided relevant information that complemented the analysis.

The third research question aims at identifying the patterns of interaction established by each pair. Moreover, it investigates how the social discourse moves used to create *comity* relate to these patterns.

**6.1 Producing discursive moves of solidarity, support, and social inquiry in the EFL classroom over time**

As seen in the previous chapter, the learners in the EFL classroom used social discourse moves in their interactions to build *comity* and create rapport when they worked together with the language tasks. The findings show that learners produced 524 episodes where they used social discourse to negotiate *support*, 437 episodes to negotiate *solidarity*, and 60 episodes of *social inquiry*. Similar to Martin-Beltrán, Chen, Guzman, and Merrills' (2016) findings, the learners in this study engaged in more episodes of *support,* yet the occurrence of *social inquiry* was less common than in their research. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the social discourse moves across the five tasks used in the classroom. The figure suggests that the frequency of *social inquiry* episodes slightly increased from the beginning of the course (Task 1) until the end (Task 5)
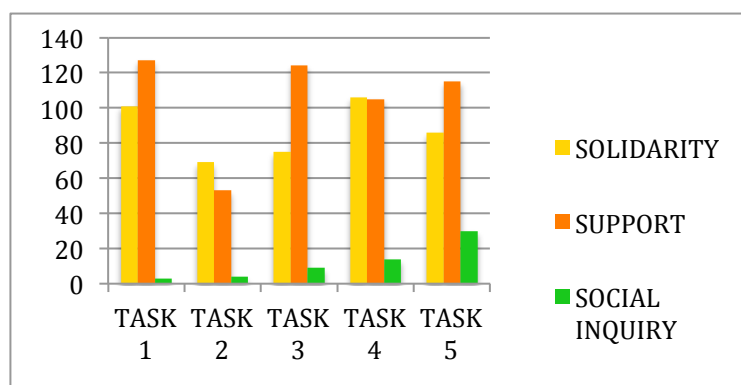
**Figure 3** *Social Discourse Moves of Solidarity, Support, and Social Inquiry Across Tasks*

The micro-genetic analysis of the pair interactions and the interviews suggests that one possible reason for the apparent increase in the frequency of *social inquiry* episodes could be that some learners felt more comfortable about asking personal questions to their peers as they worked together in class over time. That was the case of Pairs 3 (Gloria & Carlos), 4 (Martha & Carla), 9 (Gustavo & Andrea), and 10 (Ana & Isabel). For instance, Carla and Martha (Pair 4) engaged in *social inquiry* from Task 3 onwards, and in Martha's last interview, she explained feeling more confident with her peer as she got to know her better. It was interesting to observe how these learners spent a long time talking about themselves and getting to know each other before starting with the activity in the final task. This issue echoes Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) investigation where they found that the learners frequently regarded the opportunity to know their peers as social individuals more relevant than the task at hand. This did not mean that the students could not accomplish the task; instead, they worked more collaboratively as they learned about each other. It is important to note that this pair agreed to participate in the study after the first task was conducted. They worked together from Task 1, but I started audio recording their interaction from the second task.

During the observations in the first week of classes, I noticed that Martha worked alone most of the time unless the teacher told her to get together with a classmate. The teacher also noticed this issue, and she asked me if I had seen how Martha avoided working with her peers. She was concerned about the student's behavior in the classroom. This situation is similar to Hadfield's (1992) findings of language teachers who complained about classrooms where learners did not 'gel.' That is, learners created a negative classroom atmosphere. One of the behaviors included students refusing to work together. In the final interview, Martha explained that it was not essential for her to get to know her partner or anyone else in the classroom, and she preferred to work alone at the beginning of the course. However, this changed as time passed, and she felt more comfortable about getting to know her peer. She mentioned that as she worked with Carla in class, she established a certain amount of trust that allowed her to share her personal self. Both learners talked about their particular experiences of learning the foreign language, and then in the last task, they shared more personal issues. For instance, during an off-task talk episode before the fifth task, Carla told Martha that she was the mother of two teenagers, and her partner said that she looked very young to have older kids, so Carla explained that she was a teenager when she had her children. Learners talked more about other topics than just the weather or school since they had the opportunity to get to know each other by sharing their personal information. This last interaction involved what Aston (1988) defines as *restricted attitudes* or information that individuals share with whom they trust and believe will support and care for them. According to Aston (1988), this sense of restrictedness "involves participants including each other in their personal worlds" (p. 305). When Carla shared her experience of being a teenage mother and now

having adolescent children, she opened a window to her private life or world. Sharing their personal worlds helped the learners to build *comity* in the interactions. This situation is similar to Victoria's (2011) study as she also found instances where her participants decided to tell their peers their personal life experiences. Excerpt 59 was taken from Martha's last interview, where she described her feelings of trust towards her peer.

*Excerpt 59*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|
| *Interviewer: ¿cómo se te hizo trabajar con Carla? Sientes que llegaste a conocerla mas?* | What was it like working with Carla? Do you feel that you got to know her? |
| *Martha: yo creo que si:, digo, mmm porque al principio, al principio como que no me importaba mucho, como que la vida de nadie:* | yes, I think so, I mean mmm because at the beginning, at the beginning, I didn't care about anybody's life |
| *Interviewer: mhm* | |
| *Martha: o sea, no la conocía ni nada y ya la vas conociendo y es así de ahh, tienes hijos?:: y de que:* | I mean, I didn't know her or anything, then you start getting to know her and it's like ahh do you have children?: and like: |
| *Interviewer: aja* | yes |
| *Martha: o sea hay más confianza y pues porque casi no te importa preguntarle::: ehh, ¿eres casada?...* | I mean there is more trust and you don't mind asking her, are you married? |

The spoken interactions and classroom observations helped me to confirm how Martha changed her attitude from the beginning of the course until the end. During the second task, both Martha and Carla only focused on completing it, and they even worked separately. Later in the conversation, they compared and shared their answers. A similar situation happened in the third task, where the two learners started creating

their stories individually until I reminded them that they were supposed to work together. In this same task, once the students had finished the activity, they engaged in social inquiry talking about their age. In task four, they began their interaction engaged in *social inquiry* (excerpt 12, Chapter 5), and they shared their personal experience of learning the foreign language. Finally, as I explained above, in Task 5 they spent much time talking about their family and pets before working with the activity. In the interview, Martha explained that she really enjoyed working with Carla on the last task, and she also said that even if they used the grammar of the unit in the task, she had much fun working with the activity and her peer (excerpt 60).

*Excerpt 60*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
| --- | --- |
| *Interviewer: ok, y como estuvo su conversación en la última actividad?* | ok and what was your interaction like in the last task? |
| *Martha: pues nos divertimos mucho, estuvo chistoso o sea siento que ya no lo sentí tanto como clase aunque teníamos que usar lo del passive voice pero pues como que lo sentí más como diversión, se me fue el tiempo súper rápido y...* | well, we had a lot of fun, it was funny, I mean I feel like it wasn't like a class, even if we had to use the passive voice well, I felt it more like fun, and time went by very quickly |
| *Interviewer: en serio?* | Really? |
| *Martha: súper chistoso, pues acabamos puras risas::* | it was super funny, we ended up laughing |
| *Interviewer: fueron muy creativas* | you were really creative |
| *Martha: me sentí como que tiempo libre y así, o sea se me hizo padre...* | I felt like it was free time and like that, I really |
| *Interviwer: aja, me impresionó que aunque fue como dices tiempo libre,* | yes, I was really impressed that even if you felt it as free time, you used your time |

| | |
|---|---|
| *utilizaron muy bien...* | really well |
| *Martha: ajá, usamos las palabras en inglés:: y eran puros chistes los que poníamos en las campañas y todo eso* | yes, we used the words in English and we only put jokes in the campaign and all that |

In her interview (excerpt 61), Carla also mentioned that in the previous tasks, she and Martha had been very formal and serious when they worked together, and in the last task, she felt that they had had more fun, and they had crazy ideas. She also explained that they had asked very few questions to get to know each other during the other tasks, but she thought that it was in the last activity when they really learned personal information about each other.

*Excerpt 61*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|
| Carla: *porque entre, entre proyecto y proyecto, bueno actividad (.) eh, de repente si como nos preguntábamos ¿no?, ¡ay! y ¿qué esto? y ¿qué lo otro?, la edad, ¿no?, pero pues hasta ahorita me vine en enterando que es ingeniera, bueno que está estudiando* | because between the projects, well the activities (.) ehh we spontaneously ask each other questions, right? ah, that this or that? or the age, right? but it was until now that I found out that she is an engineer, well she is studying to become an engineer |
| Interviewer: *aja* | yes |
| Carla*: ya sabí::a, que:: tenía, creo que 20, creo que tiene* | I already knew that, I think that she was 20, that she is |
| Interviewer: *aja* | yes |
| Carla: *entonces cositas así ¿no?, y, y ahorita fue así como que ¡ay tienes perros! ¿cuantos perros tienes?, y que no sé qué, y ¿qué raza son?, y así ¿no?...* | So, small things like that, right? and, and now was like, ohh! you have dogs! how many do you have? and like, what breed are them? and things like that, right? |
| Interviewer: aja | yes |

Carla: *entonces, fue así como que*   so, it was like now we also had to hurry up
*ahorita también como que vamos a*   because we talked a lot
*apurarnos, porque ya platicamos*
*mucho...*

The micro-genetic analysis of the interactions of Pair 4 shows that *social inquiry*

occurred more frequently over time with these learners. In the classroom observations,

I noticed how Martha's behavior changed over time from not interacting with her

classmates, even if the teacher asked her to do so, to establishing a closer relationship

with her peer and getting along with the other students in the classroom. This suggests

that *social inquiry* or the discourse that students use to get to know each other either in

their L1 or in the foreign language does not represent a waste of time in the classroom

but an opportunity to strengthen their relationship and a way of creating trust among

peers. The example of Carla and Martha shows how their involvement in *social*

*inquiry* was a way of helping them to establish a more collaborative interaction. As

learners shared more information about their personal selves, they became more

engaged with each other's contributions to the task when they worked together. This is

related to the dimensions of social and affective/emotional engagement (Baralt,

Gurzynski-Weiss, & Kim, 2016; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Svalberg, 2009). Baralt et

al. (2016) compared their learners' cognitive, affective, and social engagement in

face-to-face and online contexts. They found that the participants' task performance

depended in great part on trusting their partner. The students in the online group

reported that they did not get to know their partners, and it affected their emotional

engagement. Similar to Baralt et al.'s (2016) findings, in this study, Carla and Martha

explained that they enjoyed working with the partner, and they had fun, which

contributed to their affective engagement. The analysis suggests that this occurred as learners got to know each other better and created a relationship of trust.

During the first two tasks, only Pairs 1, 2, and 5 engaged in *social inquiry*. In the final task, seven of the 12 pairs produced episodes where they asked each other questions to know more about their peers or shared personal experiences. Pair 5 was the only one that talked about school and their social context beyond the university throughout the five tasks. One reason for this could be that they had known each other before taking the language class (peer familiarity), and they felt more comfortable about sharing personal information. Alberto confirmed this in one of the interviews (see excerpt 28, Chapter 5). Pair 1 engaged in *social inquiry* in four of the five tasks. As explained in the next section, this pair established a friendly relationship from the beginning of the course, and it was essential for them to know more about their peer as they worked together in class.

Figure 3 also seems to indicate that the task might have influenced the learners' opportunities to negotiate *solidarity*. As the figure shows, in Tasks 1, 4, and 5, students produced higher episodes where they negotiated for *solidarity*. These tasks involved matters related to their own contexts, and they mirrored real-life situations. For instance, in Tasks 1 and 5, the participants talked about places in their hometown and problems within their communities. The qualitative analysis showed that peers shared their perceptions and feelings towards issues of their common world (Aston, 1993) in these tasks. This finding may suggest that the task can also influence the opportunities to negotiate for *solidarity* in pair interaction. If language teachers use tasks that include topics related to the learners' world in common, they can offer more chances for *solidarity* to occur within peer interaction. However, this issue needs to be

further investigated to find any links between the tasks and opportunities to use discursive moves of *solidarity* and *support*.

## 6.2 Building comity or friendly relationships over time in the EFL classroom

Most learners run between classes in a regular term, and they do not have enough time to get to know their classmates. However, in the summer term, students have the opportunity to engage with their peers since they stay in the same classroom for a more prolonged period of time (four hours every day). As Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998) explain, the longer learners stay together, and the more time they spend with each other, the more likely they are to bond and become friends. This contributes to enhancing the relationships that learners establish in the EFL course.

The micro-genetic analysis of learners' talk in peer interactions and the interviews reflect how the peers' relationships changed over time as learners described the experience of working with their classmates. Participants reported that getting along well with their peers and feeling comfortable with them facilitated their interaction. Students were more willing to share their ideas for the task, ask for assistance, or offer/receive help from their peers.

Ana and Isabel worked collaboratively throughout the five tasks. They both helped each other every time they encountered a language problem. In the final interview, Isabel shared her perceptions of working with her peer and how their relationship changed during the language course. The micro-genetic analysis of pair interaction and the interviews showed the process of change in the interpersonal relationships created by pair 10. At the beginning of the course, they did not interact a lot, and when they started working together with the tasks, they began to share personal information (e.g., talking about their families). As Isabel explains in the

following excerpt (62), this helped them feel more comfortable and create a friendly relationship.

*Excerpt 62.*

> *It changed a lot because at the beginning I didn't talk to her, well even if she was sitting next to me, I didn't talk to her (.) and now with these activities, well we started talking more, and now we talk together a lot more and we get to know each other more (.) she tells me about her family, her daughters, and this helps me because when you know the person you feel more comfortable and you learn in a nice way, I mean you feel comfortable because you're working with a friend*

In the following excerpt (63), Flora and Sarah also explained their experience about working with each other and how their relationship developed over time. In the final interview, Flora mentioned that she first was nervous about working with a classmate, but she felt comfortable with Sarah as time went by.   She placed importance on establishing a friendly relationship with the peer since it helped her to feel more relaxed about sharing ideas for the tasks.

*Excerpt 63*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|
| Entrevistador: *¿cómo te sentiste al trabajar con ella?* | Interviewer: How did you feel about working with her (Sarah)? |
| Flora: *pues al principio fue como oh voy a trabajar con alguien más, ¿no?, un poco de nerviosismo pero ya pasando el tiempo, todo, pues todo en orden, muy bien, muy a gusto (.) (hhh) ya pues hoy* | well, at the beginning it was like ohh I will work with someone else, right? I was a little nervous, but then as time passed, well everything was in order, very good, I felt comfortable (.) (hhh) and well today |

163

| | |
|---|---|
| *fue más divertido porque ya bromeábamos y todo* | was a lot of fun because we were joking and everything |
| Interviewer: *y ¿crees que eso les ayuda o:::?* | do you think that that helped you? |
| Flora: *si, creo que:: (.) entre mejor te lleves con alguien y puedas bromear, es más fácil que se te ocurran ideas para, ya sean los trabajos o platicar::* | yes, I think that (.) the better you get along with someone and you can joke, it is easier to come up with ideas for the tasks or to talk |

As the interview shows, Flora was nervous about working with a peer in the language classroom. One reason for this feeling of nervousness or anxiety could be attributed to most students not being used to working with their classmates in the language classes. The teacher explained in the interview that she worried a lot about her teaching techniques since, in the regular semester, it was difficult for her to include peer interaction in the classroom due to time restrictions. When she did use it, there were limitations on group and pair formation. The following excerpt (64) was taken from the instructor's interview.

*Excerpt 64*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|
| Interviewer*: como fue la experiencia de que los alumnos trabajaran en pares?* | what was the experience like of having students work in pairs? |
| Teacher*:* muy bonita por que yo estaba pensando que hace tres semestres que no he tenido chanza de poner pares o de cambiarlos de par entonces cuando los veo que se juntan los mismos me sentía mal, pero 50 minutos no nos permite, cada semestre tiene sus retos para que te alcance el tiempo, pero me dio mas | it was really nice because I was thinking that for three months I haven't had the opportunity of using pairs or change the students in different pairs when I see the same students working together, I felt bad, 50 minutes does not allow us much time, each semester has its own challenges with time limitations, but I felt |

| | |
|---|---|
| confianza, mas seguridad de que puedo | more confident that I can continue |
| yo seguir trabajando así con pares y no | working with pairs and not to get stress |
| estresarme tanto por que cada semestre | so much because each semester I feel that |
| siento que estoy faltando a la pedagogía | I am not keeping up with the pedagogy |

Some learners explained that they had gotten along well with their classmates since they first started working together. That is the case of Juan, who in the third interview (Excerpt 65) commented that he had established a friendly relationship with his peer from the beginning. He explained that he felt the relationship with his partner had been the same from day one, and they enjoyed their joint work.

*Excerpt 65*

> Interviewer: ok, and with Alejandro, has your relationship changed from the first activity that we did together 'till now? Has your relationship changed?
>
> Juan: mm...I don't think so: (.) with the first activity is like love at first sight
>
> Interviewer: eh, so you got together well?
>
> Juan: yeah, and, and, with the activities that we do, we've done, always is like oh, can put this or that, oh is a joke and we have fun...

In the final interview (excerpt 66), Alejandro regarded the situation a little differently from his peer since he explained that their relationship had improved from the first time they worked together. He admitted feeling embarrassed about correcting his peer when they first started working together. Then he was more comfortable because his classmate shared good ideas, and they talked about other topics besides the tasks.

*Excerpt 66*

Interviewer: Ok, and has your relationship with Juan been changing or not?, is it the same?, since the first activity until now

Alejandro: I think mmm we have improved it a lot, because, the first time, I, I, I was ashamed to correct him, because he, he likes, likes to, I don't know because he knows the English, but he:: likes to write the things in the wrong way:: (.) for example, in the, in one exercise, he, we write that (hhh), no, no but you have to write in that way…

Interviewer: *aja,* [yes] so how do you feel about correcting him now?

Alejandro: more comfortable, because he has good ideas and funny ideas:::

Interview: (hhh), ok, so do you think that getting to know him has helped you to feel more comfortable with him?

Alejandro: yes…

Interviewer: why do you think so?

Alejandro: we talk a little bad, a little bit about different things (hhh) he has crazy ideas and maybe that with (hhh)

Some learners had known each other before taking the language course. Pair 5 and Pair 9 had a shared history before enrolling in the language course. As I explained in the previous chapter Luis and Alberto (Pair 5) had known each other since high school. Gustavo and Andrea (Pair 9) had met some time before taking the class when he was her Mathematics teacher. They both worked collaboratively throughout the five tasks completing them together. Andrea was very respectful and helpful with her partner, and he asked her questions every time he encountered language problems. Excerpt 67 comes from the first interview where Gustavo explained how he had

known Andrea before, and he described their relationship in the classroom and how comfortable he felt working with her.

*Excerpt 67*

| Original | English gloss |
|---|---|
| Interviewer: *ehh, ¿cómo te has sentido trabajando con Andrea?* | ehh how have you felt working with Andrea? |
| Gustavo: mmm (.) bueno pues me he sentido a gusto, a ella la conozco de ya hace tiempo (.) fue, fue mi estudiante, me tocó darle clase (.) de pronto llegué y me encontré de que estamos en el mismo grupo, ehh:: ahora es ella la que me enseña | mmm (.) well, I have felt fine, I have known her for quite a while (.) she was, she was my student, I was her teacher (.) I got here and I discovered that we are in the same class, ehh now she is the one who teaches me |
| Interview: (hhh) está bien | (hhh) that's good |
| Gustavo: es ella, es ella la que me corrige, oye así es no, aquí cámbiale, entonces he estado muy a gusto, he estado muy a gusto. | she is, she is the one who corrects me, hey like this, or change this, so I have been very comfortable, I have been very comfortable |
| Interviewer: entonces te has sentido bien con ella? | so, have you felt fine with her? |
| Gustavo: si, eh, a gusto en, pues con confianza, con confianza puedo hablar, preguntar como se dice: | yes, ehh, comfortable and I trust her enough to speak and to ask her how to say something |

All the pairs mentioned above worked well together, and they felt comfortable with their peers. Conversely, not all learners got along well during the interactions. Through a micro-genetic analysis of the classroom observation notes and the spoken interactions, I noticed how Pair 2 (Oscar and Alma) established a dominant-passive relationship. In the first interview, Oscar explained that he enjoyed working with Alma since he described her as a cooperative person who encouraged him to join in the interaction. In the final interview (excerpt 68), Oscar declared that it had been difficult for him to work with his peer, especially at the end of the course. He mentioned that in the last task, he could not work the same way he had worked at the beginning. Oscar described the interaction as difficult and boring, and he felt that he and his peer were not exchanging ideas for the task as before.

*Excerpt 68*

| Original | English gloss |
|---|---|
| Interviewer: how did you feel now, these four weeks working with Andrea in the tasks that I gave you?, what was the experience like working with Andrea? | |
| Oscar: mmm:: (hhh), I think eh, finally of the, of the course eh (.) it turned eh (.) uncomfortable eh:: | |
| Interviewer: uncomfortable? | |
| Oscar: yeah, uncomfortable because eh (.) eh (.) I don't know (hhh) *ya no, no sé, ya no lo sentí como al principio que, qué pues… de ser una chica que hablaba mucho* (.) *y pues a mí me gustaba porque podía hacer las dinámicas más::: más fluidas, pero al final como que eso o sea se volvió monótono y pesado no sé (.)ya, ya no fue como el principio (.)y ya, ya no se o sea si fui yo el que, el que causo eso, o::* (hhh*) pero algo cambio (.) algo ya, ya no sentí así el como que ah, que divertido y así las ideas fluían::* | I don't know, it wasn't, it wasn't like at the beginning because she used to be a girl who talked more (.) well, I used to like it because she could make the tasks more:: more fluent, but then at the end, I became more like monotonous and hard, I don't know (.) it was not like at the beginning (.) and, I don't know if it was me the one who caused that or:: (hhh) but something changed (.) something wasn't, wasn't, I didn't feel like the, like ah fun and he ideas flowed. |

As mentioned before, Pair 2 established a dominant-passive relationship when they worked together with the five tasks. However, I observed both learners separately during the four weeks of classes while they worked with the textbook and with other activities (e.g., answering a worksheet) assigned by the teacher, and I noticed how they behaved differently when they teamed up with other students in the classroom. For instance, I observed that Alma seemed to have established a friendly relationship with Flora, and this was confirmed in the interviews with the two students and with the teacher. Alma explained that they did not know each other before taking the

classes and that they had become friends in a very short time as they found they had many common interests. Excerpt 69 was taken from Flora's first interview, and she explained her relationship with Alma.

*Excerpt 69*

| Original | English gloss |
|---|---|
| *Interviewer: en estos días ¿cómo te has sentido, has notado una diferencia cuando trabajas con Alma?* | during these days, how have you felt, have you noticed any differences when you work with Alma? |
| *Flora: hacíamos muchas bromas (hhh), eh, comentamos lo, lo que estamos haciendo y pues derivamos muchas bromas ¿no? y como que platicamos un poco más* | we made lots of jokes (hhh) ehh, we talk about what we are doing and well we end up with a lot of jokes right? and it's like we talk a little more |
| *Interviewer: ahh ok ¿has platicado de otras cosas aparte de lo que tienes que hacer en la clase?* | ahh ok, have you talked about other things besides what you have to do in class? |
| *Flora: (hhh) si* | yes |
| *Interviewer: ¿qué otras cosas has platicado?* | what other things have you talked about? |
| *Flora: pues es que nos llevamos muy bien, ¿no? y a ambas nos gusta escribir, estamos pensando en hacer una historia juntas y empezamos a hablar de eso.* | well, it's because we get along really well, right? and we both like to write, we are thinking about writing a story together, and we started to talk about that |

The interviews with both learners revealed how they established a close friendship during the language course. They explained that they shared interests in common such as writing or the Japanese language. In the classroom observations, I noticed that instead of going out during recess, they stayed inside the classroom talking about books they had read or movies they had seen. They also tried to work together in class every time they had a chance. When I interviewed the teacher about the pairs, she

thought they had established a friendly relationship or had worked well during classes. She mentioned that Flora and Alma had created a special friendship during the language course.

*Excerpt 70.* Teacher's interview

| Original | English gloss |
|---|---|
| *Interviewer: que pares cree que trabajaron bien en clase o se llevaron bien?* | which pairs do you think that worked well together in class or got along well? |
| *Teacher: Alma y Flora se llevaron muy bien, no se si serían amigas desde antes* | Alma and Flora got along really well, I don't know if they were friends before |
| *Interviewer: no, no se conocían, me dijeron en la entrevista* | no, they didn't know each other, they told me in the interviews |
| *Teacher: parecían, parecían amigas de antes por que se tenían mucha confianza y trabajaban muy bien juntas* | they seemed like friends from before because they trusted each other and they worked really well together |

## 6.3 Overall group cohesion

I included a qualitative analysis of group cohesion since it was salient in the data, and it was related to the learners' perceptions of the interpersonal relationships established in the classroom. The analysis of the interaction transcripts, interviews, and observation field notes indicate that the whole class seemed to have established group cohesion in this language course. This did not occur from day one, but the group integration developed over time, as would be expected (Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; Leslie, 2015). Forsyth (2017) describes group cohesion as "the *solidarity* or unity of a group resulting from the development of strong and mutual interpersonal bonds

among members and group-level forces that unify the group, such as shared commitment to the group goals and espirit de corps" (p.15). The data suggest that participants in this study created an overall group unity as it was reported in the learners' interviews and observed during the lessons. In the interviews, students described positive perceptions towards their classmates, the teacher, and the class. The classroom observations and video recordings provided information regarding the learners' behavior in class, and they allowed me to notice the teacher's key role in encouraging the group's cohesion.

