

An Analysis of Peer Activities to Inform Foreign Language Learning:
Word Searches, Voice, and the Use of Non-Target Languages

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This empirical study investigates language use and collaborative learning in informal non-classroom settings by learners of German as a Foreign Language (GFL). I examine learner interactions resulting from a language course requirement for which small groups of students composed a role-play to be performed in front of the class.

Bridging the two research traditions of activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach, my research starts with an analytical focus on speech events as they are embedded in an object-oriented educational activity. The activities are further analyzed using a conversation analytic (CA) approach within the socio-interactionist framework by focusing on the ways participants construct knowledge of the second language (L2) through word searches and the re-use of word search solutions. I also examine the role of voice when participants speak German, and the role of non-target languages in L2 learning.

The video-recorded peer-to-peer interactions are the substantial part of the dataset for analysis. The data also include questionnaires, class observations and interviews, stimulated interviews, and in-class presentations that further inform the analysis. The data were gathered during the Fall 2007 semester with learners from two beginners courses of GFL. Two groups of three and two students, respectively, were chosen for closer analysis from among 31 students and 9 instructors participating in the study.

This research found that students' past individual and group histories serve as resources for the formation of the German role-play which becomes an analytical achievement based on shared understanding of the object at all phases of its construction, including the storyline and the formulation of the text in L2. Learners engage each other in

learning, simultaneously displaying different kinds of expertise linked to task instructions, the circumstances of the context, speakers' biographies, and learning histories. The artifacts (e.g. textbook and dictionary) serve to support the authoritative knowledge when negotiating different types of expertises. Similarities in dealing with language problems could be observed in that participants learned lexical items by solving language problems, whereby the solution-word becomes a resource for further learning to produce the same item in different types