Based on the observation and video recordings, I noticed that the lesson developed in the following way: the teacher greeted the students and wrote the class's outline on the board. She then explained the grammar or vocabulary of the lesson. After that, students were asked to answer the exercises in their textbook (e.g., fill in the blanks, matching, multiple-choice, readings, reading comprehension questions), yet the teacher did not encourage working in pairs or groups, and it was up to the learners to decide. Some students completed the book activities individually, and most of them chose to work with a classmate. Once everyone had finished the exercises, the teacher checked the answers with the whole class asking for volunteers to participate. This pattern was repeated throughout the lessons, yet it sometimes varied, and the teacher included a listening exercise (audio or video) or a game. However, pair work and teamwork were not usually promoted in class, and it was optional for students to work with a classmate. The teacher mainly focused on the class as a whole group, and learners paired up with their peers when they did the tasks for this study.

Through multiple careful readings of the classroom observation field notes and interview transcripts, I coded three major themes that contributed to establishing overall group cohesion over time:

*Positive emotions (affective behavior):* it included attitudes and beliefs about their classmates and the teacher, using humor positively in the classroom, including jokes and laughter, and mutual respect between peers.

*Helping peers:* instances where learners explained or clarified doubts about the foreign language when their classmates did not understand the teacher's explanation.

*Teacher's behavior:* the teacher also contributed to group cohesion by using discourse to praise learner's participation, encourage group unity, and provide positive feedback.

These three themes will be further explained below with examples from the data.

**6.3.1 Positive emotions (affective behavior)**

Learners worked as a whole class when the teacher explained the grammar and vocabulary of a unit, when they solved an exercise from the textbook, played a game, worked with the digital arcade, or checked the homework. Within these episodes, most students showed positive emotions in the class. Excerpt 71 occurred during the last week of the course on June 21$^{st}$ (class 17) when students were checking the answers of a textbook activity. Ana asked a question to the teacher about grammar, and once she explained it, Ana expressed the following:

*Excerpt 71*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| Ana: la voy a extrañar maestra! a todos en la clase y al Alejandro también! | I am going to miss you teacher, everyone in class and also Alejandro<br><br>((All the students laughed)) |

Teacher: ohh! (hhh) I'm gonna miss you!

| | |
|---|---|
| tenemos que hacer una buena juntada el viernes | we have to do a nice party on Friday |

After Ana expressed her feelings to the teacher and the rest of the class, all the other students received her statement with laughter. This laughter was not produced to ridicule her but rather as a joint activity where everyone took part and agreed with her. Laughing together strengthened the group's affective convergence, and this represented affective moments (Pomerantz & Mandelbaum, 2005; Victoria, 2011). During the interviews, Alma explained that she felt there was affection with her peer (Isabel) and with all the students. She mentioned she was happy when her classmates offered her a smile or a greeting. The teacher's interview complemented the observation data with her opinion on the affective behavior shown by students. She mentioned that the learners expressed empathy and a feeling of care for their peers (Excerpt 72).

*Excerpt 72*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| *note mas amistades, grupos juntos, mucha empatía de hecho Alberto en una ocasión le pidió dinero prestado a otro compañero y si se lo presto y en el momento de organizar para la fiesta inmediatamente todos se apoyaron unos a otros* | I noticed more friendly relationships, close groups, a lot of empathy, in fact Alberto asked another peer to lend him money and he lent it at the moment of organizing the class' party, they all supported one another |

Humor was also expressed in a positive way in the classroom. Both the learners and the teacher made jokes during the lessons. For instance, on June 16th (class 14), while the teacher was explaining the grammar and vocabulary of unit six, Carla asked Alejandro a question about the word stain (if glass could be stained). However, he seemed unable to resolve the problem. Then Carla raised her hand and asked the teacher '*teacher, ehh for the glass, could be stained?*. The teacher gave her an extra point for her correct participation, and Carla replied in a humorous tone, *'I am awake now and more focused because of the coffee,'* and the rest of the class started laughing. The episode continued with the students paying attention to the teacher's explanation, participating, and taking notes. This situation could also be perceived as Carla using humor to avoid the face-threatening situation of not being sure about the word in English (Pomeratz & Bell, 2011).

Mutual respect was observed during classes between most students. On June 17th (class 15), the group played a Jeopardy game to review the grammar and vocabulary for units five and six. The students joked and laughed together as they played. However, these humorous instances occurred in a respectful atmosphere. Excerpt 73 was taken from the teacher's interview, where she explained the situation.

*Excerpt 73*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| *Me llamo mucho la atención el Jeopardy por que estaban sentados diferentes, eran grupos mas grandes, entonces ahí estaban comunicándose muy bien, eso me gusto por que fue con mucho respeto y eso a veces crea que se escale en poquita agresión o así y en este caso no.* | I was very interested in the Jeopardy game because the students were seated differently, it was in larger groups, so they were communicating really well, I really liked that because it was very respectful and sometimes that (a game) creates a little aggression and it didn't occur in this case. |

As observed in the teacher's comments, she believed that learners showed respect to one another even in situations that could generate aggression since students were competing to win the game. During the interview, the teacher stressed the learners' respectful behavior toward one another and her, and she admitted feeling pleased with their behavior in class. These findings concerning the students' affective behavior were similar to those found in Leslie's (2015) study of cohesive groups.

## 6.3.2 Helping the peers

Learners helped each other in different ways in the classroom. This not only occurred between dyads but also in the group as a whole. Most of the learners participated in the class discussions, but sometimes before sharing an idea or asking for an explanation, they first talked to the person next to them. For example, during the second week, Sarah wanted to indicate a mistake on the board, but first, she turned to the classmate sitting next to her to confirm if her suggestion was correct. Her partner helped her, and she felt more confident to point out the error.

Students also helped one another in class when they checked the homework together or simply expressed a supportive behavior. For instance, in class 14, Luis asked the peer next to him (Gabriela) to pass him the lesson notes because he had forgotten his glasses, and he could not read from the board. Gabriela immediately lent him her notes and moved closer to him to continue assisting him during the teacher's explanation. The teacher also noticed that it was very common for the classmates to help one another. Excerpt 74 was taken from the teacher's interview when she explained what sometimes happened during the oral exams.

*Excerpt 74*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| *cuando venían a hacer el examen se notaba que lo practicaban, 'y tu vas a decir eso y cuando yo diga esto así', 'in* English or in Spanish*?' mas en ingles lo note. y se acomodaban muy bien y cuando alguien se quedaba sin pareja decían, 'yo! 'yo le voy a ayudar' y era quizás por acompañar al compañero* | when they came with me to do the oral exam I noticed that they practiced before, 'and you are going to say that and when I say this', I noticed that it was more in English and they connected well and when someone was left without a peer they said 'I, I will help him/her' and it may be just to help the peer |

The teacher explained that sometimes some students were left without a partner to do the oral test. In those cases, other classmates volunteered to help them do the oral exam. She mentioned that she thought the students did this just to support their peers.

## 6.3.3 Teacher's behavior

Group cohesiveness was enhanced by the teacher's encouragement and positive feedback. Previous studies on group cohesiveness have highlighted the vital role that the teacher plays to foster the class's unity in the language classroom (Senior, 1997, 2002; Colibaba, 2009). During the classroom observations, I noticed that the teacher structured the lessons to promote cohesion between the students. She constantly used phrases such as '*I want to hear noise here'* or '*you're doing a great job*.' She was very enthusiastic when providing positive feedback. For example, in class 14, when Carla had made the joke about the coffee, the teacher said to the whole group*, 'oh my goodness, this is fantastic! I love it!, guys, I am having fun with your intensive summer course*'. Also, on June 21st (class 17), once she had returned the written tests, she told the students that she was pleased with their results. During the interview (excerpt 75),

the teacher explained that she noticed how this class asked numerous questions and wanted to learn more in every lesson.

*Excerpt 75*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| *este grupo fue muy diferente, fue pidiendo mas, mas, cuando ya se dieron cuenta que yo preparaba mas para explicar un poquito mas al día siguiente y así por que a veces se puede hacer una explicación muy sencilla pero cuando les di las reglas del ING que es extra que yo doy en todos los cursos, y antes decía las voy a poner en rota folio pero cuando lo vamos hacienda y ellos van creando las reglas juntos  me fije que aprendían mas rápido y ahí note que el grupo empezó a hacer mas preguntas de y esto como va y aquello?* | this group was very different, they asked for more and more when they noticed that I prepared the classes to explain a little more the next day, because you can sometimes give a simple explanation but when I gave them the ING rules, which is extra material that I used in all my courses, and I used to put them on flipchart paper, but when we were are doing this and they create the rules together I observed that they learned faster, and it was then when I noticed that they learned faster, and I noticed that the group started asking more questions about how to write this or that? |

Excerpt 75 shows that the teacher noticed the students' willingness to participate in class and asked questions about the grammar or vocabulary they were learning in each course unit. She explained that she had to carefully plan her lessons with extra material because the group wanted to learn more. On June 10th (class 10), she provided positive feedback to the group as she said, '*I have reorganized the program to make it fun for you because you're good students, you're very smart*!' Then she opened the textbook's software that included extra games and activities to practice grammar and vocabulary, and the whole group played together. The positive

feedback, encouragement, and extra material that the teacher used in her classes contributed to the group's overall cohesiveness. The student's interviews also confirmed this issue. The learners expressed positive perceptions about the teacher and the course. For instance, in the last interview Carla explained her opinion about the English class (excerpt 76).

*Excerpt 76*

| Original | English gloss/researchers notes |
|---|---|
| *Interviewer: que es lo que te ha gustado del curso?* | what have you liked about the course? |
| *Carla: pues, me ha gustado mucho lo que es la clase en sí, porque ha estado muy interactiva ¿no?, y como le comentaba el otro día que veía gente que estaba estresada en otros salones.* | well, I have really liked it, the class because it has been very interactive right? and as I told you the other day I saw people who were stressed in other groups |
| *Interviewer: ohh* | |
| *Carla: ¡y es que la exposición!, y es que ¿ya estudiaste?, y veía ya con la hoja ¿no?* | the presentation! and did you study? and I saw people with a paper, right? |
| *Interviewer: ohm* | |
| *Carla: yo si me toco estresarme en, en los exámenes no que,  no es lo mismo practicar en clase, que ya cuando uno está solo, pues porque ya de perdida preguntas al compañero o a alguien* | I got stressed too with the exams, it's not the same to practice in class to when you are alone, because in class you can ask your peer or someone |
| *Interviewer: claro, claro* | yeah, sure |
| *Carla: si como que me estresaba un poquito, pero mm, yo creo que la manera en como lo está manejando la maestra, a mí se me hace muy, muy bien, y de que* | yes, I got stressed a little, but mm I think that the way the teacher managed the class was very good, very good, and you are both paying attention if we have |

| | |
|---|---|
| *ustedes están al pendiente, de que alguna* | doubts like teacher how do you say? |
| *duda, de que teacher ¿cómo se dice así?.* | |

The excerpt shows Carla's perception of the course and the teacher. It was interesting to observe how she compared herself with students from other courses at school and how she perceived that most of them seemed stressed with presentations and exams. In her opinion, the teacher's class management helped her overcome any fears she could have with exams, and she also liked that the teacher was attentive to any problems they had with the language. In the task transcripts, I also found instances where learners expressed positive perceptions about the course. One such episode occurred during an off-task talk episode when Alejandro started telling Juan his opinion about the language course in the school *'I: think the courses are, are good (.) the courses here are good'* (see chapter 5 excerpt 47). In the teacher's interview (excerpt 77), I asked her about what she thought could have contributed to the group cohesiveness, and she explained that the time students spent together and the encouragement provided in class might have helped.

*Excerpt 77*

| **Original** | **English gloss/researchers notes** |
|---|---|
| *mmm lo que influyo en que el grupo tuviera esa comunicación entre ellos, sería quizás que veníamos muchas horas juntas entonces no había manera de estarse parando como en un curso normal, quizás se me afigura y la otra fue que procuramos tanto tu como yo de que no había que sufrir que para aprender esto volver a preguntar si era necesario* | what influenced in the group having more communication between them, it could be maybe that we came to class for a lot of hours together, so there was no way in which students had to be going out like in a normal course, maybe I think, the other was that you and I tried to let them know that they did not have to suffer in order to learn and that they could ask again if it was necessary |

As I had previously explained, the teacher concurred with the assumption that the longer students spent together in the course, the more likely the group would create unity (Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998). The intensive summer course allowed learners to get to know each other better since they spent more time in the company of each other inside the classroom and outside of it during recess. The teacher explained that in the summer, students do not have to run to their other classes in the university, and this contributes to spending more time with their peers. According to the teacher, another factor that could have contributed was that she intentionally tried to create a safe environment for the students where they could feel comfortable about participating in class.

In conclusion, from the examples presented above, it seems that the students' emotions, attitudes, and supportive behavior in class contributed to reinforcing group cohesiveness. The teacher's encouragement, positive feedback, and class management were also perceived as another factor that could have helped develop the group's unity.

## 6.4 Patterns of interaction

In this section, I review and discuss the findings of research question three. The third research question focuses on the patterns of interaction, and the use of social discourse moves to build *comity*. I will first show the patterns of interaction created by each pair, and I will present the word/turn counts by each pair to explore the quantifiable differences among them. Then, in the next section I will provide a detailed qualitative analysis that describes how each pair participated in the interactions and how learners used social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* within these patterns.

**6.4.1 Patterns of interaction: Students' roles and word/turn count**

The patterns found in the data correspond to the ones found by Storch (2001) with adult university students based on the quality of learners' engagement in terms of mutuality and equality among peers. The micro-genetic analysis showed that the predominant pattern of interaction occurred in an average of at least 75% of the transcript in the second coders' and my codes. That is, in some cases, there was variability within the interaction, as there were traits that belonged to more than one pattern. However, each transcript displayed a strong trend toward one of the four patterns. Table 11 shows the patterns of interaction created by the 12 pairs and the roles adopted by each student.

**Table 11** *Patterns of Interaction Created by Each Pair*

| Pairs | Learners | Patterns/roles |
|---|---|---|
| Pair 1 | Alejandro | Expert |
| | Juan | Novice |
| Pair 2 | Alma | Dominant |
| | Oscar | Passive |
| Pair 3 | Gloria | Collaborative |
| | Carlos | |
| Pair 4 | Martha | Dominant |
| | Carla | Dominant |
| Pair 5 | Luis | Collaborative |
| | Alberto | |
| Pair 6 | Flora | Collaborative |
| | Sarah | |
| Pair 7 | Patty | Expert |
| | Marcos | Novice |
| Pair 8 | Ricardo | Dominant |
| | Gabriela | Passive |
| Pair 9 | Andrea | Expert |
| | Gustavo | Novice |
| Pair 10 | Ana | Collaborative |
| | Isabel | |
| Pair 11 | Felipe | Dominant |
| | Daniel | Dominant |
| Pair 12 | Javier | Collaborative |
| | Abril | |

Table 11 indicates that the most common pattern of interaction was the collaborative. This result goes in accordance with other studies that have examined patterns of interaction (Roberson, 2014; Storch, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Three pairs created an expert/novice relationship. Both the collaborative and the expert/novice patterns showed high mutuality. That is, the learners in these pairs commonly engaged with each other's contributions. Two pairs established a dominant/dominant pattern as learners exhibited little engagement or mutuality with their partners' suggestions. Finally, two pairs created a dominant/passive relationship where the level of contribution to the task was unequal as one learner dominated the interaction most of the time.

Most pairs created and maintained a specific pattern of interaction over time and across the five tasks. The micro-genetic analysis showed that there was one pair that changed their relationship pattern. At the beginning of the course, Martha and Carla (Pair 4) established a dominant/dominant pattern of interaction. Students had to work together to solve the task, but they did the activity separately, and then they checked their answers (cooperative behavior). As seen in the following episode (excerpt 78), each learner made different decisions about where to sit two famous artists, and they provided their own reasons. Carla offered a suggestion in line 35, but her peer did not accept it and gave her own answer. Then Carla repeated her suggestion, and they kept explaining their choices. Finally, instead of resolving the problem in this episode, Martha started talking about other people in the task.

*Excerpt 78*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 35 | Carla: "she really likes to party and she doesn't like serious people" (0.2) y ella era serious? (.) easy going and single (.) ponemos a la Laura con Kim Kardashian? (hhh) | and is she serious? (.) should we sit Laura next to Kim Kardashian? (hhh) |
| 36 | Martha: mmm pero hay que ver (.) enseguida de, quien? (0.4) pues puse a Kim Kardashian y a Taylor Swift porque pues eran (.) like to party and no se qué (0.3) y Laura Bozo que era? | mmm but let's see (.) next to whom? (0.4) well I put Kim Kardashian and Taylor Swift because they are (.) like to party and I don't know what (0.3) and who is Laura Bozo? |
| 37 | Carmen: yo las puse así, por, pues la cuestión que no se soportan no? pero igual (.) no sé si ellas dos podrían:: | I put them like that because the thing is that they can't stand each other right? but it's the same (.) I don't know if they could |
| 38 | Martha: pues "she is noisy, talkative and likes to dominate the conversation" a la Kim Kardashian también le encanta estar- | well ((reads from the text)) Kim Kardashian also likes to be- |
| 39 | Carla: aja | yes |
| 40 | Martha: así (.) le gusta dominar (.) Taylor Swift porque pues (.) platican (.) y luego al Brozo el payaso dice que respeta mucho a Carmen:: [Aristegui] | like that (.) to dominate (.) Taylor Swift because well (.) they talk (.) and then Brozo the clown says that he respects Carmen [Aristegui] |

In Task 3, Martha and Carla also decided to divide the work until the teacher reminded them that they were supposed to be working together. Then they jointly continued solving the task. In Tasks 4 and 5, the learners displayed a more collaborative behavior by equally contributing to the tasks, and by reaching an agreement that was acceptable to both peers. In these two last tasks, particularly in the fifth one, students asked more questions to get to know each other. This could suggest that engaging in *social inquiry* can promote a more collaborative behavior among peers. The teacher's intervention in Task 3 might have also influenced the way learners worked with the rest of the tasks.

As explained in the data analysis chapter, the coding of patterns of interaction relied on the qualitative analysis of how learners engaged with each other's contributions (mutuality) and shared control over the task (equality). The following section provides an in-depth analysis of the patterns of interaction found in the data across the five tasks.

### 6.4.2 Collaborative pattern

The collaborative pattern was the most prevalent in the data. The learners in these pairs showed a high degree of mutuality and equality when working with the tasks. They had an equal contribution to the task, they engaged with each other's contributions, and they worked together to reach an agreement. Excerpt 79 was taken from the third task where Abril and Javier (pair 12) were creating a story together.

*Excerpt 79*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Abril: we have to say (.) we have to say a story | |
| 2 | Javier: *tenemos que escribir y entregar?* | do we have to write it and hand it in? |
| 3 | Abril: *aja* | yes ((participants start arranging the images of the story together)) |
| 4 | Javier: *son diferentes?* | are they different? |
| 5 | Abril: si | yes |
| 6 | Javier: ahh okey, ó sea que son dos (.) historias diferentes | ohh, ok, so they are two (.) different stories |
| 7 | | ((Abril starts opening a package of candy)) |
| | Abril: *quieres?* | do you want some? |
| 8 | Javier: *no, gracias  (0.8) vamos a empezar (.) esta dormida en esta foto* | no, thanks (0.8) let's begin (.) she is sleeping in this image |
| 9 | Abril: *aja* | Yes |
| 10 | Javier: *donde va esta?* | where does this go? |
| 11 | Abril: *esa va:: en (.) a<u>quí</u>* | that one goes (.) here |
| 12 | Javier: *okey (.) va a ser en past perfect o algo así?* | ok (.) is it going to be in past perfect or something like that? |
| 13 | Abril: *según yo si* | I think so |
| 14 | Javier: ok | |
| 15 | Abril: *cual primero? (.) esta o esta?* | which one first? this one or this one? |
| 16 | Javier: *esta esta bien* (.) one day | this one is fine |

| 17 | Abril: Mari::a:  mmm | |
| 18 | Javier: Maria was sle-, was sleeping | |
| 19 | Abril: was::  sleeping  (.)  u::until  her | |
|    | alarm: (0.5) woke her up | |
| 20 | Javier: *aja,* woke (.) her up:: ehh at six | yes |
|    | a.m.  *a las seis?* | at six? |
| 21 | Abril: ehh? | |
| 22 | Javier: *a las seis de la mañana?* | at six in the morning? |
| 23 | Abril: ok, *está bien,* at:: six a:.m | ok, that's good |

In excerpt 79, both learners used first-person pronouns in their interaction, which as Storch (2001) explains, may indicate mutuality and joint ownership of the task. Abril opened the episode by acknowledging that they were working together as she used the pronoun *we.* Then in the next turn, Javier also included his peer in the interaction, but he was speaking in his mother tongue *tenemos* (we have to). Then in line eight, Javier again expressed collaboration over the task as he says *vamos a empezar* (let's start). Students sharing their ideas and jointly constructing the task also characterize the excerpt. In line 18, Javier started an utterance, which Abril completed in the next turn, and then in line 20, Javier also added more information to finish the sentence. Both Abril and Javier were willing to engage with each other's ideas as it is seen from line 18 to 23. *Solidarity* was also observed in this episode as learners used discursive moves to agree with each other and to accept the suggestions offered by the peer to complete the task.

Ana and Isabel were another pair that established a collaborative pattern of interaction in the classroom. In the following excerpt (80), they were working with the first task, and they were deciding what to write for the activity. Isabel opened the

episode when she asked Ana if they should write their suggestions as a narrative or a list. Her peer suggested writing a list, and then they continued contributing with ideas to complete the task.

*Excerpt 80*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss/ Researcher's notes |
|---|---|---|
| 14 | Isabel: *lo hacemos como un relato o como varios puntos?* | Do we do it like a narrative or like several points? |
| 15 | Ana: ahh a list (0.8) it's a huge list? *aja* | yes |
| 16 | Isabel: *como le pongo,* pick up? | what do I write |
| 17 | Ana: *aja* | yes |
| 18 | Isabel: pick up | |
| 19 | Ana: in the (.) at the airport *aja* | ((self corrects)) |
| 20 | Isabel: at the airport (.) ehh and then? she has to visit catedral ahhh to take (.) to take the the turibus (hhh) | |
| 21 | Ana: *de acuerdo* (.) I am agree: (.) but I think that (.) first go to eat and then | I agree |
| 22 | Isabel: ahh ok *a que lugar?* | where to? |
| 23 | Ana: mmm to have breakfast ehh where? (.) The *Mercado Municipal?* | |
| 24 | Isabel: *si* | yes |
| 25 | Ana: ok | ((both start laughing)) |

Excerpt 80 shows how learners used discursive moves for *solidarity*. They agree with each other's contributions to the task. The episode also reveals an equal involvement with the task where questions, suggestions, and repetitions demonstrate collaboration with the peer. The learners checked their ideas with the partner as they asked questions seeking for confirmation.

Luis and Alberto (Pair 5) also established a collaborative relationship. Excerpt 81 shows the interaction between the learners when they were creating a role-play. The episode started with Alberto asking his peer about the role he wanted to play in the task. Luis suggested assigning roles by flipping a coin. Once they had decided on the roles, they talked about their names as characters in the role-play.

*Excerpt 81*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Alberto: ohh! (hhh) (0.5) wanna be the tenant or the landlord? | |
| 2 | Luis: we make (.) how do you say? (.) heads or tails? (0.2) do you have money? ((Alberto looks for a coin)) that's good (0.2) that's ok, that's ok | |
| 3 | Alberto: you just | |
| 4 | Luis: I got tail | |
| 5 | Alberto: that's a cross | |
| 6 | Luis: ohh cross, <u>that</u> I pick cross | |
| 7 | Alberto: ehh? | |
| 8 | Luis: cross | |
| 9 | Alberto: cross | |
| 10 | Luis: cross for what? (hhh) | |
| 11 | Alberto: (hhh) cross for tenant | |
| 12 | Luis: ok ((they flip the coin)) (0.3) I'm the tenant | |
| 13 | Alberto: yeah | |
| 14 | Luis: ok, (hhh) the tenant is, like (.) is not the, is tenant and landlord? | |
| 15 | Alberto: *aja* | yes |
| 16 | Luis: ok (0.2) so (.) I'm gonna be the | |

|     |     |     |
| --- | --- | --- |
|     | tenant |     |
| 17  | Alberto: you have to complain about the house |     |
| 18  | Luis: yeah! (0.3) what's, what's your name? (.) like, your landlord name? |     |
| 19  | Alberto: I don't know (0.4) ahh! (0.2) Marshall, Marshall Mathers (.) Eminem |     |
| 20  | Luis: I didn't know him name, him, his name as that |     |
| 21  | Alberto: it's ok (.) *como te vas a llamar?* | what's going to be your name? |
| 22  | Luis: Felipe |     |
| 23  | Alberto: Felipe |     |
| 24  | Luis: *o otro?* | or another one? |
| 25  | Alberto: *Felipe está curado* | *Felipe is a cool name* |
| 26  | Luis: Mr. Marshall? (.) so, (.) so, I'm gonna be li-, like reading my part and you your part (0.2) ok, so (0.2) hi! Mr. Marshall (0.5) it's good like that*?* |     |
| 27  | Alberto: it's ok |     |
| 28  | Luis: I have to start with a:, hello and- like, so politic? |     |
| 29  | Alberto: no::, as you wish |     |

It was interesting to observe how the learners decided on the roles they were going to fulfill in the task. They opted for flipping a coin, and they agreed with the result. Unlike Pair 2 (dominant/passive), where Alma, the dominant learner, decided what role each learner was going to fulfill, Luis and Alberto left it to chance and agreed with each other on their participation in the tasks.

As explained in the previous chapter, during the interviews I found that the learners in both Pairs 5 and 10 had established a friendship. Luis and Alberto shared a history of knowing each other for quite a while, and they were good friends. Pair 10 (Ana and Isabel) had never met before taking the class, but they became friends during the language course as they worked together in the lessons and enjoyed talking between classes at recess. When analyzing the interaction of both pairs, learners seemed to enjoy working together, and there was even shared laughter. A reason for their collaborative behavior and enjoyment out of the task could be that they were good friends. Kos (2017) had a similar finding with one of the collaborative pairs in his study. He explained that the learners engaged with each other's suggestions and explanations when they worked with the tasks, and the reason for this could have been their good friendship.

### 6.4.3 Expert/novice

Three of the 12 pairs established an expert/novice pattern of interaction. I will present two episodes that exemplify how learners worked within this pattern. The first excerpt (82) was produced in the fourth task when Juan and Alejandro were creating a role-play. Alejandro positioned himself as the expert peer while Juan is the novice one.

*Excerpt 82*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | Juan: I don't finish yet | |
| 11 | Alejandro: *aja* (.) hold:: on (0.3) I'm <u>not</u> (.) fi::nished:: yet (0.3) *ahora si le soltamos toda la sopa* (hhh) (0.5) ahh! the painting of the walls is orrible ((mispronounces horrible)), is horrible! (0.2) the:: pa::int of the walls | yes now we describe all the problems ((they used an idiom in Spanish to say this)) |
| 12 | Juan:  are terrible | |
| 13 | Alejandro: <u>is</u> terrible (.) the paint of the walls | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | is terrible (.) *porque es <u>la</u> pintura is terrible* (0.4) each (hhh) each wall is of a different color (hhh) (0.5) color, and I found it, stressful (hhh) (0.2) also (.) also | because it is the paint ((he tries to explain that it is a non-count noun)) |
| 14 | Juan: *sin el also, pues es una lista, pues tiene esto, tiene esto* (0.3) the windows *ahora* | without also, because it is a list, well this has, this has (0.3) the windows now |
| 15 | Alejandro: ok, *aja*, the windows are very dirty | Yes |
| 16 | Juan: very dirty | |
| 17 | Alejandro: dirty (.) *luego le ponemos poner, y no puedo ver* (0.2) and:: | and then we can put, and I can't see |
| 18 | Juan: I can't | |
| 19 | Alejandro: I:: can't | |
| 20 | Juan: appreciate the pretty view | |
| 21 | Alejandro: *aja*, appreciate the view (0.5) of the city | yes |
| 22 | Juan: the kitchen | |
| 23 | Alejandro: ah! so they need to be (.) they:: need to be:: washed (0.3) ah!! *es que no le pusimos*, need to be painted (0.2) ah!! *que raro, paint, o que usemos* paint o repair | It's because we didn't put, need to be painted (0.2) that's weird, paint, or that we use paint or repair |
| 24 | Juan: *es que veo que tiene grietas* | It's because I see that it has some cracks |
| 25 | Alejandro: *mande?* | pardon me? |
| 26 | Juan: *creo que tiene grietas la pared* | I think that the wall has cracks |
| 27 | Alejandro: *si::* (.) yeah (0.15) I am not finished yet, the paint of the walls is terrible (.) each wall is: (0.2) of a different color and [inauidible] stressful (.) mmm *si tienes razón (0.2) lo, lo arreglamos entonces?* | yes

yes you are right (0.2) do we add this then? |
| 28 | Juan: *ponemos esto después* | we put this after |
| 29 | Alejandro: *si*, ahh ok (.) yeah, be washed (.) ahh! dam it! (0.9) ohh!! God! (0.8) a lot of problems | yes |
| 30 | Juan: I don't (.) *como se dice entregué?* (.) I | how do you say I |

|  | d: mmm I don't | delivered? |
| 31 | Alejandro: delivered | |

The next excerpt (83) was taken from Task 3 where Andrea and Gustavo

created a story together. This pair established an expert /novice pattern of interaction.

*Excerpt 83*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 25 | Gustavo: li::ke every day (.) she::: mmm prepared breakfast | |
| 26 | Andrea: she:: made breakfast | |
| 27 | Gustavo: *preparó y? estamos qué usando el simple past?* | prepared? we are using the simple past? |
| 28 | Andrea*: es que una es en simple past y la otra es past continuous* | It's because one is in simple past and the other is in past continuous |
| 29 | Gustavo: ok past continuous (.) *de ahi no nos podemos salir?* | we cannot go out of that? |
| 30 | Andrea: ehh? | |
| 31 | Gustavo: *de ahí no nos podemos salir?* | we cannot go out of that? |
| 32 | Andrea: es que una es en esto y una es en esto (.) o sea una historia va a ser en past continuous, como mmm I was sleeping, y la otra: en simple past, I went to school | It's because one is in this and the other is in that (.) I mean one story is in past continuous like I am was sleeping and the other is in simple past I went to school |
| 33 | Gustavo: *si se puede?* | can it be done? |
| 34 | Andrea: *si* | yes |
| 35 | Gustavo: (hhh) vamos a ver (hhh) bueno en:tonces | (hhh) let's see (hhh) well then |
| 36 | Andrea: *luego que más?* | then what else? |
| 37 | Gustavo: she prepared breakfast | |
| 38 | Andrea: aja (.) she woke up, woke w-o-a-k, no w-o-k-e, woke (.) she have, had breakfast (0.2) had breakfast | |
| 39 | Gustavo: have break- | |
| 40 | Andrea: had breakfast, had *con d* | with the letter d |
| 41 | Gustavo: had breakfast, ok (hhh) break:::fast, including coffee (hhh) | |

As mentioned before, Andrea and Gustavo had known each other before taking the English class. Gustavo used to be Andrea's Math teacher, and in the interview, he declared that his peer had become his teacher as she helped him with the language problems when they worked together. He explained that he felt comfortable whenever Andrea corrected him, and he trusted her enough to ask her for help.

Andrea assumed the role of the expert in the interaction, while Gustavo was the novice learner. Episode 83 provides a typical example of an expert/novice pair, where Andrea was the one who offered assistance to her peer. In lines 27 and 29, Gustavo produced requests that elicited Andrea's long explanation and examples of the structures they were using in the task. Andrea also helped her peer by correcting him in line 40 when she reminded him that they were using the past tense of the verbs as she told him to use *had* instead of *have*. Then Gustavo included the correct form of the verb in the next turn. Andrea also tried to include her peer in the interaction by asking him if he had more suggestions for the task when she asked him, *then what else?* This example shows how the expert learner provided assistance and encouraged the peer to participate. The novice student asked questions and accepted the peer's help. In this episode, there was engagement with LREs as the pair discussed using the simple past and the past continuous. The micro-genetic analysis showed that Andrea and Gustavo maintained *comity* throughout the language course. Excerpt 83 illustrates how Andrea, the expert learner, expresses *support* to her partner when she explained the grammatical structures. She also encouraged and allowed Gustavo to continue participating in the interaction when she asked him *luego que mas?* (then what else?).

### 6.4.4 Dominant/passive

The data showed that two of the 12 pairs (two and eight) established a dominant passive relationship. The following excerpt (84) shows how in Pair 2, Alma dominated the task, and Oscar just complied with her suggestions.

*Excerpt 84*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Alma: so:: (0.12) ahh, it's (0.7) *yo (0.10) so:: (0.2) soy a:: y tu eres b* (hhh) literally (hhh) | I (0.10) I am a and you are b |
| 2 | Oscar: (hhh) | |
| 3 | Alma: *puedes hacerlo como*, ring, ring, ring (hhh) *y luego* answer (hhh) *no?* | you can do it like ring, ring, ring (hhh) and then answer (hhh) right? |
| 4 | Oscar: *si* | Yes |
| 5 | Alma: o de frente? así como:: dejame ver (0.4) I have so:: requires (.) little requires (.) tell you (hhh) I'm not angry, but you're going to die (hhh) | or face-to-face? like:: let me see |
| 6 | Oscar: (hhh) mmm (0.2) face-to-face ((whispers)) | |
| 7 | Alma: *mande?* | excuse me? |
| 8 | Oscar: face-to-face | |
| 9 | Alma: face to face? (.) mmm (.) or:: | |
| 10 | Oscar: or:: (.) we can do, an email? | |
| 11 | Alma: an email? | |
| 12 | Oscar: like that | |
| 13 | Alma: mmm no! (0.2) face-to-face, I think (0.4) ok, hello Oscar (hhh) mmm can I | |

Right at the beginning of the interaction, Alma told her peer what role he would assume in the role-play, and Oscar did not complain, he just laughed, showing agreement. When other pairs created their role-play, they normally asked their peer who they wanted to be in the interaction, or as in the case of Pair 5, they flipped a coin. Then in lines three and five, Alma suggested what Oscar would be doing in the conversation, which he accepted. In line six, Oscar proposed doing the activity face-to-face, but he whispered when he said that. This could mean that he was afraid of making a suggestion or was just shy about contributing to the task. In lines eight through 12, Oscar made suggestions, and his peer was doubtful about them until she finally decided on how to do the role-play without checking with him. As seen in the interaction, there was a low level of mutuality shown on Alma's part since she did not engage with her partner's contribution to the task and a low level of equality as she seemed to dominate the interaction, and she was the one who made the final decisions for the activity. This behavior also occurred in other tasks during the course, as shown in excerpt 85 below.

*Excerpt 85*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Alma: o::k (.) so:: we wr:ite I will send Wendy in my own house to live the ti::me. I will send you Wendy (.) in my own house to live the time you visit. So:: a:after that we ca:n go to uni dogos and show you a little piece of Hermosill::o  o::r (0.2) you say you like to:: e:at some fried food? well what fried food do you kno::w? | ((she is writing while she speaks)) |

| 2 | Oscar: fried food? [(hmm)] | ((smiles nervously and looks at her)) |
| 3 | Alma:          [(hhh)] | |
| 4 | Oscar: I don't know mmm *chil:itos relle::nos*?? | stuffed chilies? |
| 5 | Alma: chilitos rellenos?   [(hhh)] | stuffed chilies? |
| 6 | Oscar:           [(hhh)] | |
| 7 | Alma: hay! (0.5) ahh 7    is (.) is because the first day ahh the first day (.) it's all time tha::t you came from the airport and you are tired so: you do: not want to do so many things? like tomorrow? so the first day mmm you don't need to be so:: (hhh) don't needs to be so:: (0.1) so:: to many mmm walk (.) walk? don't need to walk (0.2) too much [mmm] ((she is writing while she speaks)) | |

Alma's turns tended to be lengthy monologues, and Oscar's participation in the interaction was minimal, so there was little involvement with the task from this peer. As in the previous example (excerpt 85), Alma seemed reluctant to accept her peer's suggestions. Another interesting finding of this pair compared to the collaborative ones is that Alma used second-person pronouns or only the singular first-person pronoun. In contrast, the learners in the collaborative patterns normally used the pronoun *we* to do the tasks. Even if she sometimes involved her peer, she seemed to be working alone. One possible reason for this dominant-passive relationship could be attributed to the learners' personality traits. In the interview, Oscar admitted he was a shy person, and it was difficult for him to speak in front of others. When I interviewed Alma, she explained that she thought her partner was very shy, and she was entirely the opposite of him since she really enjoyed talking to other people. As explained in

chapter five (part 5.5), Pair 2 produced episodes that were the opposite of *solidarity* and *support (dissension)*. Being the dominant peer in the interactions, Alma tended to get impatient with Oscar, and she sometimes did not acknowledge her peer's contribution to the task. Moreover, since she dominated the conversations most of the time, she did not allow her partner to talk on several occasions. The excerpt below (86) occurred while the learners were doing the fifth task, which consisted of creating a poster for a political campaign. It shows Alma ignoring her peer's suggestions to the task from line 30 to 33 and deciding on her own what to include in the poster. In line 33, it can be observed how Alma gets impatient, rushes her peer, and tells him not to think too much about the answers. Then at the end of line 33 and in lines 35 and 37, she tells her peer what colors to use without previously consulting her decision with him.

Excerpt 86

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 30 | Oscar: *una columna de problemas y una columna de soluciones?* | A column for problems and a column for solutions? |
| 31 | Alma: three, three, possible solutions | |
| 32 | Oscar: four solutions? | |

| 33 | Alma: three problems and three three solutions (0.5) quickly, quickly, quickly, no, no think too much (.) no thinking (0.6) ok, with green, *andale ya*! | C'mon now |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 34 | Oscar: ok, *voy a buscar como se dice baches* | I am going to check how to say potholes |
| 35 | Alma: no, with red | |
| 36 | Oscar: pot holes, *dice aquí* (0.2) ehh the red? | It says here |
| 37 | Alma: red is for, is for ehh, problems | |

Gabriela and Ricardo (Pair 8) also created a dominant/passive relationship where Ricardo was the dominant peer and Gabriela the passive one. The following excerpt (87) is an example of the pattern of interaction formed by this pair.

*Excerpt 87*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 66 | Ricardo: do you ha:ve (.) mm can I have your pencil (0.22) How much they charge in the museum? | ((partner gives him her pencil and he uses it to erase a word. He continues writing)) |
| 67 | Gabriela: | ((shrugs)) |
| 68 | Ricardo: fifty pesos? I will put a 100 just to- (.) so the next day? what should she do? (.) early in the morning she will go to hiking | |
| 69 | Gabriela: the next day? | |
| 70 | Ricardo: yeah she- she likes sports and: being outside (.) she can go to climb in the Bachoco hill and (.) [maybe got to ride] her bicycle | |

| 71 | Gabriela: | [yes, but really early] | |
|----|-----------|------------------------|---|
| 72 | Ricardo: yes really early or ride a bicycle to the:: to the: new stadium | | |
| 73 | Gabriela: Bachoco is a:: ok for climbing | | |
| 74 | Ricardo: oh yeah, mountain bicycle (.) yeah, so what you prefer? go to the new stadium or climb? (0.3) mm well  I will write climbing to the *Bachoco cerro* | | Bachoco hill |
| 75 | Gabriela: *si* | | yes |
| 76 | Ricardo: but at five | | |
| 77 | Gabriela: yeah, five | | |
| 78 | Ricardo: five and a half in the morning mmm so 5:30 in the morning go to climb the Bachoco's hill? it's not a hill lets put a mountain Bachoco's moun:tai:n so after that she's going to have a really good breakfast like around nine? maybe? (.) yeah because she needs to enjoy the view and stuff like that 8:30! | | |
| 79 | Gabriela: or eight? | | |
| 80 | Ricardo: eight? | | |
| 81 | Gabriela: eight | | |
| 82 | Ricardo:  mmm  8:30  is  better  to  have breakfast | | |

As seen in excerpt 87, there were some instances where the dominant peer self-directed the questions that he asked and answered them himself. For example, in lines 68 and 74, he asked questions to get suggestions for the task, but instead of waiting for his peer to answer, he was the one who decided what to include in the task. Gabriela just agreed with her peer's contributions, and she only offered suggestions twice. From line 79, when Gabriela made a suggestion, her peer discarded it, and he

decided to use his idea. The episode also shows how Ricardo's turns tended to be longer than his peer's.

In the interviews with both students, I found that they had known each other for a while since they were studying a master's program together. In the first interview (Excerpt 88), when I asked Gabriela how she felt about being corrected by his peer, she mentioned that it was fine because she thought he was a smart person, and she learned more from him.

*Excerpt 88*

Interviewer: ok, mmm did Ricardo correct you with vocabulary or grammar when you were doing the activity?

Gabriela: yes, Ricardo is, is smart, is a smart boy, yes.

Interviewer: How did you feel when he correct you?

Gabriela: No, I… I, for me is really good because I learn more.

In the final interview (excerpt 89), when I asked Gabriela about her experience working with her peer for four weeks, she admitted feeling a little nervous because she sometimes did not understand what Ricardo was saying. One reason why Gabriela assumed the role of the passive learner in the interaction could be that she did not feel confident enough about her language proficiency. Her participation in the tasks was minimal, and her turns in every interaction were short.

*Excerpt 89*

Interviewer: how did you feel working with Ricardo during the course?

Gabriela: a little mmm nervous because Ricardo is very emm a little ehh *un poco incómodo* [a little uncomfortable]

Interviewer: Ok, uncomfortable?

Gloria: yes, a little uncomfortable, but that is ok (.) don't worry: (.) the problem is I'm not understand Ricardo (.) the speaking, yeah

In Ricardo's last interview, he explained that he appreciated his joint work with Gabriela and considered her a friend. He also mentioned that she was a responsible and hard-working person who really tried to learn the foreign language. As explained above, Gabriela might have assumed the passive role because she had difficulties understanding her peer. In the interview, Ricardo also mentioned her proficiency level as he explained that Gabriela was trying to learn the language.

### 6.4.5 Dominant/dominant pattern

When analyzing the data, I found that two pairs (Pairs 4 and 11) established a dominant/dominant pattern of interaction. However, as explained previously, Pair 4 changed their pattern of interaction by the end of the course once they got to know each other while they engaged in social inquiry. Excerpt 90 is an example of how Martha and Carla worked at the beginning of the language course.

*Excerpt 90*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comment |
|---|---|---|
| 47 | Martha: *a ver  (0.3) de que hacemos una entre las dos o cada una,. una cada una?* | let's see (0.3) do we do one together or each one does one? |
| 48 | Carla: *para hacerlo mas rápido cada quien una* | to do it faster each one can do one |
| 49 | Martha: *y como le pongo? equis nombre ?* | and what do I name her? any name? |
| 50 | Carla: Mary: (hhh) (0.3) *como, como el:: ejemplo* | Mary:: (hhh) (0.3) like, like in the example |
| 51 | Martha: *a ver le voy a poner Mary* (0.3) once upon a time: (0.3) wake up | I am going to name her Mary ((they started writing the stories separately, even |

| | |
|---|---|
| 52 | Teacher: remember that it's one paper for the two of you (.) you have to work together with one paper (.) you're going to give me one paper with the two stories |
| 53 | Martha: ok |
| 54 | Teacher: because then, you're working alone, I want you to work together |
| 55 | Carla: ok |
| 56 | Martha: *entonces con la mía, porque ya voy más avanzada* ((smiles)) (.) ok "once upon a time, Mary was sleeping when suddenly (.) she heard a noise, outside her window" — then with mine because I'm am ahead now |
| 57 | Carla: hm |
| 58 | Martha: "she woke up quickly (.) to see what was happening outside" |
| 59 | Carla: mmm (0.3) she thought:: (0.2) there was a- (0.2) thief |
| 60 | Martha: *no, de que::* (.) she thought, *o sea penso que había* — no, like (.) she thought, I mean, she thought |
| 61 | Carla: *si: eso dije,* ((in an irritated tone of voice)) she thought (0.5) ehh, hay que poner de que, she was:: so:: scared (0.5) that:: she: (0.2) thought (0.5) that a thief:: — yes, I said that (0.5) ehh let's put like she was:: so:: scared (0.5) that:: she: (0.2) thought (0.5) that a thief:: |

As seen in excerpt 90, the learners decided to work separately to finish the task quickly. This indicates a cooperative behavior instead of students collaborating to construct the task together. It was not until the teacher reminded them that it was a joint activity when they began working together. In line 56, Martha started by

dominating the task saying that they had to use her story since she had written more. Then in line 59, Carla made a suggestion for the task, but Martha seemed not to accept the contribution, repeated what her peer said, and presented it as her own idea. In the next turn, Carla emphasized the word *that* indicating she had already said what Martha was repeating. The episode shows that when one peer (Martha) tried to dominate the task, the other resisted and made suggestions as well. There is an absence of *support* and *solidarity* in this interaction from lines 56 to 61. As observed in this excerpt, instead of showing appreciation for her peer's contribution to the task and encouraging her peer to talk in the interaction, Martha seems to ignore Carla's idea, and she seems to pretend that it is hers. This lack of awareness of the partner's contribution attests the opposite of support in this dominant-dominant interaction.

Pair 11 also established a dominant-dominant pattern of interaction during the language course. In excerpt 91, Daniel and Felipe were creating a role-play (Task 4), but they had difficulty deciding what to include in the task.

*Excerpt 91*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 94 | Felipe: *luego le puse,* I'll be there in a few minutes, *luego:::* | then I put then |
| 95 | Daniel: *toc toc, toc, toc* | knock, knock |
| 96 | Felipe: *toc, toc? no voy a poner eso* | I'm not going to write that |
| 97 | Daniel: toc (.) *como se escribe? no::: es en inglés, en inglés es* knock knock | how is it written? no, it's in English, in English is knock, knock |
| 98 | Felipe: que no! wey, no seas payaso | I said no! don't be a clown |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 99 | Daniel: *ponle* ring, ring *pues, es más internacional* (hhh) | put ring, ring then, it's more international |
| 100 | Felipe: (hhh) | |
| 101 | Daniel: knock, knock *y ya* | Knock, knock and that's it |
| 102 | Felipe: *no wey, lo voy a dejar así* | no dude, I am going to leave it like that |
| 103 | Daniel: *pero es una conversación* | but it's a conversation |
| 104 | Felipe: *no, solo ponle*, yes, I have a big problem, my apartment is a disaster (.) the windows is cracked, my refrigerator is scratched | no, just put |
| 105 | Daniel: <u>*ya*</u> *pues dejale así, ya empezamos, ahora si, te digo los problemas* | just leave it like that then, and we start now, I will tell you the problems |

As seen in excerpt 91, both learners struggled to reach agreement. The interaction began with Felipe reading what he had written for the conversation. Then in the next turn, Daniel suggested adding the sound of someone knocking at the door, but he used the Spanish onomatopoeia *toc toc toc*. Felipe disagreed, and he told him straightforwardly that he would not include that in the role-play. Daniel insisted on adding the onomatopoeia, but his peer insulted him by telling him not to behave like a clown (turn 98). Daniel then suggested adding the word *ring* instead of knock, but even though both peers laughed, Felipe did not seem to consider his peer's ideas. In line 103, Daniel explained his reason for including either onomatopoeia, but once again, Felipe rejected his peer's contribution and told him what to say. Finally, in line 105, Daniel responded in an annoyed manner and told him to leave it the way his peer wanted and continue with the task. While both learners were involved in the task, their

decision-making process was characterized by disagreements and difficulty reaching consensus (Storch, 2001a, p. 279). This episode exhibited a low level of mutuality, and it also shows how Felipe had a higher degree of authority over the task. Unlike the dominant/passive pattern, Daniel refused to assume a passive role, and he provided suggestions and stated the motives for his contribution to the task. Despite their dominant/dominant relationship, the learners were able to complete all five tasks.

Pair 11 (Daniel and Felipe) had a similar behavior throughout the course, and as explained in chapter five, the learners also produced episodes of *dissension*. There was a lack of *support* in their interactions, and they sometimes got impatient with one another. In some cases, there was even ridicule since they used derisive language. The data seems to indicate that the absence of *comity*, that is, when learners use discourse which is the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*, relates to patterns of interaction where students developed a dominant/dominant or dominant/passive relationship.

## 6.5 Summary and discussion

The second research question investigated how learners used discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* to create *comity* over time. The findings suggest that only the frequency of discourse used for *social inquiry* increased with some dyads from the beginning until the end of the course. Talking about their private selves with their peers allowed learners to establish affective ties, as shown in the examples from the interactions of Pair 4 (Carla and Martha). Carla included her peer in her personal world using the discourse of *social inquiry* to share *restricted attitudes* (Aston, 1988). This did not occur from the first time they worked together, but it developed gradually during off-task talk. The data also seems to indicate that the passing of time did not affect the use of social discourse moves to negotiate for *solidarity* but rather by the

nature of the task. Tasks that involved issues related to the participants' context (e.g. talking about their hometown) seem to elicite more instances of *solidarity*. In these tasks, learners shared their oppinions and feelings about matters of their *common world* (Aston, 1993). It would be worthwhile studying the role of tasks in providing opportunities for *solidariy* and *support*.

The micro-genetic analysis of the pair's relationships showed how these evolved during the language course. Friendly relationships developed over time within most of the dyads. The data suggested that some collaborative and expert/novice pairs established a good friendship in the classroom, which helped their interaction when working with the language tasks. Such was the case of the collaborative pair 10, where Isabel explained that she felt more comfortable working with a friend. These learners listened to each other during the interactions and resolved linguistic problems together, reflecting a collaborative behavior that could be explained by their friendship (Koss, 2017). However, not all pairs created friendly ties (Pairs 2 and 11), but they behaved differently when they worked with other classmates. For instance, the classroom observation field notes and the participants' interviews revealed that Alma (Pair 2) established a close friendship with Flora, and they worked collaboratively in every class. A different situation occurred with Pair 8 (Ricardo/Gabriela), who had known each other before taking the English course but formed a dominant/passive relationship (Kos, 2017). As the interviews reflected, Gabriela was insecure about participating more in the interactions due to her lack of proficiency in the language. This could imply that language proficiency may also impact the way learners interacted when solving the tasks. In sum, working with

friends was beneficial for some dyads and facilitated task performance (Kutnick & Kington, 2005).

Triangulating the data from the interaction transcripts, classroom observation field notes, and interview transcripts with both the teacher and the students allowed me to do a general analysis of the whole English class environment. The results showed that the class displayed characteristics of a cohesive group (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Leslie, 2015). The group cohesiveness gradually developed during the four weeks of classes, and it was enhanced by the learners' spending more time together and creating a space for *comity*. The teacher's encouragement and her role in the classroom also contributed to the class unity. It was suggested that students had a better opportunity of establishing group cohesion during the intensive summer course than in the regular semester.

The analysis of the peer relationships during the language course also revealed that learners formed certain patterns of interaction (Storch, 2001a) when they worked together with the language tasks. Most of the pairs built symmetrical relationships: five established a collaborative interaction and one a dominant-dominant interaction. Five dyads created an asymmetrical relationship, among which three were expert/novice, and two were dominant-passive. The majority of the pairs remained stable throughout the course. However, as seen in the results, Pair 4 gradually changed their interaction pattern as they got to know each other better through *social inquiry*. They moved from being a dominant-dominant pair to establishing a collaborative relationship when they shared their personal selves with the peer. These results were similar to Roberson (2014), who also found a shift to a more collaborative pattern when participants developed personal familiarity, which allowed them to feel more

comfortable when working together. The results of this study suggest that the interpersonal relationships established by the learners might have influenced the pattern of interaction.

The findings showed that the pairs that created collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction engaged in more episodes where they used discourse to negotiate for *support* and *solidarity,* as it will be further explained in section 7.2 of the quantitative analysis. This result seems to indicate that *solidarity* and *support* in pair interactions could be a contributing factor for creating peer relationships characterized by a higher equality and mutuality of engagement. Therefore, I argue that establishing supportive pair interactions where learners use discursive moves to negotiate for *solidarity* and *support*, and where they engage in *social inquiry* promotes collaborative relationships or a collaborative mindset (Sato & Ballinger, 2012), which has been found to facilitate the provision and effectiveness of corrective feedback.

As presented in this chapter, the data seems to suggest that *dissension* or the opposite of *solidarity* and *support* occurred mostly within pairs that established a dominant/passive and dominant/dominant pattern of interaction. Episodes of *dissension* were found in Pairs 2 (dominant/passive), 4 (dominant/dominant), 8 (dominant/passive), and 11 (dominant/dominant). There was an absence of *support* reflected by a lack of awareness of the partner's contribution to the task. Moreover, impatience and even ridicule (pair 11) were observed in parts of the interactions produced by these learners. The examples shown in this chapter seem to indicate that the absence of *comity* is related to the dominant patterns of interaction.

**Chapter 7: Findings and Discussion for Research Question four: Opportunities for Languaging Within Social Discourse**

The previous chapters showed how learners used discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* to build *comity* in the EFL classroom. They also described how the peer relationships developed over time and revealed the learners' attitudes towards peer interaction. This chapter provides the findings related to the fourth research question, which explores to what extent engaging in social discourse affords opportunities for language learning as learners focus on language by producing language related episodes. The examples show how the learners' social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* opened a space for them to focus on language by asking questions about grammar or vocabulary and by helping each other resolve linguistic problems (e.g., LREs).

The first part of the chapter provides a qualitative analysis. It gives examples from the data of how learners produced lexical, phonological, and grammatical LREs while using discursive moves to negotiate *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*. The section shows how students focused on the language while working together by asking questions, explaining, or correcting each other on vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation of words in English. The second part of the chapter provides a quantitative analysis of the distribution of discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*, and language related episodes across pairs and tasks. Finally, the quantitative analysis discusses the simultaneous occurrence of social discourse (*support*, *solidarity*, and *social inquiry*) and LREs.

**7.1 Qualitative analysis: Focusing on language during social discourse**

The fourth research question investigates how the discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* to negotiate *comity* relate to opportunities for language learning. In this study, I followed Storch's (2008) and Fernandez Dobao's (2016) description of language learning as the acquisition of both new knowledge (e.g., grammar, lexis) and consolidation or extension of existing knowledge (Swain & Lapkin, 1998). I analyzed the learners' talk for instances of languaging. According to Swain (2006), *languaging* is the "process of making meaning and shaping knowledge through language" (p. 98), and it represents a source of language learning (Swain, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2013; Swain & Watanabe 2013). From a sociocultural perspective, learning is a social activity mediated by language, and consequently, learning occurs during languaging. Following Martin-Beltrán, Chen, Guzmán, and Merrills' (2016) study, I operationalized the language-related episode as the unit of analysis for *languaging* (Fernandez Dobao, 2016; Mozaffari, 2017; Rouhshad & Storch, 2016; Swain & Lapkin, 2003). This first part of the chapter provides examples from the data where pairs engaged in *languaging* while producing discursive moves of *social inquiry*, *support*, and *solidarity* in their interactions.

**7.1.1 Social Inquiry Provides a Context to Focus on Language**

As illustrated in chapter four, learners created opportunities to get to know each other by talking about school and their personal life. The data also showed that peers seemed to engage more in *social inquiry* as they worked together in class over time (see chapter six). *Social inquiry* occurred both in the student's native language and in the foreign language. While peers were involved in these episodes, they created a context for *languaging* (Swain, 2006) as they produced language related episodes.

Seven of the 12 pairs engaged in *social inquiry* while they worked with the language tasks. Only Pairs 1 (Juan/Alejandro), 4 (Carla/Martha), 5 (Luis/Alberto), 9 (Gustavo/Andrea), and 11 (Javier/Abirl) produced LRES while involved in *social inquiry*. This corresponds to 14 of the 60 episodes of *social inquiry* in the data. This section discusses and provides examples showing how social discourse moves for *social inquiry* relate to opportunities for languaging during on-task and off-task talk.

Juan and Alejandro produced three correctly resolved LREs (two grammatical and one lexical) while engaged in *social inquiry* episodes. In excerpt 92, Juan and Alejandro were working on the fifth task (creating a poster). While they were solving the task together, they engaged in a *social inquiry* episode.

*Excerpt 92:* talking about family

| Transcript line | Original utterance | Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 38 | Juan: ok yeah, how much- ehh how much- ehh how much married? | ((struggling to make a question)) |
| 39 | Alejandro: how <u>many</u> years? married?  how many years I have been married? | ((provides a recast)) |
| 40 | Juan: yeah | |
| 41 | Alejandro: mmm five years married | |
| 42 | Juan: ohh!!  how old are you? | |
| 43 | Alejandro: I have 33 | |
| 44 | Juan: ohh and that's many (.) my brother married last year | |
| 45 | Alejandro: and how old is him? | |
| 46 | Juan: 29 | |
| 47 | Alejandro: yeah, yeah, I got married at 28 | |
| 48 | Juan: the three are honest | ((talking about his siblings)) |

| 49 | Alejandro: what? |
| 50 | Juan: the three::: are ho- honest |
| 51 | Alejandro: ahh ok yeah |
| 52 | Juan: I am twenty-four, my sister 20 |

Juan opened a space for *social inquiry* by asking his partner about his personal life, which provided an opportunity for *languaging (*Swain, 2006*).* Before engaging in this episode, the students had agreed on how to do the task. When Juan tried to ask his partner how long he had been married, he used the incorrect quantifier *much.* Alejandro then provided a recast with the correct structure *how many? how many years I have been married?.* This excerpt illustrates how engaging in *social inquiry* offered these learners an opportunity to focus on language. Juan experimented with language as he formulated a hypothesis of what he wanted to ask, and then he tested it (Swain, 1998, 2000). However, the utterance was not well structured, and Alejandro provided corrective feedback in the form of a recast. In this way, both of these students focused on language while engaged in *social inquiry* to get to know each other better.

Luis and Alberto produced seven LREs (three grammatical/ four lexical) during *social inquiry* episodes. They correctly resolved six of them, and one was incorrectly resolved (grammatical LRE). The following example (Excerpt 93) was produced during an off-task talk episode. Learners had just finished working with the fourth task, and Luis started telling his peer about one of his friends.

*Excerpt 93:* talking about friends

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 302 | Luis: I was watching this, this (.) friend who doesn't have like, like gas for | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | cooking, and she just cook in his, in his | |
| | (.) *plancha* | iron |
| 303 | Alberto: (hhh) ohh | |
| 304 | Luis: that's so:: engineer | |
| 305 | Alberto: but [inaudible] it dries the | |
| | pizza, right? | |
| 306 | Luis: no, he puts just his, his (.) his | |
| | *sartén* and he like put a | Pan |
| 307 | Alejandro: a pan | |
| 308 | Luis: no, is, like | |
| 309 | Alejandro: a pan | |
| 310 | Luis: pan (.) is [the name?] | |
| 311 | Alberto:        [*sartén*] is pan | pan |
| 312 | Luis: ohh, ohhh  (.) sorry (hhh) | |
| 313 | Alberto: pan is bread (hhh) | ((the word pan in Spanish means bread)) |
| 314 | Luis: pan is bread (hhh) yeah (0.2) I'm gonna show you a picture, wait, wait | |
| 315 | Alberto: (hhh) | |
| 316 | Luis: pure engineering | |
| 317 | Alberto: that's a pot | |
| 318 | Luis: a pot? | |
| 319 | Alberto: yeah | |
| 320 | Luis: ok, thank you (.) the, the one from behind (.) from, under under? | |
| 321 | Alberto: this is a pot, this is an iron | |
| 322 | Luis: iron! (0.30) we're gonna keep this, we're gonna keep this | |
| 323 | Alberto: yeah, totally | |

In excerpt 93, learners were engaged in a *social inquiry* episode as Luis shared a personal experience about one of his friends. Using social discursive moves of *social inquiry* offered learners an opportunity for *languaging* as they produced lexical LREs. In line 306, Luis explained how his friend heats his pizza on a pan, but he used the Spanish word *sartén* since he did not know how to say it in English. Alberto gave him the correct word in English, but Luis did not accept it or did not understand what his partner meant (line 308). Alberto repeated the word, and his partner asked him if pan meant *sartén*, so he again provided the correct answer, and Luis apologized for not believing him. In line 314, Luis showed a picture to his peer, and in the subsequent turns, Alberto told him the name of the objects in English. Luis also thanked Alberto for explaining him the correct vocabulary in line 20. In this episode, learners were also involved in language play as they made humorous comparisons between their L1 and the foreign language (lines 313, 314). Since both learners had been engaged in a lexical LRE for the word pan (*sartén* in Spanish), in line 313, Alberto joked saying that pan was bread in Spanish, and his peer agreed with him by repeating the sentence. Then both learners laughed about the joke. Episodes like this were common between Alberto and Luis, and they helped them to create affect. Consequently, these instances had a positive impact on the peer's friendly relationship or *comity*.

Luis and Alberto talked about different issues when they worked together in the classroom. When I observed these learners throughout the course, I noticed that they liked one of their female classmates. At the beginning of the class, they sat in the first row in front of the whiteboard, but as time passed, they started moving to the back of the classroom until they sat right next to the student they liked. I confirmed this when I listened to their interactions since they talked about her or flirted with her.

The following excerpt (94) occurred during an off-task talk episode once the learners had finished the second task.

Excerpt 94. *The one with the curly hair?*

290   Luis: so, do you like the one from the (.) from behind the classroom? you know
          (0.2) <u>ama</u>zing!

291   Alberto: the one with the curly hair?

292   Luis: the what?

293   Alberto: curly hair

294   Luis: yeah (0.5) she's like thin, with a tiny wai::st? (.) how do you say *cintura*?
          [waist]

295   Alberto: hips

296   Luis: yeah with the tiny hips, hips (.) no wait hips are these, like <u>these</u>, it's like
          the:: ahh *la cintura,* la::: (0.5) the waist, the waist, <u>I</u> think, (hhh) you got it
          (hhh)

297   Alberto: (hhh)


In this episode, we can see how both learners are involved in *social inquiry* as they talked about the woman they liked in the classroom. Both Alberto and Luis mostly used the FL to communicate, and sometimes when they encountered a linguistic problem, they switched to their L1 to resolve the difficulties. This *social inquiry* episode involves a lexical LRE as they tried to find the English word for *cintura* (waist). Excerpt 94 shows how learners engaged in collaborative dialogue and tried to find solutions for their linguistic problem (Swain, 2013), in this case, how to say waist in English. In line 294, Luis produced the correct vocabulary word, but he was not sure about this. It was not until his friend provided an incorrect answer that he compared both words, and he realized that *waist* was the right choice for what he

wanted to explain. This example shows how learners maintained *comity* as they used the FL for *social inquiry*.

Gustavo and Andrea produced a lexical LRE while engaged in *social inquiry*. The following example occurred during an on-task talk episode. In this excerpt (95), Gustavo shared with his peer an anecdote of how he learned the word 'garbage.' Learners were working on the fifth task, and they were giving suggestions for their poster.

*Excerpt 95. Puro inglés no?*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 35 | Gustavo: *entonces* (.) bottles, *botellas, no?* (.) *entonces sería* garbage? | then (.) bottles, right? (.) then it will be garbage |
| 36 | Andrea: *aja*, es garbage can | yes, it is garbage can |
| 37 | Gustavo*: okey::* thanks a lot:: (hhh) (0.30) *en el 94 andaba de Colorado, en gringolandia y:: (.) y llegue un día y estaba trabjando, y:: y:: un italiano, que era   el responsable de (.) de ahí* | in the year 1994 I was in Colorado, in the United States, and I arrived one day, and I was working, and an Italian man, who was  the responsible of the place |
| 38 | Andrea: *aja* | yes |
| 39 | Gustavo: *puro inglés no?,  nada de español* | only English, right? no Spanish |
| 40 | Andrea: (hhh) ((laughs to show agreement)) | |
| 41 | Gustavo: *y recuerdo que esa palabrita, yo nunca la había escuchado no* | and I remember that word little word, I had never heard it before |
| 42 | Andrea: garbage? | |

| 43 | Gustavo: *si* | yes |
| 44 | Andrea: *basura* | garbage |
| 45 | Gustavo: take the garbage Gustavo! (.) garbage! grrr *(.) tiró la::, estaba haciendo pastas, tiró la pasta, is garbage* grr! | he threw the::, he was cooking pasta, (hhh) he threw the pasta ((both learners start laughing)) |

Gustavo opened the episode by checking for confirmation with his peer about the words *bottle* and *garbage*. Then Andrea told him that the correct word is garbage can. Gustavo thanked her and shared an anecdote from when he heard the word *garbage* for the first time. Gustavo felt secure enough with his peer to talk about personal experiences. As I described in the previous chapter, Gustavo and Andrea have a shared history of knowing each other before taking this course when she was his student in a Math class, and that might be a reason why he felt confident enough to talk about his experience. Engaging in *social inquiry* allowed these learners to maintain *comity* throughout the course. In one of the interviews (Excerpt 96), Gustavo explained that he was not very sociable and that he had only worked with three other classmates, but he felt he did not have the same interaction with them as with Andrea.

*Excerpt 96.*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
| --- | --- |
| Entrevistador: ¿Con qué otros compañeros has trabajado en este curso? Andrea es la que principalmente estas trabajando, ¿con quién más? | Who have you worked with? Andrea is the person who you are mainly working with, who else? |
| *Gustavo: si, ehh Martha* | yes, with Martha |
| *Entrevistador: ahh con Martha ¿cómo te has sentido con Martha?, ¿es diferente trabajar con Andrea?* | how have you felt working with Martha? Is it different than working with Andrea? |

| *Gustavo: Esta bien, interaccionamos un poco menos, pero eh… también no, no, no este, no hay problema, eh… veo que eh… que Martha sabe bastante, vocabulario y todo eso, las reglas* | It is fine, we interact a little less, but ehh also there is no problem, I see that ehh, that Martha knows a lot of vocabulary and all that, the rules |
| --- | --- |

It is interesting to observe that in excerpt 96 above, Gustavo mainly communicated using his L1. The first language plays a key role in interaction since learners use it as a cognitive tool to mediate the learning of another language (e.g., Antón & DiCamilla; Brooks & Donato, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2000) and to help them manage and complete the classroom tasks more effectively (Storch & Aldosari, 2010). In this study, the data shows that the L1 was commonly used to mediate the understanding of complicated language structures or vocabulary and comprehend the tasks better to complete them. The L1 also had the social function of helping learners establish *comity*. Although most of the students tried to communicate in the target language during their interactions, even when engaged in *social inquiry*, some pairs relied on their L1 to share their personal experiences and information with their partners. Such was the case of Gustavo, who in the interviews explained feeling more comfortable and relaxed using the L1 with Andrea, which helped him establish *comity* with her. He explained that when he worked with Luis or Alberto, he felt anxious because they tried to force him to use the FL. He mentioned that he did not understand everything they said, even if they explained something about the FL. He was very nervous since they were only using English. He explained that this did not happen when he worked with Andrea. Gustavo mentioned that she was more patient with him, and she allowed him to *cheat* by using Spanish to organize the task or to explain the grammar/vocabulary. Using the L1 allowed Gustavo to bond with his partner by

sharing his personal experiences, and he felt more comfortable asking her questions whenever he encountered language problems.

### *Summary: Social inquiry provides a context to focus on language.*

It is in *social inquiry* when students talk about themselves, and they get to know each other better. The excerpts presented above revealed that the learners in this study did ask personal questions or recounted personal experiences when they worked together. Engaging in *social inquiry* provided a context for *languaging* by producing LREs. These results are similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study as they discovered that *social inquiry* represented a way of starting a conversation and opened a space to ask questions about language.

The examples showed that learners produced both lexical (e.g., Pairs 5 and 9) and grammatical (e.g., Pair 1) LREs while sharing personal information besides working with the task. In the case of Juan and Alejandro, their *social inquiry* afforded opportunities to experiment with language and to provide corrective feedback in the form of a recast. Engaging in *social inquiry* was a way of learning new words from the partner, as it happened with Luis and Alberto. It also helped them reinforce their vocabulary knowledge by sharing a personal experience, as in Gustavo's case.

In some cases, such as with Pairs 1 and 5, learners continued using the FL while engaged in *social inquiry*. This provided more opportunities for language production, and as Swain (2013) explains, "the act of verbalizing is critical in the process of language learning" (p. 200). That is, the more opportunities students have to use the language, the more they can notice the limitations of their FL knowledge and find ways of solving their difficulties. Even if learners produced very few LREs during *social inquiry*, the findings show that the discoursive moves used by students

to get to know each other better (*social inquiry*) can relate to opportunities for languaging and language production. What is more, *social inquiry* also helps learners create friendly relations (*comity*) in the classroom. Consequently, they feel more comfortable when working with the partner, and they establish a context of trust that allows them to take risks with the FL and produce further LREs (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). The following section illustrates how using discursive moves to negotiate *support* in interaction also provided students with a context for focusing on language.

**7.1.2 Using Discursive Moves of Support Affords Opportunities for *Languaging***

As shown in chapter five, support was observed as learners encouraged their partners to participate or allowed them to have a turn in the interaction, and when they showed appreciation of their partner's contribution to the discourse by providing encouragement or positive feedback. Following Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study, I also coded episodes of *support* when students produced co-constructions (Foster & Ohta, 2005) as they helped each other complete an idea in the foreign language. According to Foster and Ohta (2005), co-constructions are "the joint creation of an utterance, whether one person completes what another has begun, or whether various people chime in to create an utterance" (p. 420). In this study, to better understand how *comity* was created and maintained in peer interaction, I analyzed all the instances of co-constructions in the data where learners showed *support* to each other. As explained in chapters four and five, co-constructions were divided into two categories: (1) instances where learners helped a peer finish his/her sentences by providing ideas or (2) instances where learners helped a peer by offering word choices, repairing syntax, recasting and explaining a grammatical, lexical, or phonological LRE. It is important to note that the second type of co-constructions was

not included as part of the total number of *support* episodes since it is a kind of LRE. Therefore, the episodes where the peers helped one another through repairs, recasts, and grammatical/lexical explanations are not a predictor of the LREs. The qualitative analysis is included in this study to illustrate how learners support each other when they encounter language problems and how this can help them to build *comity* in the language classroom.

The analysis showed that the episodes of *support* were the most common in the data (n=524). All the participants engaged in episodes where they expressed *support* in different ways. I will now present examples from the data where learners expressed *support* through offering opportunities to participate in language-related episodes. The first two examples show peers allowing each other to have a turn in the interaction. The third example shows learners providing positive feedback and encouragement to the joint work. The final section provides examples of co-construction where learners offer ideas to complete a sentence or utterance.

### *Encouraging and allowing partners to have a turn in the interaction.*

Carlos and Gloria established a collaborative pattern of interaction. The following example shows how these learners worked collaboratively with the first task. While Carlos and Gloria (Pair 3) were working together, they expressed *support* to the partner as they included their peer in the conversation by asking questions that elicited ideas for the task.

*Excerpt 97*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Carlos: ehh sorry (0.4) mmm *vamos a empezar a ver* (.) mmm (0.3) *a ver*:: (.) af-, af- (.) after this? *que hacemos?* | let's start (.) mmm (0.3) let's see:: (.) aft- (.) after this? what do we do? |
| 2 | Gloria: mmm *podemos decir*, first of all we go to [inaudible] (0.4) how do you say *cómodo?* | mmm we can say first of all we go to (0.4) how do you say comfortable? |
| 3 | Carlos: comfortable | |
| 4 | Gloria: pretty and comfortable (0.7) however? *sin embargo*? | however? |
| 5 | Carlos: *aja* (.) *como se escribe después?* afte- after this? | yes (.) how do you write after? |
| 6 | Gloria: after::: (.) a:fter that | |
| 7 | Carlos: after that? ok, we:: (.) we visit? we can vi:sit mmm to*: Ciudad:: de Mexico*? or? | Mexico City |
| 8 | Gloria: we visit Teotihuacan | |

Carlos started the task by acknowledging they were both working together when he told his partner, *let's start*. The use of first-person plural pronouns indicates mutuality and joint ownership of the task (Storch, 2001). Carlos started by including his peer in the task when he asked *what do we do* in order to encourage his partner to contribute to the task. In this way, he expressed *support* as he did not dominate the interaction but considered Gloria's ideas instead. Allowing the peer to participate opened a space to produce lexical LREs in the interaction. This example shows how Carlos and Gloria provided each other with opportunities for speaking by asking for suggestions to the task or by producing lexical language related episodes (Lines 2, 4, and 5).

In the example below, Flora and Sarah (Pair 6) worked together to solve the first task. As mentioned before, the learners created a collaborative pattern of interaction, and it was very common in their conversations to encourage each other to contribute by asking for ideas in order to complete the tasks.

*Excerpt 98.*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 38 | Flora: San Carlos a::nd then? | |
| 39 | Sarah: a::nd? mmm climbing, and after cli:mbing the Tetakawi *cerro como se dice*? | how do you say hill? |
| 40 | Flora: ce:rro? mmm (0.4) hill! | hill? |
| 41 | Sarah: hill, Tetakawi hill (.) cli:mbing | |

Excerpt 98 shows how Flora encourages her partner's participation by asking her for more suggestions to the task in line 38. This opened a space for learners to focus on language as Sarah asks how to say the word *cerro* (hill) in English. The analysis showed that this pair produced episodes similar to the one presented above, where one student asked for the peer's contribution to the interaction, and this allowed them to engage in languaging by producing lexical or grammatical LREs. Flora and Sarah created a collaborative relationship where both students had an equal contribution to the task, and they engaged with each other's suggestions.

### *Providing encouragement and positive feedback.*

The following excerpt (99) shows Ana and Isabel working with the third task. In this episode, *support* is expressed as Ana provides positive feedback to the joint work.

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 49 | Isabel: *ahh, pero ya le pusimos le llamó, ya sigue que fue a su casa (.) después su amigo fue a su casa* (0.2) after that her friend had (0.2) gone to her house? | ahh we already wrote that she called him, the next part is that her friend went to her house |
| 50 | Ana: *si pero con el* had, participle or only:: only in past? have gone or went? | yes but with had |
| 51 | Isabel: *bueno yo creo que si queda* went | well, I think that went can also be used |
| 52 | Ana: *aja si*, went (.) *perfecto* | yes, yes, went (.) perfect |

In this episode, the students engage in a grammatical LRE. Both learners were trying to resolve whether to use past perfect, present perfect, or simple past. Once they decided to use the simple past to complete their story, Ana expresses *support* when she provides positive feedback to their joint work as she uses the word *perfect* to describe their choice of structure. These learners created a collaborative relationship where they relied on each other to solve language problems.

### *Co-construction: offering ideas to help the peer.*

Clancy and McCarthy (2014) view co-constructions as conversational episodes where a second speaker jointly creates utterances "across turn-boundaries, in collaboration with a previous speaker or speakers" (p. 431). Co-constructions occurred when learners helped their peers finish his/her sentence by offering ideas. The following excerpt (100) is an example of a co-construction where Sarah and Flora (Pair 6) are creating a role-play together.

Excerpt 100

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 55 | Sarah: ohh my God, I:: (.) I::'m going to send you a person, for repair (.) the, the ceiling (.) the kitchen ceiling but, I can't:: | |
| 56 | Flora: help you with the floor | |
| 57 | Sarah: help you with the floor (0.2) si until you, pay mmm *la renta* (hhh) ((both peers start laughing)) (0.3) ok, I can:: (.) send you (.) a person (.) a person *o cual es el especialista para reparar eso?* | yes <br><br> The rent <br><br><br><br> Which is the specialist that repairs that? |
| 58 | Flora: ehh (.) is the-, is the ceiling right? (.) could be the roofer? | |
| 59 | Sarah: ahh, roofer ya lo habían dicho verdad? | They have said it right? |
| 60 | Flora: aja | Yes |
| 61 | Sarah: I can send you a roofer | |

In this example, Sarah is creating her part of the conversation. In line 56, Flora helps her peer construct her utterance by offering an idea, and then she allows Sarah to continue with the interaction without dominating the task. A lexical LRE is produced within this episode of support in line 57. Sarah does not know how to say the word *roofer* in English, so she asks her peer for assistance.

Excerpt 101 is characterized by learners co-constructing utterances while doing the first task. Gloria starts the episode, and Carlos offers her an idea to complete the sentence. In line 194, Gloria continues creating the schedule, but she seems not to

know what to write next. Then in line 195, Carlos expresses support to his peer when he offered an idea to help her complete her utterance. From line 195 until line 203, the learners echoed each other's utterances based on Carlos' suggestion. A grammatical LRE occurred from line 197 to line 200. In line 197, Carlos continues helping his peer with the task by saying *visitaremos* in Spanish, and then he gives his English translation *we visit.* In line 198, Gloria repairs her partner's error and indicates that the future tense is needed in this sentence. In the next line, Carlos uses the structure provided by his peer.

*Excerpt 101*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 188 | Gloria: in the morning (.) we:: | |
| 189 | Carlos: we eat breakfast in (0.3) in tacos *del Chino* (hhh) | Tacos del Chino is a traditional restaurant in the students' hometown |
| 190 | Gloria: (ahhh) (0.3) in the morning:: we:: | |
| 191 | Carlos: we:: eat breakfast (.) in the morning | |
| 192 | Gloria: mmm  tacos of, barbecue tacos (hhh) bar:::because tacos | |
| 193 | Carlos: chompa tacos (hhh) | |
| 194 | Gloria: and after that we: (.) we visit? (0.4) we show her the, city (.) we: | |
| 195 | Carlos: we? (.) vamos a ir a catedral de ahi? xxx al cerro de la: Campana? | Are we going to the Cathedral from there? to the *Cerro de la campana?* |
| 196 | Gloria: we visit: *cerro de la: Campana?* | *Cerro de la Campana* is a |

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| | | landmark in the students' hometown |
|---|---|---|
| 197 | Carlos: *visitaremos*! we(.) we visit | We will visit |
| 198 | Gloria: we will, we will visit *en futuro* | In future |
| 199 | Carlos: we will visit (corrects the structure after the peer indicated it was a future tense)) | |
| 200 | Gloria: we will:: | |
| 201 | Carlos: *Cerro de la Campa:na, Catedra::l, Plaza Bicentenario* | |
| 202 | Gloria: vi:sit *Ce::rro* | |
| 203 | Carlos: *Cerro de la Campana* (0.4) *Catedra::l* (0.2) *el Centro de Gobierno* | |

### Co-construction: helping with language problems.

As previously explained, the second category of co-constructions involved instances where learners helped a peer solve a language problem. This type of *support* episodes is included in the thesis to provide further evidence of how *comity* is created and maintained in peer interactions. However, these examples are not included in the total count of *support* episodes to avoid using them as a predictor of LREs.

This section provides examples of how co-constructions to express *support* occurred in the peer interactions. The following excerpt (102) is an example of a co-construction where Marcos and Patty (Pair 7) are creating a role-play together.

*Excerpt 102*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 42 | Marcos: this apartment is in terrible condition (.) *y luego*, yes mmm *por eso*, the rent is, is:: | and then, yes mmm that's why the rent is, is:: |
| 43 | Patty: cheaper | |

| 44 | Marcos: cheaper (hhh) *simon, mas barato verdad?* | yeah, cheaper right? |

| 45 | Patty: *aja* (.) this is all? |
| 46 | Marcos: yes |

As seen in excerpt 102, learners engaged in a lexical LRE while *support* is expressed with a co-construction. Marcos opens the episode (line 42) describing an apartment, but he could not complete the sentence alone, so his peer provided the missing word *cheaper* (line 43). Marcos accepted Patty's contribution by saying *simón*, which is a slang expression in Spanish that means *yes of course,* and he laughed to show agreement with his partner. Then in line 44, he corroborates the meaning of the word by asking his partner. In this lexical LRE, learners talked about the meaning of the word cheaper as Marcos verified that it was actually what he wanted to say in Spanish (*barato*).

### Other-correction.

Other-initiated repairs (Shehaded, 2001) also occurred in the data as a way of expressing *support* to the peer. In the following excerpt (103), Juan and Alejandro (Pair 1) were creating a story together, and in line 304, Alejandro explicitly corrected his peer.

*Excerpt 103*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 303 | Juan: she: (.) found it | |
| 304 | Alejandro: no, es <u>he</u> found it | no, it is |
| 305 | Juan: *ahh es cierto no? es* he | ohh that's right isn't it? It's he |
| 306 | Alejandro: he found it (.) that it was just a cat | |

Juan was describing one of the pictures of a story, and he wanted to explain that a man found a cat, but instead of using the pronoun he, Juan says *she found it*. In the next turn (304), Alejandro corrected his peer and provided the right pronoun. Consequently, Juan acknowledged his partner's correction and said that *he* was the correct pronoun. Then they continued with the task. This is an example of *other-correction* (Foster & Ohta, 2005), where one learner helped his peer by explicitly indicating that he made a mistake and then gave the right solution. Learners engaged in a lexical LRE as one of them corrected the other in the use of pronouns.

Following Martin-Beltran et al.'s (2016) study, recasting was also included as a way for learners to show *support*. In excerpt 104, Sarah and Flora were making decisions about restaurants and food for the person visiting their hometown (task 1).

*Excerpt 104*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5 | Sarah: *en el CBTIS ensegui:da en frente por el Morelos por el Morelos en contra esquina como se llama ese?* | what's the name of the one next to CBTIS on Morelos boulevard, across the corner? |
| 6 | Flora: ehh? | |
| 7 | Sarah: *Herradura?* | ((Herradura: name of a restaurant)) |
| 8 | Flora: *mmm creo- no me acuerdo (0.8) había uno por aquí que se llama el Leñador* | I think- I don't remember (0.8) there was one near here that is called Lumberjack |
| 9 | Sarah: ahh! *el Leñador* | Leñador ((name of |

| | | restaurant)) |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | Flora: for dinner | |
| 11 | Sarah: so:: mmm in breakfast? in breakfast? *huevos rancheros?* | ((traditional Mexican dish)) |
| 12 | Flora: for breakfast? | |
| 13 | Sarah: for:: breakfast (0.4) ehh *o una cocina económica?* | ((*cocina económica* is an informal restaurant with cheaper food)) |

As observed in the episode, the learners were trying to decide where to go and what to eat. Then in lines 8 and 9, they agreed on a specific restaurant. In turn 11, Sarah used an incorrect preposition (*in breakfast*) when she suggested eating a typical Mexican dish, so her peer provided a recast with the more-target-like version of the phrase, and she did this using a question form. Then in line 13, Sarah reformulated her original utterance, including the correct preposition (uptake). From a sociocultural perspective, the excerpts provided above (repairs and recasting) are examples of "other regulation" (Wertsch, 1985) since learners provided feedback to their peers on their non-target-like utterances in order to help them attain "self-regulation."

### *Helping a peer solve linguistic problems.*

As illustrated in the previous chapter, support was also expressed when learners helped each other solve language problems. Excerpt 105 shows how Alejandro provided assistance to his peer with the spelling of the words raining and running.

*Excerpt 105*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 126 | Juan: so::: (.) he:: go out (0.10) and: dis:::covered that (0.2) it was:: [raining] | |

| 127 | Alejandro: | [raining] | |
|-----|-----------|-----------|---|
| 128 | Juan: raining *con* double n? | | raining with double n? |
| 129 | Alejandro: raining? no, is with only one n, raining | | |
| 130 | Juan: running *es* double n? | | running is double n? |
| 131 | Alejandro: running, yeah | | |
| 132 | Juan: raining, it was raining | | |

Juan sought help from his peer twice in the episode to ask for the spelling of the words *raining* and *running*. Alejandro expressed *support* to his partner as he explained how to write each word. This pair established an expert-novice relationship and excerpts such as the one presented above were common in their interactions.

In excerpt 106, Carla and Martha engaged in a grammatical LRE where Martha explained to her peer the use of infinitives and gerunds. In order to do this, she used Spanish and gave Carla examples in her mother tongue. Support was expressed as Martha provided assistance to her peer with the grammar structures.

*Excerpt 106*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 191 | Martha: to wash *dices?* | are you saying to wash? |
| 192 | Carla: I can help you to wash | |
| 193 | Martha: *creo que el* to wash *ya no va* (.) I can help you wash | I think that to wash doesn't go there |
| 194 | Carla: o washing? | or washing? |
| 195 | Martha: I'll be washing the windows (.) washing the windows | |
| 196 | Carla: pero, wash o washing? | but wash or washing? |
| 197 | Martha: *o sea (.) que es, yo te puedo* | that is (.) it is, I can help |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *ayudar a lavar esto o yo te puedo ayudar lavando las ventanas, o sea se puede de las dos, sabes como?* | you to wash this or I can help you by washing the windows, that is it can be both, do get me? |
| 198 | Carla: ok, I can help you, wash (.) *voy a ponerle washing a ver* | I am going to put washing, let's see |
| 199 | Martha: washing then? | |
| 200 | Carla: washing, *si quieres déjalo así* | just leave it like that if you want to |
| 201 | Martha: washing the windows (0.3) and cleaning (0.2) the carpet (.) *y luego*, for the kitchen roof: | (.) and then for the kitchen roof |

The excerpts presented above showed how learners engaged in *languaging through* collaborative dialogue (Swain, 2006; Swain & Watanabe, 2013) as they verbalized with their peers their problems or limitations in the foreign language and found ways to solve them and build knowledge. That is, they "used language to learn language" (Swain & Suzuki, 2008, p. 565). During this collaborative dialogue, learners were capable of pooling each other's knowledge of the L2 to provide assistance to the peer. This is what Donato (1994) refers to as *collective scaffolding*. According to Donato (1994), scaffolding not only occurs unidirectional with an expert's (teacher or more capable learner) help but bidirectional as learners collectively help each other construct utterances contributing with each person's knowledge to solve language problems.

During the interviews, most learners expressed positive perceptions towards working with the peer when engaged in collaborative dialogue. They explained that when interacting with a peer, they were able to notice language mistakes and to help each other by correcting these errors.

Excerpt 107 was taken from the last interview, where Carla explained that working with her peer allowed her to notice if she made mistakes with the language either when writing or speaking it. She also mentioned that her peer helped her solve language problems.

*Excerpt 107*

| Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|
| *Entrevistador: ¿qué te pareció esta experiencia de estar trabajando así con un compañero en el curso?* | Interviewer: what was your experience like of working with a partner in the course? |
| *Carla: lo recomendaría porque ahí nos damos cuenta, si tenemos algún error, alguna duda, al lo mejor el compañero te pueda echar la mano...* | I would recommend it because it is there when you realize if you have a mistake, or a doubt and maybe your classmate can help you |
| *Entrevistador: aja ¿por qué te das cuenta ahí en ese momento  de si tienes algún error?* | mhm, why do you notice in that moment that you have a mistake? |
| *Carla: Porque a lo mejor tú piensas de que se escribe de esa manera bueno  o se dice de, lo pronuncias de, de esa manera, y a lo mejor la persona ya te dice no , entonces que, que si se pronuncia de esa manera* | Because you might think that it is written that way, or you say it like, you pronounce it that way and maybe the person can tell you then that it is pronounced that way |

Alejandro also explained his perceptions about helping his peer and being helped whenever they encountered linguistic problems. In the following excerpt (108), he mentioned that he is accustomed to correcting people and giving advice and that he feels comfortable about being corrected.

*Excerpt 108*

Interviewer: I saw that you corrected him a lot? how do you feel about correcting your peer? about telling him the spelling of words?

Alejandro: mmm natural, I, I am not, I'm just, I've always been that way, I am used to correcting people, and give advice, I, I think that maybe someone, sometimes is a defect, how do you say *metiche?* [nosy]

Interviewer: nosy

Alejandro: nosy, yeah! yeah! I'm nosy, not in the bad way, I want to help but (.) I think, sometimes, it's not problem

Interviewer: did he correct you? how did you feel when he correct you?

Alejandro: mmm good, no problem yeah, yeah I am open to, for corrections

Other learners, especially those who established a dominant-passive relationship, explained that they relied more on the cellphone to solve linguistic problems. They commented that they also sought for the teacher's assistance. Such was the case of Ricardo (dominant learner) and Gabriela (passive learner). In the interviews, Ricardo reported that he looked for the spelling of words on his cellphone or, as he explained it, he *googled them*, and as a second resource, he asked the teacher. In contrast, Gabriela (passive learner) explained that she relied on her partner's expertise as she first asked him to help her using her mother tongue. A second strategy she used was to ask Ricardo to repeat what she did not understand. Oscar (Pair 2) also mentioned that he used a translation device to solve any language difficulties, or he asked the teacher.

**Summary: Using Discursive Moves of Support Affords Opportunities for**

*Languaging.*

The examples presented above revealed how learners created a supportive environment when working together, thus, promoted *comity*. Asking questions about language or correcting a peer (e.g., recast, explicit correction) could be perceived as risky for students. However, as the data showed, when learners produced instances of *support*, they opened the floor to focus on the language and produce LREs since they relied on each other to solve language problems. Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) investigation, supportive discourse created a safe space to take risks using the language either by asking questions or offering corrective feedback. That was particularly common in the pairs that formed either a collaborative or an expert/novice pattern of interaction. As seen in this chapter and the previous one, some learners in these collaborative and expert/novice patterns declared being friends or knowing each other before taking the EFL class or creating friendly relationships in the classroom. In the interviews, the students explained that their partners helped them notice when they had made a mistake, such was the case of Carla, who had positive perceptions about Martha helping her solve language difficulties or correcting her. Some students also explained that they did not feel threatened or embarrassed when being corrected or when they provided the corrective feedback (e.g., Alejandro in excerpt 64, Gustavo in excerpt 65, and Isabel in excerpt 39). This finding coincides with Philp and Mackey's (2010) study as they discovered that students provided and welcomed feedback when they had established friendship. A different situation occurred with learners who had formed a dominant/passive pattern since they first relied on

technology to solve language problems (e.g., internet, translation device), and then they asked the teacher.

Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) findings, this study revealed that *support* was also expressed as learners encouraged or allowed their partners to participate in the interaction. This offered them more opportunities to engage in languaging by producing LREs. When learners were given a space to share their ideas for the task, they focused their attention on the grammar or vocabulary they needed to convey their thoughts. For instance, excerpt 98 above showed how Flora encouraged her peer to participate as she asked her for more suggestions, and when Sarah contributed to the task, they engaged in a lexical LRE. Providing positive feedback and encouragement for their joint work (e.g., solving an LRE together) also promoted a supportive relationship between peers. Consequently, they felt more comfortable sharing their ideas and taking risks with language.

The examples presented in this section suggest that *support* fosters learning as students engaged in languaging by producing LREs. When learners create a supportive relationship with their peers, they seem to take more risks with the language by asking questions to solve problems or correcting each other.

### 7.1.3 Solidarity Affords Opportunities for Languaging

*Solidarity* involves speakers sharing similar feelings or concerns towards a common experience. As explained in previous chapters, for this study, I expanded this definition also to include instances where learners negotiated *solidarity* by reaching agreement on how to solve a task. Excerpt 109 shows an instance of *solidarity* as Carlos and Gloria agreed on what to add to the task.

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*Excerpt 109*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 13 | Carlos: *podemos poner (.) cuando yo estaba en la casa* | we can put (.) when I was at home |
| 14 | Gloria: *si, está bien,* when I:: | yes, it is ok |
| 15 | Carlos: I stayed? | |
| 16 | Gloria: stay:: (.) ahh in my house? | |
| 17 | Carlos: stayed, *en pasado no?* | stayed in the past right? |
| 18 | Gloria: yes, yes, stay:ed:: | |
| 19 | Carlos: in my [house] | |
| 20 | Gloria:      [house] | |
| 21 | Carlos: in my house (.) I:: (.) I wa-, I watch the: (.) *que no sería* when I stayed, *cuando yo, a no (.) cuando yo me quedé en mi casa, cuando yo me quedé en mi casa* | wouldn't it be when I stayed, when I, ohh no (.) when I stayed at home, when I stayed at home |
| 22 | Gloria: *aja, es* stayed | yes, it is stayed |

*Solidarity* is observed as learners align with each other's contributions to the tasks. As seen in the example, Gloria uses discursive moves of *solidarity* as she agrees with her partner's contribution to the activity. This allows them to continue working with Carlos' suggestion and opens a space for them to engage in a grammatical LRE.

The following excerpt (110) is characterized by agreement routines where Martha and Carla jointly decided what to include in Task 5. Both learners provided suggestions for the poster they were creating, and each one accepted their peer's ideas.

Excerpt 110

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 248 | Martha: *hay que dejar esas y ya (.) hay que poner lo del passive, voice, pero no se como (.) hay que poner, ahora si que hay que poner cosas como de que bien, ehh* | let's leave this and that's it (.) because we have to use passive, voice, but I don't know how (.) let's put, now let's put things that are correct, ehh |
| 249 | Carla:  *es que por allá lo van a hacer así de chistes* | they are going to make it funny over there |
| 250 | Martha: *aja* (0.5) *pero también tenemos que usar el* passive voice | yes (0.5) but we also have to use the passive voice |
| 251 | Carla: el que? | the what? |
| 252 | Martha: passive voice | |
| 253 | Carla: unit seven right? | ((starts looking for the grammar structure)) |
| 254 | Martha: *aja, lo de que, carreteras* will be replaced, streets will be repaired | yes, the one of the highways will be replaced, streets will be repaired |
| 255 | Carla: *ándale, aja* | that's right, yeah |
| 256 | Martha: *bueno hay que poner de que* streets will be repaired (.) ehh | let's put that the streets will be repaired (.) ehh |
| 257 | Carla: *ahh pues ahí está (.) pero no le vas a poner entonces así, como ni al caso como de risa?* | ahh well there it is (.) but aren't you going to write like that, like to make them laugh? |
| 258 | Martha*: si o sea, estas de que:: dos de* | yes, that is, these two are |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | passive voice*, sabes como? o sea vamos a poner estas, y dos como en* passive voice | in passive voice, right? that is, we are going to put these and two in passive voice |
| 259 | Carla*: ahh okey, si, podemos poner también,* check points will be eliminated | ahh, ok, yes, we can also put that checkpoints will be eliminated |
| 260 | Martha: checkpoint will be eliminated, *si* | checkpoint will be eliminated, yes |
| 261 | Carla: *aja, para que se vea, para que cuente como* passive voice | yes, so it is, so it counts as passive voice |
| 262 | Martha: *voy a poner, vamos a ponerle* proposals, *ya porque ni siquiera tenemos::: tiempo* | I am going to, we are going to write proposals, because we don't have time |
| 263 | Carla: *si está bien* | yes, that's fine |

In excerpt 110, learners were creating a poster for a political campaign, and they used the vocabulary and grammar seen in unit seven of their textbook. *Solidarity* can be observed as learners reached an agreement on what to include in the task and how to write it. The agreement routines opened a space for the students to focus on the structures they needed to complete the task. The episode shows how Martha and Carla worked collaboratively to solve the task. They aligned with each other's contributions to the task in order to accomplish it.

In excerpts 109 and 110, students relied on their L1 to accomplish the task and to engage in *languaging* rather than using the foreign language. According to Antón and Dicamilla (1999), the use of the L1 in peer interaction also serves the social

function of intersubjectivity, which implies a "shared perspective on the task" (p. 240). Both excerpts show how learners used the L1 to collaborate to accomplish the common goal of completing the task. Antón and Dicamilla (1999) do not specifically use the term *solidarity*. However, they explain that learners use the L1 to show acceptance of the partner's suggestions and to reach agreement by both peers. This is seen in excerpts 109 and 110 as peers used the words *si esta bien, aja,* and *ándale* in Spanish to agree with the partner's contribution to the conversation.

### 7.1.4 Dissension and languaging

*Dissension* occurred when there was an absence of *comity* in parts of the learners' conversations. As previously explained in chapters five and six, *dissension* involved a lack of *solidarity* and *support* between the peers. The data showed very few episodes of *dissension*, and they were produced by pairs that created dominant/dominant and dominant/passive relationships. Most of these instances occurred in the interactions of Pairs 2 (dominant/passive) and 11 (dominant/dominant).

Alma and Oscar (Pair 2) produced five instances of *dissension* in Tasks 3, 4, and 5. Most of these involved Alma, the dominant learner, not acknowledging her peer's contributions to the task and taking decisions unilaterally. There was also one occasion when Alma used derisive language to mock the partner. Only one of these episodes of dissension occurred along with a language related episode (Excerpt 111).

*Excerpt 111*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 52 | Alma: go:: to:: the res-cue and, get the bicycle (.) no, get in the bicycle? (0.2) o montar o subirse? (0.4) get up, no | Ride |
| 53 | Oscar: ride? | |
| 54 | Alma: no, no, well, when you say (.) you, you put yourself in the bicycle! (hhh) | |
| 55 | Oscar: and ride? | |
| 56 | Alma: he: takes: ahh he take, take, bike, bic-ycle (.) and:: | |
| 57 | Oscar: and ride no? | |
| 58 | Ahh ride? | |
| 59 | Aja | Yes |

Excerpt 111 shows the opposite of *support* since Alma does not acknowledge her peer's linguistic expertise. At the beginning of the episode in line 52, she does not know how to say the word *montar* (ride) in English. Then in lines 53, 55, and 57, Oscar provides the correct answer, but Alma does not trust her partner and refuses to use the word given until the end of the episode. This is an example of a lexical LRE correctly resolved that occurred within an episode of *dissension.*

Excerpt 112 is another example of a lexical LRE that co-occurred with an episode of *dissension*. The learners in pair 11 were writing their notes for the role-play

(Task 4). Daniel opens the episode by asking for his peer's help on the spelling of the word *tenant*. Felipe assists his classmate but with a derisive tone of voice. Moreover, he criticizes his partner's handwriting. Daniel does not allow his peer to belittle him and uses demeaning language in response.

*Excerpt 112*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 64 | Daniel: tenant *así*? | Like this? |
| 65 | Felipe: *si (0.8) pero con a wey! Ponlo con a* | Yes (0.8) but write it with an a you halfwit. Write it with an a |
| 66 | Daniel: *es a wey!(0.10) ahí está animal!* | it's an a you halfwit. There it is you animal! |
| 67 | Felipe: *escríbelo bien, es una o esa! (.) es una o esa* | Write it well, that's an *o*! that's an *o* |

The examples presented above (excerpt 112) show that LREs also co-occurred with episodes of *dissension* where learners used discourse that was the opposite of *solidarity* and *support*. However, these instances were very low in the data. A total of 21 episodes of *dissension* were identified in the dominant/dominant and dominant/passive interactions. Six of these instances relate to the occurrence of LREs. This finding is similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study as they also identified a low incidence of LREs in interactions with several occurrences of impatience, lack of *support,* and ridicule.

It is interesting to observe that the pair that maintained a dominant-dominant pattern of interaction throughout the five tasks was the one, which produced the most instances of dissension alongside with LREs. The examples of pair 11 presented in chapters five, six, and in this chapter show that when one of the learners asked for

help to solve a lexical LRE, the peer provided assistance, but at the same time, he insulted, ridiculed, or scorned his partner.

Due to the low incidence of episodes where LREs occurred in the absence of *comity*, it cannot be concluded that the opposite of *solidarity* and *support* (*dissension*) relates to opportunities to produce LREs. Only two pairs (Pair 2 and 11) generated such instances, and one of them produced most of the cases of dissension alongside LREs (*N= 5*). However, the data seems to indicate that LREs were more commonly produced in interactions where learners used discursive moves to negotiate *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* than in conversations where there was a lack of *comity*. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine whether or not *dissension* episodes relate to the presence or absence of LREs. More classroom-based studies are needed to investigate this issue.

## 7.2 Quantitative analysis: Social discourse moves and languaging

Section 7.1 showed how learners' use of social discourse moves relates to opportunities to produce language-related episodes. This section of the chapter shows a quantitative analysis that complements the qualitative analysis presented above. The purpose of this part is not to draw any causal relationships between phenomena since the learners interacted in different conditions. This section provides an overview of the distribution of the social discourse moves and the LREs produced by the pairs during the language course. I also present the findings of the relationship between the frequency of occurrence of social discourse moves and the frequency of occurrence of the LREs across the five tasks. It is important to note that not all the pairs did the five tasks. Four of the 12 pairs did not complete one of the tasks for different reasons, such as students' absenteeism, or in the case of pair four, because they had not signed up for

the study when the first task was completed in class. Therefore, the data presented in this section includes 56 transcriptions where both learners participated in the tasks and engaged in LREs. Table 12 presents the tasks completed by each pair.

**Table 12** *Tasks Completed by Each Pair*

| Pairs | Task 1 | Task 2 | Task 3 | Task 4 | Task 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Juan Alejandro | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Alma Oscar | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Carlos Gloria | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Carla Martha | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Luis Alberto | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Flora Sarah | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Patty Marcos | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Ricardo Gabriela | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Gustavo Andrea | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Alma Isabel | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Daniel Felipe | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Javier Abril | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

**7.2.1 Distribution of social discourse moves across pairs and tasks**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, learners produced 524 episodes of *support*, 437 of *solidarity*, and 60 episodes of *social inquiry*. Table 13 shows the distribution of the

social discourse moves of *support*, *solidarity*, and *social inquiry* produced across the pairs during task-based interaction.

**Table 13** *Number of Episodes of Social Discourse Moves Across Pairs and Tasks*

| Pair | Pattern of interaction | Support | Solidarity | Social inquiry | Total | Total tasks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Juan Alejandro | Expert Novice | 59 | 62 | 5 | 126 | 5/5 |
| Alma Oscar | Dominant Passive | 32 | 25 | 2 | 59 | 5/5 |
| Carlos Gloria | Collaborative | 58 | 61 | 9 | 128 | 5/5 |
| Carla Martha | Collaborative | 37 | 46 | 11 | 94 | 4/5 |
| Luis Alberto | Collaborative | 41 | 37 | 13 | 91 | 5/5 |
| Flora Sarah | Collaborative | 54 | 35 | 4 | 93 | 4/5 |
| Patty Marcos | Collaborative | 40 | 40 | 2 | 82 | 5/5 |
| Ricardo Gabriela | Dominant Passive | 24 | 22 | 5 | 51 | 5/5 |
| Gustavo Andrea | Expert Novice | 61 | 33 | 2 | 96 | 4/5 |
| Alma Isabel | Collaborative | 51 | 36 | 4 | 91 | 5/5 |
| Daniel Felipe | Dominant Dominant | 24 | 15 | 1 | 40 | 5/5 |
| Javier Abril | Collaborative | 43 | 25 | 2 | 70 | 4/5 |
| n | | 524 | 437 | 60 | 1021 | |
| Percentage | | 51% | 36% | 5% | 100% | |
| M | | 43.6 | 36.41 | 5 | 85.01 | |
| Range | | 24-61 | 15-62 | 1-13 | 47-146 | |

Table 13 reveals that learners mainly engaged in episodes of *support*. These account for 51% of all the social discourse moves with a mean score of 43.6 and ranged from 24 to 61 per pair across the five tasks. This is particularly interesting as we can observe that the pairs, which established either a dominant/dominant or dominant/passive pattern of interaction, engaged in fewer episodes where *support* was

expressed in the interaction. Ricardo and Gabriela, who created a dominant-passive relationship, only produced 24 instances where they used social discourse to express *support*. Ricardo dominated most of the conversations, and Gabriela's participation was minimal. As she explained in the interviews, she did not feel confident enough to contribute due to her perceived lack of language proficiency. A different story occurred with the collaborative and expert/novice pairs who produced 40 or more instances involving discourse to express *support*. This finding suggests that in those pairs where learners commonly used language to express *support,* they tended to create a more collaborative interaction or collaborative mindset (Sato & Ballinger, 2012).

Episodes where learners used discursive moves of *solidarity* comprised 36% of the social discourse moves, and they varied in range from 15 to 62. The table shows that the discourse aimed at *social inquiry* was not very common in the data since only 5% of the episodes were related to learners talking about their personal life or school. Even if there were few instances of *social inquiry*, an interesting finding observed through a micro-genetic analysis suggests that students engaged more in this form of discourse as time passed. The pairs that produced the most episodes of *social inquiry* were Pairs 3, 4, and 5, which established a collaborative pattern of interaction. Pair 11 formed a dominant/dominant relationship, and they only engaged once in *social inquiry* while working together.

### 7.2.2 Distribution of support episodes across pairs and tasks

As previously explained, *support* was expressed when learners encouraged or allowed their peers to have a turn in the interaction when they showed encouragement or positive feedback, recognized the partner's language expertise, and every time

students constructed language together by offering ideas to help the peer finish the partner's sentences. Table 14 shows the distribution of the episodes comprising the different ways in which learners expressed *support* across the data relative to the pattern of interaction.

**Table 14** *Number of Episodes of Support Across Pairs and Tasks*

| Pair | Pattern of interaction | T | CC | EPF | LE | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Juan Alejandro | Expert Novice | 31 | 18 | 10 | 0 | 59 |
| Alma Oscar | Dominant Passive | 25 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 32 |
| Carlos Gloria | Collaborative | 52 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 58 |
| Carla Martha | Collaborative | 32 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 37 |
| Luis Alberto | Collaborative | 29 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 41 |
| Flora Sarah | Collaborative | 48 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 54 |
| Patty Marcos | Collaborative | 31 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 40 |
| Ricardo Gabriela | Dominant Passive | 22 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 24 |
| Gustavo Andrea | Expert Novice | 59 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 61 |
| Alma Isabel | Collaborative | 44 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 51 |
| Daniel Felipe | Dominant Dominant | 23 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 24 |
| Javier Abril | Collaborative | 36 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 43 |
| n | | 432 | 51 | 36 | 5 | 524 |
| Percentage | | 82.4% | 9.7% | 6.8% | .95% | 100% |
| M | | 36 | 4.25 | 3 | .41 | 58.58 |
| Range | | 22-59 | 0-18 | 0-10 | 0-1 | 26-94 |

*Note*. T- encouraging/allowing a peer to continue or have a turn in the interaction, CC: Co-constructing language (e.g., offering an idea to help a peer finish an utterance) EPF-showing encouragement and positive feedback, LE-recognition of linguistic expertise

Table 14 shows that the most common way of expressing *support* occurred when learners encouraged and allowed a peer to have a turn in the interaction. These episodes accounted for 82.4% of the forms of how students showed *support* to one another. Encouraging a partner to participate or allowing him/her to have a turn in the conversation promoted positive relationships, especially in the collaborative and expert/novice pairs. The collaborative Pairs 3, 6, and 10 and the expert-novice Pair 9 had the highest number of episodes where students expressed *support* to one another by including the partner in the interaction. As shown in previous chapters, most of the learners used discourse to encourage each other to participate in the conversation when they asked for suggestions or ideas for the task.

As seen in table 14, 9.7% of the data involved learners expressing *support* when they co-constructed utterances together by offering ideas to the peer to complete a sentence. It is interesting to note that one of the dominant/passive pairs and the dominant/dominant pair did not produce any instances of this type of *support*. The range of distribution varied from zero to 18. This is not surprising since the pair that produced the most episodes (Alejandro/Juan) established an expert/ passive relationship where Alejandro was constantly helping his peer. In contrast, the pair (Ricardo/Gabriela) that created a dominant-passive pattern of interaction did not engage in any of these episodes. Ricardo controlled most of the conversation in every task, and he made most of the decisions of what to include. Consequently, this left little room for learners to express *support* by helping each other. Excerpt 113 shows how Ricardo dominated the interaction.

*Excerpt 113*

| Transcript line | Original utterance | English gloss Researcher's comments |
|---|---|---|
| 37 | Ricardo: where? (.) weird (.) that's weird (.) tenant, no:: that's not true I e:ven took (.) pictures of it (0.2) tiles from the kitchen (.) were broken (.) oven (.) needed, to be (.) replaced (0.7) also (.) was leaking (0.2) land:: lady (.) yes! yeah, but:: I:: gave you a good price, price (0.2) te::nant (0.4) mmm (0.2) well:: are you:: planning to:: (.) re:pair | ((Ricardo is reading what they are going to say in the role-play. He is controlling all the tasks)) |
| 38 | Gabriela: but I gave you? | |
| 39 | Ricardo: I gave you a good price | |
| 40 | Gabriela: que es good price? | what does good price mean? |
| 41 | Ricardo: un buen precio de renta (.) es que dice:: ehh (.) es raro, es raro porque ehh cuando yo te lo renté, el departamento estaba en muy buenas condiciones, no no es cierto (.) inclusive tomé fotos de el (.) ehh (.) "the floor tile (.) from the kitchen, were broken (.) the oven needs to be replaced, also there was a leaking all over the place (.) luego, yeah, but I gave you a good price"  (.) como que si pues  te di un buen precio (hhh) | a good price for rent (.) it is because it says:: ehh (.) it's weird, it's weird because ehh when I rented you the apartment was in very good condition, no, no it's not true (.) I even took pictures<br><br>it's like I gave you a good price (hh) |

In contrast, the other dominant/passive pair (Alma/Oscar) engaged in five of such episodes of *support*. When analyzing their interactions qualitatively, a different story occurred since Oscar, the passive learner, was the one who provided the assistance to his partner. In this case, it seems that it was not the lack of language proficiency that

limited Oscar's participation in the task as it happened with Gabriela, but instead, it was Alma's constant attempt to dominate the conversation.

Only 6.8% of the data included instances where the learners expressed *support* by showing encouragement or positive feedback to their joint work. Pairs 1 (expert-novice) and 5 (collaborative) produced the most episodes of *support* by encouraging each other when they worked together and providing positive feedback. Table 14 also reveals that recognition of linguistic expertise was the least common form of showing *support* to a peer. These episodes only accounted for .95 % of the data and were mainly produced by pairs that had established a collaborative relationship (Pairs 3, 4, 5, and 7). It was interesting to observe that Pair 2 (dominant-passive) was also involved in this form of supportive discourse, and the dominant learner praised the passive student on his language proficiency.

### 7.2.3 Distribution of solidarity discourse moves across pairs and tasks

As shown in previous chapters, *solidarity* occurred when learners used discursive moves to acknowledge common struggles as language learners, share similar feelings or opinions, and agree on how to do the task. Table 15 presents the distribution of the *solidarity* episodes that occurred in the data.

**Table 15** *Number of Episodes of Solidarity Across Pairs and Tasks*

| Pairs | Pattern of interaction | Agreeing with the peer | Acknowledging common struggles | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alejandro Juan | Expert Novice | 62 | 0 | 62 |
| Alma Oscar | Dominant Passive | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| Carlos Gloria | Collaborative | 54 | 7 | 61 |
| Carla Martha | Collaborative | 45 | 1 | 46 |
| Luis Alberto | Collaborative | 37 | 0 | 37 |
| Flora Sarah | Collaborative | 35 | 0 | 35 |
| Patty Marcos | Collaborative | 40 | 0 | 40 |
| Ricardo Gabriela | Dominant Passive | 22 | 0 | 22 |
| Gustavo Andrea | Expert Novice | 33 | 0 | 33 |
| Ana Isabel | Collaborative | 35 | 1 | 36 |
| Daniel Felipe | Dominant Dominant | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| Javier Abril | Collaborative | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| n | | 428 | 9 | 437 |
| Percentage | | 97.9% | 2.1% | 100% |
| M | | 35.6 | .75 | 36.4 |
| Range | | 15-62 | 0-7 | 15-62 |

As explained in previous chapters, it was interesting to observe that only three pairs of 12 (Pairs 3, 4, and 10) negotiated *solidarity* by sharing with peers their struggles as language learners. This accounted for only 2.1% of the data, and Pair 3 was the one that produced the most episodes. Table 15 shows that 97.9% of the data involved *solidarity* episodes through agreement routines when learners shared similar feelings or ideas towards experiences in common or when they agreed on how to do the tasks. As it occurred with the *support* episodes, most of the collaborative and expert-novice pairs produced the highest number of instances of *solidarity* across the data. The

dominant-dominant pair was the one that engaged the least in *solidarity* episodes; nevertheless, these learners were able to complete all the tasks during the course.

## 7.2.4 Distribution of language-related episodes across the tasks

The data showed that learners did focus on language while they worked together with the classroom tasks. Similar to Williams' (2001) and Philp et al.'s (2010) studies, students produced more lexical LREs than grammatical or phonological LREs. Learners engaged in a total of 766 LREs during the five tasks: lexical (n=474), followed by grammatical LREs (n=283), and phonological (n=9). Figure 4 shows the distribution of the three types of LREs across the pairs and tasks.
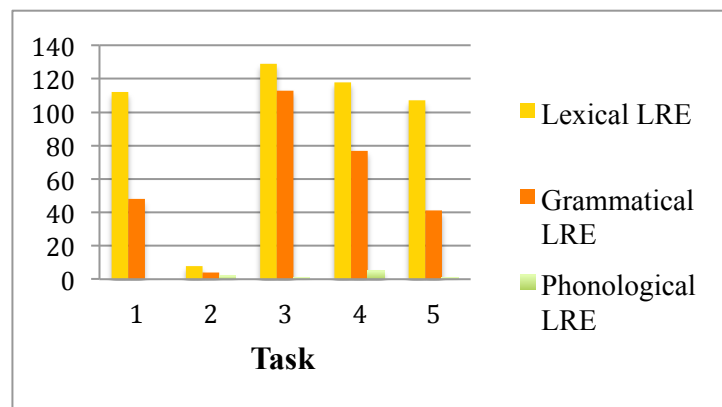


**Figure 4** *Overall Distribution of Lexical, Grammatical, and Phonological LREs Across Pairs and Tasks*

As observed in Figure 4, the LRE distribution varied across the four tasks. This can be attributed to the nature of the task. For instance, the pairs produced the highest number of LREs in Task 3 (n=243), where learners had to create a story based on the pictures, but Task 2 (decision-making task), which involved only oral production, elicited the lowest number of LREs with only 14 instances across all pairs. This goes in hand with previous research, which shows that tasks where learners are required to write, elicit more attention to form, and tasks that involve speaking evoke

more focus on meaning (Alegría de la Colina & García Mayo, 2007; García Mayo *&* Azkarai, 2016; Philp et al., 2010; Pica, Kanagy, & Falodun, 1993). Swain (2005) also explains that collaborative dialogue mostly occurred in tasks that involved students writing together.

It was interesting to observe that Task 4 (role-play) also elicited a high number of LREs (n=200), particularly lexical LREs. This task did not encourage students to write since they had to act out a conversation between a landlord and a tenant. However, while learners were creating the role-play, they wrote the script and focused on the vocabulary and grammar that they needed to describe the house problems and solutions. The students also used their textbooks to look for sample conversations and check the unit's grammar and vocabulary.

Storch (2008) explains that LREs can involve two or more turns, and their length may be representative of the levels of engagement with language. In order to analyze the learners' engagement with the LREs produced during the interactions, I followed Philp et al. (2010), and I counted the number of conversational turns produced by each pair, and the number of LRE turns within the conversational turns. The rationale was that each pair approached the tasks differently, and they produced diverse conversational turns as they required different amounts of time to complete the tasks. The number of LRE turns in relation to overall conversational turns reveals the extent of engagement with the language among learners. Table 16 shows the LRE turn/conversational turn ratio.

**Table 16** *LRE Turns/Conversational Turns Across Tasks*

| Pairs | Pattern of interaction | LRE turn/conv. turn | Ratio |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alejandro Juan | Expert Novice | 409/946 | .43 |
| Alma Oscar | Dominant Passive | 217/687 | .31 |
| Carlos Gloria | Collaborative | 452/869 | .52 |
| Carla Martha | Collaborative | 317/907 | .34 |
| Luis Alberto | Collaborative | 308/884 | .34 |
| Flora Sarah | Collaborative | 360/564 | .63 |
| Patty Marcos | Collaborative | 209/612 | .34 |
| Ricardo Gabriela | Dominant Passive | 55/474 | .11 |
| Gustavo Andrea | Expert Novice | 240/679 | .35 |
| Ana Isabel | Collaborative | 343/685 | .50 |
| Daniel Felipe | Dominant Dominant | 330/841 | .39 |
| Javier Abril | Collaborative | 238/614 | .38 |

As seen in table 16, most pairs frequently engaged in LREs, except for Pair 8 (Ricardo

and Gabriela), who produced the lowest number of LRE turns. During the qualitative

analysis, I compared the transcripts from both dominant-passive pairs (Pairs 2 and 8),

and I observed that Pair 8 exhibited little engagement during the LREs since the turns

tended to be short (two-three turns). The majority of their LREs were lexical. A typical episode involved Gabriela, the passive peer, asking for the meaning of a word using her L1 and Ricardo providing the correct answer. In contrast, when the learners in Pair 2 participated in an LRE, they both initiated and responded to the language difficulties despite their dominant-passive relationship. One possible explanation for this could be that 12 of the LREs produced by Ricardo and Gabriela were lexical. They did not require further elaboration since one peer simply provided the correct answer. Another possibility was observed during the interviews (see Chapter 6, excerpts 88 and 89). Gabriela explained that she perceived her peer as a smart person, and she sometimes struggled to understand what he said. Gabriela relied on her peer to provide all the answers; she was the one seeking help. Ricardo gave her a short, direct answer either in the L1 or in English since she had difficulties understanding him, and he did not provide more explanations. Table 16 also shows that Flora and Sarah (collaborative) were the pair that engaged in the longest LRE turns despite participating in only four of the five tasks. The pair's episodes generally involved both learners initiating and responding to the LRE and working together to resolve the language problems.

I further analyzed the LREs produced by each pair to resolve the linguistic difficulties they encountered when working with language tasks. Table 17 shows the number of correctly resolved, incorrectly resolved, and unresolved LREs across pairs and tasks.

**Table 17** *Comparison of Resolution of LREs*

| Pair | Pattern of interaction | LRE | CR | IR | UR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Juan Alejandro | Expert Novice | 104 | 93 89.4% | 8 7.6% | 3 2.8% |
| Alma Oscar | Dominant Passive | 52 | 41 78% | 7 13.4% | 4 7.6% |
| Carlos Gloria | Collaborative | 105 | 97 92.3% | 5 4.7% | 3 2.8% |
| Carla Martha | Collaborative | 63 | 51 80.9% | 8 12.6% | 4 6.3% |
| Luis Alberto | Collaborative | 61 | 55 90.1% | 4 6.55% | 2 3.27% |
| Flora Sarah | Collaborative | 73 | 61 83.5% | 5 6.8% | 7 9.5% |
| Patty Marcos | Collaborative | 44 | 43 97.7% | 1 2.27% | 0 0% |
| Ricardo Gabriela | Dominant Passive | 14 | 13 92.8% | 0 0% | 1 7.2% |
| Gustavo Andrea | Expert Novice | 56 | 54 96.5% | 1 1.7% | 1 1.7% |
| Alma Isabel | Collaborative | 68 | 64 94.1% | 4 5.8% | 0 |
| Daniel Felipe | Dominant Dominant | 66 | 44 66.6% | 15 22.7% | 7 10.6% |
| Javier Abril | Collaborative | 60 | 53 88.3% | 4 6.6% | 3 5% |
| N | | 766 | 669 | 62 | 35 |
| Percentage | | 100% | 87.3% | 8% | 4.5% |
| M | | 63.8 | 55.75 | 5.1 | 2.9 |
| Range | | 14-105 | 13-97 | 1-15 | 0-7 |

*Note.* CR- correctly resolved, IR- incorrectly resolved, UR-unresolved

As the table shows, all pairs correctly resolved 60% or more of the LREs produced, with a range from 13 to 97. The table also reveals that there were instances in which most of the pairs incorrectly resolved the LREs with a range from 1-15, or they also left LREs unresolved with a range from 0-7. The data also displays that the pairs that created a collaborative and expert-novice pattern of interaction correctly resolved 80% of more of the LREs produced in their conversations compared to the 66% of LREs correctly resolved by the dominant/dominant pair. The qualitative analysis showed that in the case of Daniel and Felipe (dominant/dominant pattern), even if they engaged in many episodes where they focus on the FL, they tended to reject or they did not trust the partner's suggested solutions. That is, they were unlikely to engage with each other's contributions to solve any language difficulties. Interestingly, the dominant passive pair of Gabriela and Ricardo correctly resolved 92% of all the LREs produces. However, a closer qualitative analysis showed that Ricardo was the one who resolved all of the LREs initiated mostly by Gabriela or produced by him in private speech.

**7.2.5 Simultaneous occurrence of LREs and social discourse moves**

As illustrated in the first part of the chapter, there were several instances where learners' involvement in social discourse moves opened the floor for *languaging* (Swain, 2006) by engaging in LREs. Students produced language-related episodes interwoven with episodes of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*.

Figure 5 is based on a dataset of 56 transcriptions across the five tasks. Each data point in the plot represents a transcription of one pair's interaction. Following Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) study, for clarity of the quantitative analysis, all the discourse moves to build *comity* (*support*, *solidarity*, and *social inquiry*) were

collapsed into one category, and all LREs (lexical, grammatical, and phonological) in another category in order to explore correlations between the two. Across the 56 peer interaction transcriptions, dyads produced a total of 766 language-related episodes and 1021 episodes of social discourse moves (*solidarity* 437, *support* 524, and *social inquiry* 60). Tests of correlation were preceded by a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, revealing a normal distribution. A Pearson product-moment coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the number of SDMs produced across the five tasks by all the dyads and the number of LREs in which they engaged. There was a positive correlation between the two variables, r = .734, n = 56, p < .001, $R^2$ = 0.539. Following Cohen (1988), Pearson r values of .01, .03, and .05 were considered small, medium, and large. Thus, there was a strong positive correlation between the number of SDMs and the number of LREs. The scatterplot in Figure 5 summarizes these results.
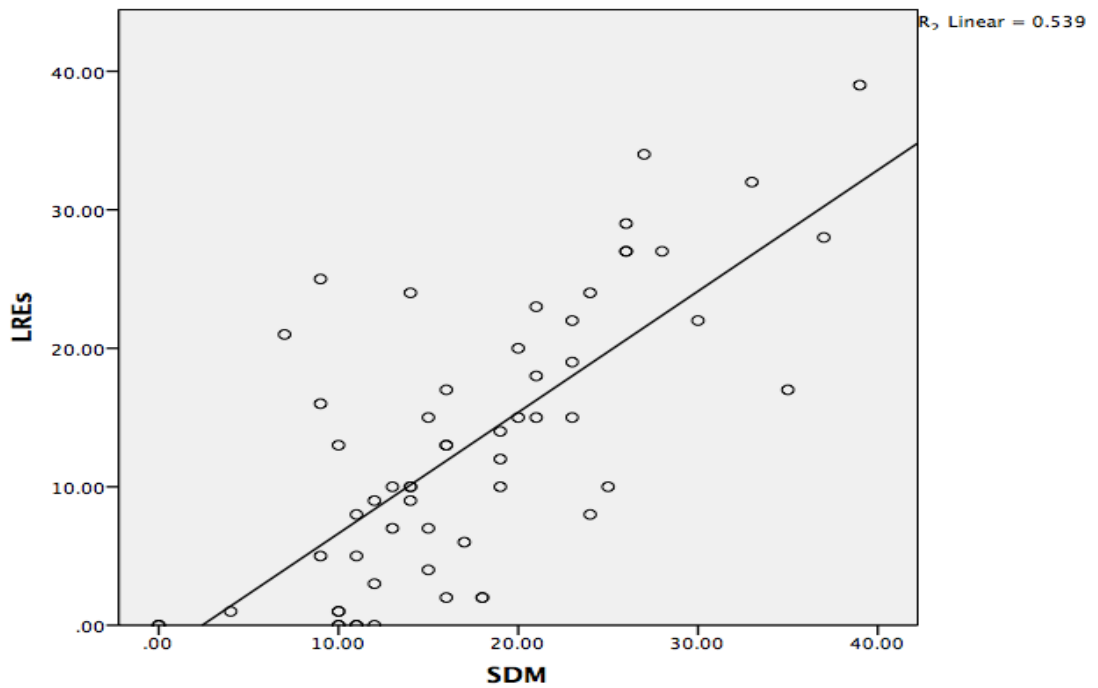
**Figure 5** *LRE and SDM (solidarity, support, social inquiry) co-occurrence in transcribed interactions*

As observed in Figure 5, the effect size of the correlation is indicated by the $R^2$ coefficient showing that the number of social discourse moves explains just over half (53%) of the total difference in the number of LREs produced. The remaining 47% could be explained by other factors (e.g., individual differences), which were not analyzed as they were beyond the scope of the study.

As part of the quantitative analysis, I explored the distribution of (a) social discourse moves and (b) LREs produced in each task. Figure 6 shows this distribution from the 56 interaction transcriptions across the five tasks during the four weeks of classes. As explained above, I incorporated all the discourse moves into one category and the LREs into another one.
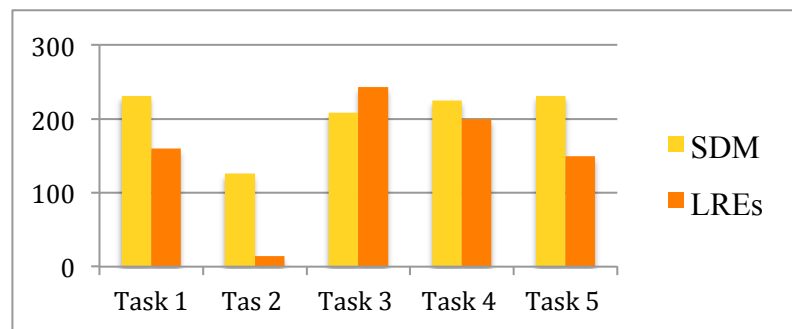


**Figure 6** *Distributions of SDM (solidarity, support, social inquiry) and LREs across tasks*

Figure 6 shows that the distribution of the LREs and social discourse moves varied across tasks. The figure suggests that Task 2 elicited fewer social discourse moves and LREs than the other tasks. In this task, only 10% of the social discourse moves involved LREs, in contrast to Task 3, where there was a 95% occurrence of LREs within social discourse moves. Task 2 was the only one where participants did not include writing to complete their goal. As previously explained, this difference could be attributed to the nature of the task. Learners produced more LREs in tasks that required writing (Alegría de la Colina & García Mayo, 2007; García Mayo & Azkarai, 2016; Philp et al., 2010; Pica, Kanagy, & Falodun, 1993) and the least type of LREs was produced in the second task where learners only focused on meaning. Figure 6 also indicates that in Tasks 1, 4, and 5 learners produced more than 220 instances of social discourse moves. As mentioned before, this could be related to the task itself.

The data suggests that learners produced higher episodes of *solidarity* in tasks where they discussed topics related to their own context, such as their communities and their hometown, and in tasks that emulated real-life situations, which was the case of these three tasks.

**7.3 Summary and discussion**

The last research question investigated how the learners' use of social discourse moves (*solidarity, support, social inquiry*) to build *comity* related to opportunities for *languaging* (Swain, 2006). This question was explored through both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The qualitative analysis allowed for an in-depth examination of how learners focused on language by producing LREs while using discursive moves to negotiate for *solidarity* and *support* and get to know each other through *social inquiry*. The quantitative analysis showed the distribution of the social discourse moves and LREs across pairs and tasks. It also provided an account of the co-occurrence of incidences of LREs and social discourse moves.

The qualitative analysis provided examples that showed how learners were likely to engage in LREs while they used social discourse to build relationships with their peers. As seen in the chapter, *social inquiry* afforded opportunities to focus on language. The examples presented show that during *social inquiry* episodes, students felt confident enough with their peers to share their personal information and life experiences, and this created an environment of trust among learners. Consequently, they enhanced *comity* (Pullin, 2010; 2013; Victoria, 2011, 2017). This finding goes in accordance with Leslie (2015), who also observed that as participants shared their private life with their peers, they established a certain amount of trust, which in turn afforded opportunities to acknowledge their linguistic limitations and ask for help.

Similar to Leslie's (2015) study, when learners in this research were involved in *social inquiry* episodes, they also focused on the language by producing lexical and grammatical LREs. The examples also showed how Pairs 1 and 5 used the L2 for *social inquiry* even if they were not working on the task at the moment and were not required to speak in English. They were engaged in the process of *languaging* (Swain & Watanabe, 2013) or, as Swain (2006) explained, in a "process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (p.98).

Consistent with Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) findings, this study shows that the most common way of expressing *support* to the partner was to encourage or allow him/her to contribute to the interaction. On several occasions, these episodes of *support* opened a space for students to engage in more LREs because as they shared their ideas, they needed to use the structures and vocabulary of the foreign language to add something to the task. As a result, there are more opportunities for language learning. Teachers and learners prefer pair work because it offers more opportunities for language use (see Fernandez Dobao & Bloom, 2013). In most of the pair interactions, students are forced to participate in order to accomplish a task. However, as seen in previous research (e.g., Fernandez Dobao & Bloom, 2013: Storch, 2002; Watanabe & Swain, 2007), this is not always the case. Some learners do not collaborate well when they work together. The dominant-dominant and dominant-passive pairs were involved in fewer instances where students encouraged their partners to join the interaction. Pair 8 (Ricardo & Gabriela), who formed a dominant-passive relationship, provide an example of this since Ricardo dominated the interaction, and there were few instances when he asked his peer for suggestions to the tasks; thus, this implied fewer opportunities for Gabriela, the passive learner, to use

the language. As it occurred with *social inquiry* episodes, the examples presented above showed that when learners were involved in supportive episodes, they also created a space for *languaging*. Students were capable of assisting each other with language difficulties (Ohta, 2001) as they talked about these problems and looked for ways of solving them in collaborative dialogue (Swain, 2000). As the data reveals, in most cases (87%), learners correctly resolved the lexical, grammatical, and phonological LREs. They were capable of successfully assisting each other. This could be associated with Donato's (1994) notion of *collective scaffolding* since learners were able to accomplish together what they would not have been able to do individually. Webb (2008) also suggests that learners benefit from this support between peers as they help each other by sharing their knowledge and finding solutions for the problems encountered while working with tasks. The findings also showed that there were very few instances where learners expressed *support* by providing encouragement or positive feedback, and only two pairs engaged in more than eight episodes where they used this type of supportive discourse.

The results also showed that *solidarity* also afforded opportunities for learners to focus on language. There were instances where students produced LREs as they reached an agreement on how to do the task, expressed similar feelings towards common experiences, and acknowledged mutual struggles as language learners. These findings were similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study since some pairs demonstrated *solidarity* as learners admitted having problems with the vocabulary or grammar of the foreign language. That is the case of the collaborative Pair 3 (see chapter 5 of results), who negotiated *solidarity* by sharing common feelings of frustration when they tried to construct utterances together in the foreign language.

Most of the episodes of this form of *solidarity* produced by Carlos and Gloria (pair 3) were related to lexical or grammatical difficulties.

Taking risks with language can seem threatening for learners, and their willingness to focus on the L2 may depend on the context (e.g., whole classroom, small group, or pairs) and the relationships between students as suggested in previous research (Cao, 2009; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Tarone, 2009). Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), this chapter shows that learners were involved in *languaging* during the tasks while using discourse to create *comity* in the classroom. The quantitative analysis revealed a positive correlation between the episodes where learners used social discourse and the LREs produced. Finally, the data also suggests that the tasks influenced the extent to which pairs engaged in both social discourse and LREs. Learners produced more instances of LREs in the four tasks that involved writing compared to the one where they only had to speak (Task 2). The data seems to indicate that learners used more social discourse moves within tasks that were related their *common world* (Aston, 1993) or that mirrored real-life situations (Aston, 1988).

**Chapter 8: Conclusions**

**8.1 Overview of the study**

Block (2003) calls for a more socially informed approach to SLA research. He argues that interaction is not only about the transaction of information, but crucially, it also involves the negotiation of relational/interpersonal functions. It is important to understand what happens when learners interact with one another. Therefore, in this study, I investigated how learners created comity in the foreign language classroom. Following Block (2003), I used Aston's (1986, 1988, 1993) notions of *solidarity* and *support* in SLA research to go beyond the restrictions of the negotiation for meaning and to "broaden and embellish our understanding of interaction" (Block, 2003, p. 76).

Aston (1988, 1993) argues that much of our everyday talk deals with the negotiation of interpersonal relationships. Students also use language to establish these relationships in the classroom context as they interact during the lessons. Following Aston's assertions, this study investigated how learners established and maintained friendly relationships in a month-long intensive English class. Consistent with Aston, the results indicate that students used language in conversations to create *comity* as they produced discursive moves to negotiate *solidarity* and *support*.

The concept of *comity* has been largely ignored in peer interaction research (Block, 2003; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016). However, this study suggests that this area could benefit from exploring the role of interpersonal relationships to discover the factors that may influence opportunities for language learning. Some SLA researchers have indicated that further research should focus on the interpersonal relationships between learners and how these impact language development (Batstone, 2012; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Philp, Walter & Basturkmen 2010) Therefore, based on the issues

raised by Block (2003), Aston's (1988, 1993) notion of *comity* and the need for more studies that investigate interpersonal relationships in peer interaction, the current study explored how learners used discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* to establish *comity* in the context of the classroom, and how this developed over time during the English language course. The aim was also to explore if social discourse moves related to opportunities for language learning through *languaging*. The research questions that guided the research were:

a. How do learners negotiate for comity during peer task-based interaction? And what types of social discourse moves do they use?

b. How does the passing of time affect *comity*?

c. How does the use of social discourse moves to build *comity* relate to the patterns of interaction between peers?

d. How do the learners' social discourse moves relate to opportunities to engage in *languaging*?

Different research tools were used to explore the research questions and to understand the complex nature of students' relationships in the EFL classroom. The audio and video recordings of the pairs' interaction, the classroom observations, and the participants' interviews (learners and teacher) provided insightful information regarding the establishment of *comity* in the EFL context.

The main source of information came from the interaction transcriptions, and it was triangulated with the other research instruments. The qualitative analysis of the pair interactions allowed for an emic perspective of the data since it provided an opportunity to have an insight into what students do when they work together with language tasks and how they use discourse to create interpersonal relationships. The

interviews offered information regarding the learners' perceptions of peer interaction and the relationships established with their classmates. The data was subsequently analyzed quantitatively to complement the qualitative analysis, which provided a better picture of the students' relationships.

## 8.2 Main findings of the study

In this study, I explored the social context of the language classroom by investigating the moment-to-moment discourse used by learners to get to know their peers, negotiate *support* and *solidarity*, and focus on language (LREs) while engaged in task-based peer interaction. I discussed how learners developed and maintained *comity* over the four weeks of classes in the summer course. Establishing *comity* (Aston, 1988, 1993) in the EFL classroom involved trusting and respecting the peer, using discursive moves to negotiate *support* and *solidarity*, and sharing their personal selves. This did not occur from day one but evolved gradually with time.

The first research question focused on how learners established and maintained *comity* during peer task-based interaction and the types of social discursive moves they used. The results were consistent with Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study since learners mostly produced episodes of *support* and *solidarity*. This is also similar to Victoria's (2011) investigation, where participants typically interacted in a supportive manner and negotiated *solidarity* in their conversations. A difference with Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) occurred in the case of *social inquiry* since, in this investigation, there were fewer instances where students asked questions or shared information to get to know each other.

The data suggests that the most common social discourse moves were used to express *support* between learners. Supportive discourse involved providing

encouragement or positive feedback to the partner's contribution to the task, encouraging or allowing a peer to participate in the interaction, and providing compliments and apologies. Students also expressed support when constructing language together (Foster & Ohta, 2005; Martrin-Beltrán et al., 2016). Co-constructions involved a learner helping the peer finish an utterance by offering ideas. *Solidarity* occurred when learners talked about similar experiences, interests, and feelings about features of their world in common (Aston, 1993), including issues about school, politics, and their community or hometown. The findings showed that some students produced discursive moves of *solidarity* to share their personal struggles with the foreign language. *Social inquiry* occurred the least in pair interaction, and it usually happened during off-task talk episodes once students had finished the tasks. *Social inquiry* provided an opportunity for learners to get to know each other as they shared information about their personal selves. The data suggest that the instances of *social inquiry* promoted affective/emotional engagement (Baralt, Gurzynski-Weiss & Kim, 2016; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Svalberg, 2009). However, due to the small size of the data set, this issue needs to be further investigated to verify the influence of *social inquiry* on collaboration.

The influence of time on peer relationships (RQ2) in the classroom was also observed in this study. Results support previous research as they show that learners need time to develop interpersonal relationships and support each other in the learning context of the classroom (Brooks, Donato, & McGlone,1997). Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998) argue that the longer learners stay together, and the more time they spend with each other, the more likely they are to bond and become friends, as it was the case of some pairs in this study. Based on the data from the pair talk transcripts, interviews,

and classroom observations, this study shows how the learners' relationships developed over time. Some students reported that they created a friendlier relationship with their peers as they got to know them better and as they worked together with the tasks. This result is consistent with Kim (2016), who found that pair-work over time helped students solidify their interpersonal relationships. The study suggests then that when investigating peer relationships, researchers need to consider the importance of time for peer interaction (Kim, 2016). Most peer relationships do not occur instantly, but they develop over time as learners share experiences in the classroom and get to know each other. The analysis of the social discourse moves also revealed that *social inquiry* seemed to increase as learners spent more time together.

Research question three focused on the patterns of interaction and the social discourse moves to establish *comity*. Following Storch's (2001a, 2002) framework, the four patterns of interaction were identified in the data. Seven out of 12 pairs established a collaborative relationship, two pairs created an expert/novice pattern, two more pairs created a dominant/passive relationship, and one established a dominant/dominant interaction. Thus, most of the students engaged in interactions that were characterized by equality and mutuality. Research has found that collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction are more conducive to learning (e.g., Storch, 2001; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). What this implies for the current investigation is that nine of the 12 pairs were likely to have created more opportunities for language production and for focusing on language.

The data showed that most of the pairs consistently maintained the same pattern of interaction across the four weeks of the course, except for one pair. The findings indicate that as this pair engaged in more episodes of *social inquiry*, their

dominant interaction became more collaborative. This finding has implications for peer interaction research since it could suggest that when learners constantly spend time working together and getting to know each other through *social inquiry*, they can create more collaborative interactions, which have been found to be conducive to learning (Storch, 2001, 2002; Watanabe & Swain, 2007). This suggests an area for further investigation. Specifically, in work on interaction and L2 learning, there is a need to explore the potential benefits of *social inquiry*, time on task with peers, the impact of the passing of time on peer relationships, and opportunities for language learning.

The results also indicate that those pairs which created more collaborative or expert/novice patterns of interaction engaged in more episodes of *support* and *solidarity*. This seems to indicate that using discursive moves to negotiate *solidarity* and support could be a contributing factor for creating peer relationships characterized by higher equality and mutuality of engagement. Supportive pair interactions that promote collaborative relationships or a collaborative mindset (Sato & Ballinger, 2012) have been found to facilitate the provision and effectiveness of corrective feedback.

Finally, I investigated the opportunities for languaging in pair work interaction (RQ4). Research following a sociocultural framework has measured learning outcomes through tailor-made post-tests (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 2002) or by analyzing correct resolutions of LREs (e.g., Watanabe & Swain, 2007). For this study, I explored the LREs produced while pairs worked together on language tasks and the outcome of their resolution. Additionally, I studied the learners' use of discursive moves to encourage one another, mitigate against embarrassment, and get to know

each other. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to investigate this issue. The qualitative analysis provided detailed examples of how LREs occurred when students used discourse to express *solidarity*, *support*, and to engage in *social inquiry*. The quantitative analysis revealed a positive correlation between the episodes where learners used social discourse while involved in LREs. That is the instances where learners produced discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* related to opportunities to engage in LREs.

The data showed that there was also an absence of *support* and *solidarity* in some interactions. These occurrences were labeled as episodes of *dissension*. *Dissension* occurred in pairs that had developed dominant-passive and dominant-dominant peer relationships. The data presented in this thesis seems to indicate that the absence of *comity* is related to the dominant patterns of interaction. Pairs 2, 4, and 8 produced instances where learners expressed the opposite of *solidarity* and *support* by not acknowledging their peer's suggestions to the task, not showing appreciation for the peer's contribution, and not recognizing the peer's linguistic resources. Students sometimes made decisions unilaterally in order to complete the tasks. Pair 11 produced the most episodes of dissension since their interactions were characterized by a lack of *solidarity* and *support*. Impatience, ridicule, and disagreement were observed while students worked together. Moreover, derisive language and even cursing were used to criticize and disrespect the partner.

Languaging also occurred in episodes of *dissension,* yet these instances were low in the data. This finding is similar to Martin-Beltrán et al.'s (2016) study as they also identified a low incidence of LREs in interactions where there was an absence of *comity*. Pair 11 (Daniel and Felipe) produced most of the episodes of dissension

alongside LREs. When the learners engaged in an LRE, assistance was provided to solve the language problem, but the students insulted, ridiculed, and scorned each other.

## 8.3 Research contributions

The overall objective of this study was to investigate how adult EFL learners used social discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and to establish *comity* in the classroom and how these social instances related to language learning opportunities during peer interaction. First of all, this study contributes to the existing body of research in education that has investigated the significance of peer relationships on interaction and learning (e.g., Gülay & Önder, 2013; Hartup, 1994, 1996, 1998; Kutnick & Kington, 2005; Riese, Samara & Lillejord 2012; Rotenberg & Boulton, 2013; Zajac & Hartup, 1997) as it describes how learners establish and maintain friendly relationships, and through this, mediate opportunities for learning when they work together in the classroom. Similar to Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016), the study shows that the frequency of episodes where learners produced discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, related to the frequency of LREs. Based on the participants' interactions and interviews, the data seems to indicate that in most cases, learners were more willing to produce and elaborate on language in LREs when they had created interpersonal relationships based on trust, *support*, and *solidarity*. The pairs that developed dominant/dominant and dominant/passive patterns of interaction during the course also produced plenty of language-related episodes. However, when analyzing them closely (micro-genetic analysis), it was observed that the learners in these pairs did not engage as much in the LREs as the learners in the collaborative and expert/novice patterns. For instance, many of the LREs in Pair 2 (dominant/passive) were initially

produced by the dominant peer, and they were quickly resolved by the passive learner who just provided the answer and did not give further explanations about the language. Alma was the one who dominated the interactions and made most of the decisions in every task. She was continuously reluctant to consider and accept her peer's suggestions. However, Oscar was the one who resolved most of the LREs initiated by Alma, and there was very little involvement in these episodes since he only solved the LREs without elaborating on the language. Pair 11 (dominant/dominant) also produced a high number of LREs across the five tasks. When analyzing the LREs closely, many of them occurred alongside episodes of *comity*, few with episodes of *dissension*, and several were produced in the absence of *comity* or *dissension*. Similar to Pair 2, when learners made an LRE along with an episode of *solidarity* or *support*, they did not elaborate on the explanations about the language. When an LRE co-occurred with an episode of *dissension*, one of the learners asked for assistance to resolve the LRE, and the other provided help while he ridiculed, insulted, and scorned the peer. Pair 8 established a dominant-passive pattern and produced the least amount of LREs across the five tasks. Contrary to pair 2, the qualitative analysis of their interactions revealed that the dominant peer was the one who resolved all of the LREs initiated by the passive learner or by himself through private speech. Like pair 2, the learners did not elaborate in the language episodes as they were resolved quickly and without further explanations from the dominant peer. Ricardo and Gabriela (Pair 8) engaged in fewer instances of *comity* compared to the collaborative and expert/novice pairs.

Conversely, the learners in the collaborative and expert/novice patterns of interaction participated in language-related episodes when they made cross-linguistic

comparisons between Spanish and English, when they tested word choice and their language hypotheses, and when they asked questions about the foreign language. As observed in their interactions, the students relied on each other to solve language problems, and they were more willing to ask for help and provide assistance to the peer. The data seems to suggest that learners were more likely to engage in LREs and elaborate in their language explanations when they participated in social discourse moves to negotiate *comity* and when they had created friendlier relationships based on trust and support.

This study also contributes to the scarce research that has focused on the complex nature of peer relationships in the language classroom (Kim, 2016; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Storch, 2001a, 2002; Watanabe, 2008; Watanabe & Swain, 2007) by presenting a detailed description of the interpersonal relationships established between learners. Block (2003) argues that to understand better what happens in student-student interactions, researchers need to look beyond the limitations of the negotiation for meaning perspective to include more socially oriented constructs such as *solidarity* and *support* (Aston, 1993). In this investigation, I illustrated how learners established *comity* by using discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support* and by getting to know each other when working together in the classroom. The data seems to indicate that when learners engage in more episodes of *support*, *solidarity*, and *social inquiry* to develop *comity*, they tend to create more collaborative and expert/novice relationships. Moreover, consistent with previous research (e.g., Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016), the study showed that using social discourse moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry*, related to opportunities for languaging (Swain, 2006).

The study also suggests that some collaborative and expert/novice pairs created a good friendship in the classroom, which helped their interaction when working with the tasks. The friendly relationships formed between peers did not occur from day one but evolved day by day as learners worked together and got to know each other better. Similar to Victoria (2011), this study contributes to our understanding of how socially cohesive pairs are established from the beginning and how the interpersonal relationships developed from being strangers, in most cases, to becoming friends. This investigation provides insights into how the social discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support,* and *social inquiry* are used in the learners' interactions within the context of the EFL classroom.

Conflict was not absent in the learners' exchanges. As it has been explained throughout this thesis, these instances were coded as *dissension*, and they reflected a lack of *comity*. *Dissension* occurred when students ignored their peer's contribution to the task, when they did not believe in their peer's level of competence in the foreign language, and when they ridiculed and disrespected the peer. The data suggest that *dissension* is more related to the dominant and dominant/passive patterns of interaction.

Finally, by investigating peer interaction within the setting of the EFL classroom, this study contributes to existing research conducted in foreign language classrooms (Davin & Donato, 2013; Kim, 2016; Moranski & Toth, 2016; Philp & Mackey, 2010; Williams, 2001). The findings of this study suggest that it is worthwhile investigating *comity* in the EFL context. In many cases, this setting offers the advantage of including individuals who share a common ground since they have

similar experiences within a given culture (Aston, 1993). This contributes to creating *solidarity* and *support* among learners.

## 8.4 Pedagogical implications

Simply placing students together in pairs or small groups will not automatically create a context that offers opportunities for language production and learning. Students' willingness to use the language, to ask questions, and to maximize the potential of peer interaction depends in great part on the interpersonal relationships they establish in the classroom (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016)

This study demonstrates that learners were willing to take more risks in using the foreign language when they have established a supportive relationship and created opportunities to get to know each other. Consistent with previous research, this investigation found that the learners' shared histories or relational knowledge established before the class or created during the lessons through *social inquiry* influenced peer interaction (Riese et al., 2012) and the provision and acceptance of feedback (Philp & Mackey, 2010). The interviews with the participants revealed that learners were more willing to help their peers or ask for help with language difficulties without feeling embarrassed or threatened when they felt their partners' supported them and they could trust them. Students also explained that getting to know their peers was a way of creating friendly relationships. Thus they felt more comfortable when solving language problems and perceived that they could learn better. Similar to Tognini (2008), the learners in this study placed great importance on the support from their peers, and in some cases, they valued the *solidarity* expressed when they shared similar struggles or difficulties with the foreign language.

The question is then, what are the implications for the foreign language classroom? Being an EFL teacher myself, I had thought about the peer relationships that students create in my classes. However, I had never actually considered all the issues involved in establishing these relationships. Language teachers can benefit from this study as it describes in detail how students used the discursive moves of *solidarity*, *support*, and *social inquiry* in peer interactions to build *comity* in their context. In this investigation, I argue that the use of these discursive moves helped learners create more collaborative relationships, which have been regarded to be more conducive to L2 learning (see Fernández Dobao, 2012; Sato & Viveros, 2016; Storch & Aldosari, 2013; Watanabe & Swain, 2007).

This study can motivate teachers to become more aware of the ways in which students develop *comity* in their daily interactions and to notice the potential of *comity* for learners' willingness to participate in the classroom. Based on the learners' and teacher's perceptions of *comity* in peer interaction presented in this investigation, teachers can consider creating an environment that fosters supportive interpersonal relationships and *solidarity* between peers. The study showed the important role that the teacher plays in promoting a context where students feel less threatened to participate in class and more disposed to engage in interactions based on *support* and *solidarity*, which can help them create collaborative relationships. In the classroom, we usually tend to pay more attention to the students' transaction of information or goal-oriented speech to complete the activities and exercises. The language used to establish interpersonal relationships is often ignored in the lessons. However, we as teachers can encourage and model the use of discursive moves of *support* and *solidarity* to provide further opportunities for language learning in peer interaction.

Previous research has shown benefits of preparing students for peer interaction by modeling the use of corrective feedback and collaborative interactional strategies (Ballinger, 2013; Sato & Ballinger, 2012; Sato & Lyster, 2012). Therefore, we can include modeling examples of discursive moves to build *comity* and examples of *dissension* to promote more collaborative interaction in the classroom. For instance, we can show students how to encourage and provide positive feedback to each other whenever they encounter language difficulties.

This study also suggests that the tasks may influence opportunities to produce discourse moves to negotiate *support* and *solidarity*. It was in the tasks that involved issues related to the students' context (Tasks 1 and 5) and that mirror real-life situations (Task 4), where learners produced greater instances of *support* and *solidarity*. In many EFL classrooms, students share similar experiences and the same first language. This may facilitate the establishment of affective ties between them as they can share their perspectives on issues that they have in common. Therefore, based on this finding, teachers could consider including tasks where learners discuss matters related to their common world to foster *support* and *solidarity* in peer interactionthe classroom. The present investigation showed that learners produced the most instances of *solidarity* and *support* during the role-play. This finding supports Aston's (1988) assertion that role-plays promote and enhance negotiation for *comity* as they mirror real-life situations.

As seen in chapter six, *social inquiry* was not influenced by the task itself, but it seems that as learners spent more time together, they got to know their peers better, as explained in the interviews. The study also showed that in some cases, *social inquiry* helped students develop more collaborative interactions, which was the case

of Pair 4. As the learners in Pair 4 discovered more about each other, they changed their dominant relationship to a more collaborative one. This finding has implications for the language classroom since we as teachers can help learners develop more collaborative patterns of interaction by encouraging and providing opportunities for students to engage in *social inquiry* when they work together. This investigation showed that *social inquiry* does not mean that learners are wasting task-time, but it represents an opportunity to strengthen their relationship and to create more trust and support between peers. Instead of discouraging the discourse and the time spent creating friendlier bonds, we can promote this type of discourse by using prompts to elicit the sharing of personal information and life experiences when students work with classroom tasks.

This study also shows that L2 pedagogy needs to create more space for *comity* in the language classroom (Aston 1988; Victoria, 2011). In many EFL contexts, students are not used to working with their classmates. However, as seen in the examples presented in the results and discussion chapters, when students are given opportunities to interact with one another, they can create supportive relationships that influence their language production and quality of engagement with each other's contributions to the tasks in terms of mutuality and equality.

## 8.5 Limitations and directions for future research

This part of the chapter first addresses the limitations of the study, and then it provides suggestions for future research. Unlike empirical research, this qualitative investigation cannot control for the countless factors existing within the EFL classroom setting and may mediate learning and interpersonal relationships in any classroom. Mackey and Gass (2015) warn about keeping in mind flexibility issues

when doing classroom research since unforeseen events can occur. Before conducting the study, I planned to take the role of non-participant observer, but I came to be a participant-observer at the teacher's request and the students' expectations. It is likely that having me as a second teacher could have influenced the students' participation in class. In the interviews with the students, some mentioned that it had been helpful for them to have two teachers who could help with any linguistic problems. They also explained that they felt the class was more dynamic.

Another limitation of the study involved generalizability issues. Due to the nature of the study being context-dependent, there is limited generalizability of the results to other EFL/ESL contexts. The interpersonal relationships established during the language course cannot be generalized beyond the specific group of learners and their context in this study. An important limitation of this study involves the difficult task of unraveling the complex, abstract social variables and relating them to the learners' interpersonal exchanges, which can have numerous simultaneous motives. Future studies could benefit from investigating these variables and finding their connection to language learning outcomes.

This study showed how *solidarity* and *support* arose in contexts where learners shared experiences in common. The data revealed positive implications for the EFL context as students created opportunities to establish affective bonds and interpersonal relationships. This facilitated their interaction as their quality of engagement increased in terms of mutuality and equality. Adopting Martin-Beltrán et al.'s coding framework as a base for analysis allowed for a better understanding of how learners used social discourse moves in their conversations. The present study showed that it is worthwhile to investigate *comity* in the context of the language classroom. Future studies could

benefit from further exploring the implications of the discourse for *comity* in different EFL contexts. Students' personal journals could be used to gather more information about the peer relationships developed over the language course. A limitation of this study was not including a learners' journal to collect data. This research tool would have provided insightful first-person accounts of the learners' interactions with their peers and their perceptions towards working with a classmate.

Research that has analyzed LREs to identify learning opportunities (e.g., Storch, 2001a, 2002) has usually focused on language use. What the current study has shown through a focus on social discourse moves in peer interaction is the ways in which these social instances relate to opportunities for languaging. The qualitative analysis presented detailed examples of how students produced LREs while using the discourse of *support,* solidarity, and *social inquiry*. The quantitative analysis showed positive relationships between the frequency of LREs and the frequency of social discourse moves. Building from this investigation, future studies could investigate the potential of *comity* for second/foreign language development. For instance, tailor-made post-tests (Swain & Lapkin, 2002) could be used to check learning outcomes of LREs produced during social discourse. A process-product approach (Storch, 2002) using isomorphic tasks could also be followed to check for opportunities for individual language learning gains related to the use of social discourse moves.

The current study was conducted in a context that offered more opportunities to promote peer interaction since learners spent longer periods of time together each day in class in comparison to the regular semester (16 weeks). Even though the EFL course only lasted four weeks, the number of class hours was equal to those given in the regular semester in the students' school. As observed during the lessons and in the

learners' interviews, the data showed how learners created interpersonal relationships during the lessons in these four weeks. This study suggests that peer interaction research in foreign language classrooms needs more longitudinal studies to better understand how learners use the language of *comity* to develop interpersonal relationships over time.

This study explores the social aspects of peer interaction that have commonly been neglected in the more cognitive-oriented perspective on interaction research in SLA. The findings suggest that the development of *comity* between students may be a vital platform for creating more collaborative interactions that are conducive to learning. This has important pedagogical implications for the EFL context since we as language teachers could recognize the significance of promoting *comity* in the classroom and provide opportunities for learners to work together through tasks that are related to their common world. This study offers language instructors and researchers evidence of the potential of *comity* for language learning in the context of the foreign language classroom. A classroom environment where *comity* is encouraged allows for more collaboration between peers, and thus opportunities for learning are enhanced.

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## Task 1: Visiting Hermosillo

Wendy is going to spend four days in Hermosillo.  Remember that this is her first time visiting Mexico. You want to give her a good time and show her as much as possible, so consider the following:
Places to visit
Food to eat
Souvenirs to buy
Things to do
Where to stay
With your partner plan an itinerary for the four days. You will have a $5,000.00 pesos budget to spend during Wendy's visit. Then write a message to Wendy explaining everything you are going to do during her stay in Hermosillo.



| Day 1 | |
|-------|--|
| Day 2 | |
| Day 3 | |
| Day 4 | |
| Day 5 | |

**Task 2: Planning a party**

Instructions: Imagine that you are planning a party. Work with your partner and decide the possible seating arrangements for ten famous people. Then complete the seating chart. Read each person's description carefully and make your decision based on their age, personality, profession, likes (dislikes) and other personality traits that you can detect.
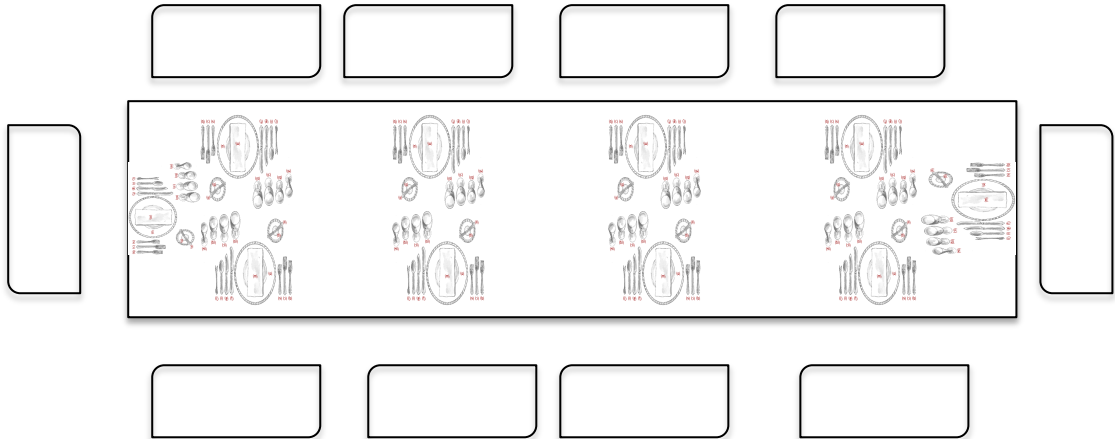


Donald Trump is 69 years old. He is married and has 5 children. He is a businessman, and he is the chairman of Trump organization. He is very bossy and straightforward. He is also egotistical, outspoken and tends to start arguments. Even if he states having a fortune of over 10 billion dollars, he has had some business failures like Trump airline and Trump University. He loves to eat steaks and dislikes vegetarians. He doesn't like Mexicans.

Laura Bozzo is 64 years old. She is from Peru, but she has been living in Mexico for several years. She is a TV hostess who works for Televisa. She has two daughters. She is noisy, talkative, opinionated and likes to dominate the conversation. She can't stand Carmen Aristegui.

Mark Zuckerberg is 32 years old. He is a programmer, internet entrepreneur and philanthropist. He is the chairman, chief executive, and co-founder of the social networking website Facebook. He is married and has a baby girl. He's shy, introverted, and creative.

Enrique Peña Nieto is 49 years old. He is the president of Mexico. He is married and has four children. He is ambitious and stingy. He has been accused of corruption. He enjoys sports, and he doesn't like talkative people. He doesn't speak English well.

Taylor Swift is 26 years old. She is a singer and songwriter. She is known for her pop albums, but she started as a country music singer. She is easy going and single. She enjoys cooking and partying with her friends. She is vegetarian and likes to help people.

Julion Alvarez is 33 years old. He is singer and songwriter. He's one of the most renowned interpreters of regional Mexican music (Norteño, Banda). He loves meat, and he can't stand vegetarians. He is sociable and a little bit temperamental.

Carmen Aristegui is 62 years old. She is a journalist and anchorman. She is best known for her critical investigations of the Mexican government. She is not married, and she has a 17 year-old son. She is serious, modest and enjoys talking to interesting people.

Brozo el Payaso Tenebroso (Brozo the Creepy Clown) is 54 years old. He is a Mexican host, comedian and political commentator. He is a widower who doesn't have any children. He is characterized by being a messy, obscene and aggressive clown. He is also a very smart man who speaks English and German. Even if he has a temperamental personality, he highly respects Carmen Aristegui.

Michelle Obama is 52 years old. She is an American lawyer and writer. She is married to the President of the United States and has two daughters. She studied in both Harvard and Princeton universities. She is supportive, reliable and easygoing. However, she tends to be temperamental. She really enjoys playing the piano and dancing.

Kim Kardashian is 35 years old. She is an American reality television personality, actress, socialite, businesswoman and model. She is married and has two children. She is sociable, egotistical, bossy and stubborn. She really likes to party, and she doesn't like serious people.

**Task 3 Story**
**Instructions:** Look at the pictures in your envelope and orginize the story.
Then describe what is happening in the story.
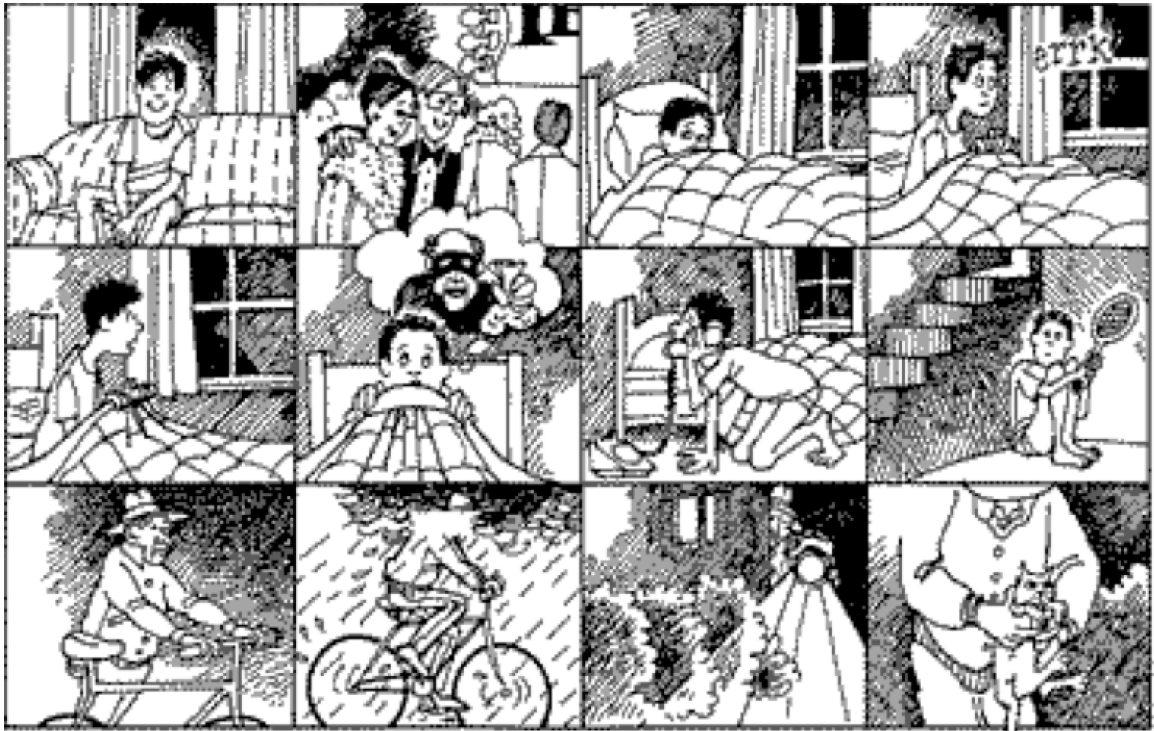
**Task 4. Role-play**

Instructions: Student A: Imagine that you are the landlord/landlady of an old house. Your tenant calls you to complain about the many problems (look at the pictures below) he/she has with the place. Try to come up with an arrangement
Student B: Imagine that you are renting an apartment, but you have many problems (look at the pictures below) with it. Call your landlord/landlady to complain about all of these problems. Try to come up with an arrangement.

| Oven (replace) | Fan blades (adjust) | Wall (repair) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Floor tile (replace) | Carpet (clean) | Windows (wash) |
| Lamp shade (replace) | Toilet (fix) | Refrigerator (repair) |

**Task 5. Creating a political campaign**

**Instructions:** You and your partner have to create a poster for a political campaign to become the governor of Sonora. Think about all the problems of your community and look for solutions for each one. Decide who will be the candidate for governor of the state and who will be the campaign manager. Check the poster on page 44 of your textbook for a guide.

**Appendix B**

Questionnaire

Cuestionario
Me gustaría pedirte tu apoyo contestando este cuestionario. Este no es un examen así que no existen respuestas "correctas" o "incorrectas". Los resultados de este cuestionario serán utilizados únicamente con fines académicos para esta investigación, por lo cual te pido respondas de la manera mas sincera. Muchas gracias por tu ayuda.

Instrucciones: Por favor indica tu respuesta encerrando la opción que mejor describa tu opinión para cada enunciado. Por ejemplo:

| Completamente en desacuerdo - - - | En desacuerdo - - | Ligeramente en desacuerdo - | Ligeramente de acuerdo + | De acuerdo + + | Completamente de acuerdo + + + | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |

| Ejemplo | Me encantan las películas románticas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| 1 | Me gustó trabajar con mis compañeros durante las clases. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Me gustó trabajar en actividades en pares con mis compañeros de clase de inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | Me gusta trabajar con mis compañeros en equipos pequeños en el salón de clases | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | Me siento mas relajado cuando hablo en inglés con mis compañeros que con mi maestro(a). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | Pienso que hablar con mis compañeros es menos estresante que hablar con mi maestro(a) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | Disfruté hacer actividades comunicativas con mis compañeros. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | Pienso que las actividades comunicativas con mis compañeros me dan mas oportunidades para hablar en inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | Pienso que comunicarme con mis compañeros en inglés me ayudará a desarrollar mis habilidades orales en inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | Si mis compañeros señalan mis errores gramaticales, acepto su opinión y corrección. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | Me siento bien cuando mis compañeros corrigen mis errores gramaticales en inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | Creo que los estudiantes deben ayudarse unos a otros señalando los errores gramaticales que se hacen en la clase de inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| 12 | Me gustó ayudar a mis compañeros cuando cometieron un error gramatical en inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | Cuando mis compañeros de clase cometieron un error pude señalarlo. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | Cuando mis compañeros cometieron un error pude corregirlos. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | Comparado con otros cursos de inglés creo que este grupo es uno de los mejores | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | Me gustó el ambiente de mi clase de inglés. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17 | Hay algunas personas que tienen su grupito en el salón de clases | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18 | Si tomo otro curso de inglés me gustaría que hubiera compañeros de clase como los que tuve en este nivel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19 | Esta clase está compuesta por personas que se llevan bien y trabajan bien en equipo. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20 | Hay algunas personas en esta clase que no se llevan bien | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 21 | Estoy insatisfecho con mi clase de inglés | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Parte 2: Por favor responde las siguientes preguntas

1. Si fueras al cine con tus compañeros de clase, elige a tres personas a las cuales invitarías.
2. Elige a tres compañeros de clase con los cuales te gustó trabajar durante el curso. ¿Por qué te gustó trabajar con ellos?
3. Elige tres compañeros de clase con los cuales e gustaría continuar trabajando en otros cursos. ¿Por qué e gustaría seguir trabajando con ellos?
4. ¿Te gustó trabajar con tus compañeros de clase en este curso? ¿Por qué?
5. ¿Qué te gusto mas de trabajar con tus compañeros de clase durante este curso? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Qué no te gustó de trabajar con tus compañeros de clase durante este curso? ¿Por qué?
7. ¿Qué prefieres, trabajar en pares o trabajar individualmente durante las clases? ¿Por qué?
8. ¿Qué factores consideras importantes para trabajar efectivamente en pares con tus compañeros de clase?

Parte 3. Por favor responde lo siguiente

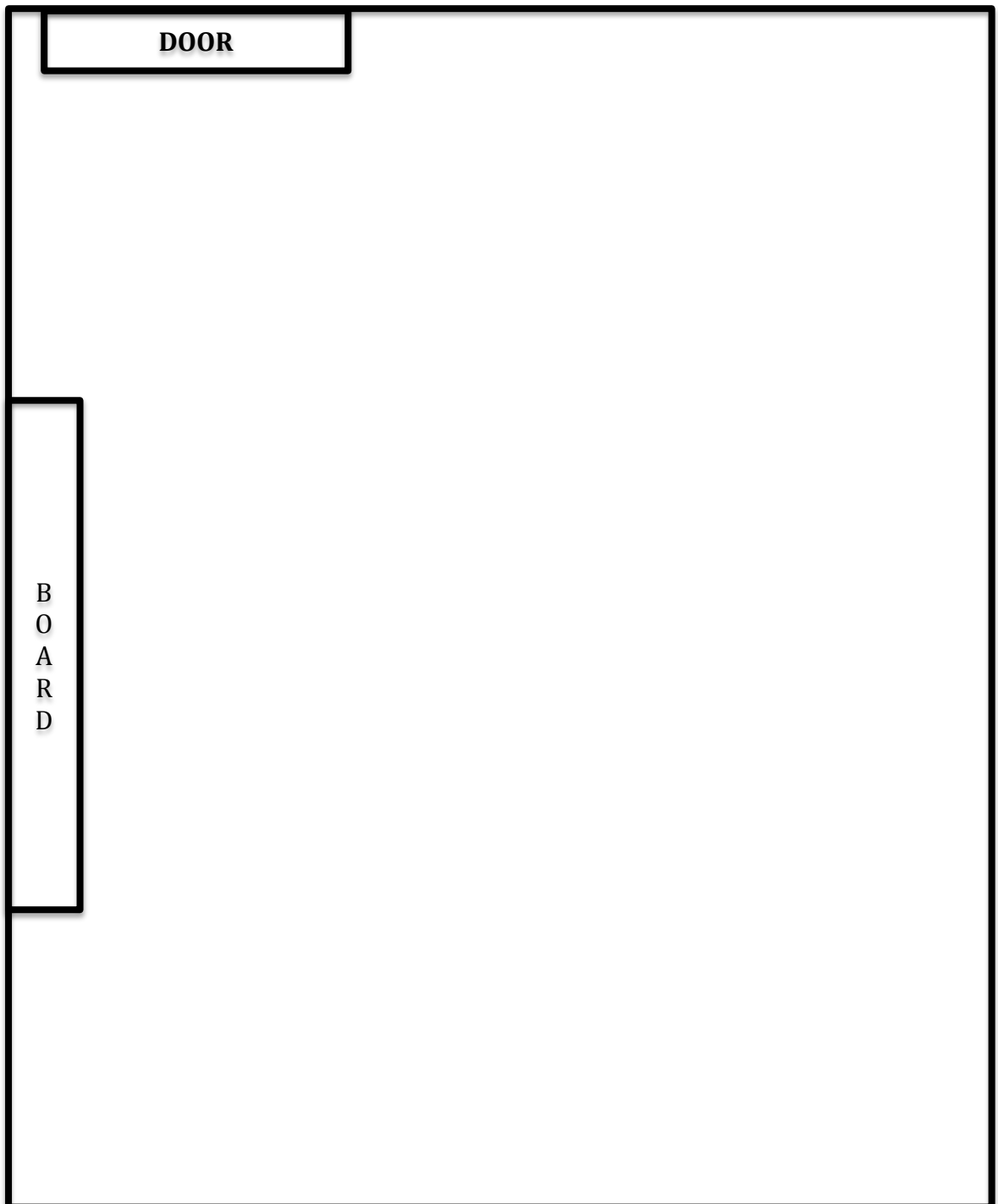Nombre: _____ Edad: _____

¿A que te dedicas? _____

Si respondiste que eres estudiante, ¿qué carrera o posgrado estas estudiando?

_____

¿Qué edad tenías cuando empezaste a aprender inglés? _____

¿En que escuelas has estudiado inglés?_____

**Appendix C**

Classroom chart for observations

**Appendix D**

Interview: questions' guide

* No olvidar decir el nombre de la persona y la fecha para la grabadora

1. Me puedes explicar que hiciste mientras trabajabas con tu compañero(a)

2. Tuviste problemas con el idioma (vocabulario, gramática)?

3. ¿Que tipo de problemas tuviste?

4. ¿Como lo resolviste?

5. ¿Te ayudó tu compañero (a) a resolver estos problemas? ¿Como te ayudo?

6. Cuando encuentras una palabra que no sabes o algo de la gramática que no entiendes a quien le preguntas primero: a tu compañero o a tu maestro? Porque?

7. ¿En que estabas pensando mientras trabajabas en equipo con la actividad?

8. ¿Piensas que tu y tu compañero trabajaron bien en equipo? Porque?

9. ¿En que piensas que contribuiste al trabajo en equipo?

10. ¿En que piensas que tu compañero(a) contribuyó?

11. ¿Sientes que aprendiste algo al trabajar con tu compañero? Porque? ¿Que aprendiste?

12. ¿Preferirías haber hecho la actividad solo o con tu compañero(a)? por que?

13. ¿Conocías a tu compañero antes?

14. ¿Con que compañero que has trabajado te has sentido mas a gusto?

15. ¿Con que compañero sientes que aprendiste mejor?

16. ¿Hubieras preferido hablar con el mismo compañero en todas las actividades?

17 ¿Como se te hizo tener la cámara y grabadora? Te pusiste nervioso?

Transcription symbols

| ? | Rising intonation at the end of a word or phrase |
|---|---|
| ! | Sharp rise at the end of a word or phrase (showing surprise) |
| . | Falling intonation |
| - | Abrupt cut off or incomplete utterance |
| ::: | Lengthening of the preceding sound; the more colons, the greater the extent of the lengthening |
| Underline | Stress given to this word or phrase |
| (1.0) | Pause, Silences timed to the nearest second |
| [brakets] | Simultaneous/ overlapping talk |
| "quotations" | A speaker is reading a written text/ utterance read from a written text (e.g. instructions) |
| xx | Unintelligible/inaudible approximately one syllable per x |
| (hhh) | Laughter |
| w-o-r-d | Spelling |
| °...° | Sounds are softer than the surrounding sound/ whispers |
| (( )) | Comments about gesture, facial expression, eye gaze, body, posture |
| *Italics* | Utterances produced in Spanish and latter translated by the researcher. |
| (word) | Translated utterances from Spanish to English |
| (.) | Short pause |

# Appendix F

## Example of a matrix display

| | Task 1 | Task 2 | Task 3 | Task 4 | Task 5 | Interviews | Observations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| support: showing encouragement /positive feedback | 2 episodes produced by Alejandro: Positive feedback to peer regarding the spelling of the word sea "that's good" Shows encouragement to the joint work with the task: "I like it" "I really like the idea" | There is one episode. Again Alejandro produces it about the way they are solving the task: "I really like it" | Alejandro produces one episode by saying: is, is making sense | ALEJANDRO Three instances ahh está curado. verdad? Esta curado. Esta bien. | Two instances: Juan produces one* The other is produced by both peers *he produced it because his peer asked him about his opinion | Alejandro: mmm natural, I, I am not, I'm just, I've always been that way, I am used to correcting people, and give advice, I, I think that maybe someone, sometimes is a defect, how do you say metiche? nosy, yeah! yeah! I'm nosy, not in the bad way, I want to help but (.) I think, sometimes it's not problem | Alejandro participates frequently in the classroom. His classmates acknowledge him as a person who is proficient with the language, Ana expressed the following quote in front of the whole class: "maestro, la voy a extrañar y a Alejandro tambien (hhh)" |
| explaining a lexical/grammatical LRE | Alejandro produced all the episodes. He explained the grammar and vocabulary | Peers did not explain grammar or vocabulary to each other in this task | Two instances one by Juan the other alejandro | Three instances all produced by Alejandro | Peers did not explain grammar or vocabulary to each other in this task | A: haha, Juan is, more, most express, more expressive eh... he is more open... | Juan is a talkative person who likes to make jokes and he is not afraid or shy about passing to the front of the classroom or sharing his pair's tasks |
| providing a recast | Alejandro provided 1 recast Juan produced 2 recasts | There is one episode produced by Alejandro | Alejandro produced two recasts (one is incorrect) One by Juan | Two instances produced by Alejandro | None | | |
| allowing peer to continue or have a turn | Both learners provided each other with opportunities to have a turn. They asked questions to elicit ideas | Two instances: one from each peer | Five instances by both learners: Do you agree? o que piensas que se asustó? | Three instances by both students, generally asking questions | three instances: que mas? What else? Who's going to be the candidate | | |
| helping a | There are two instances | Alejandro helped | One episode produced | One episode | Two instances | | |

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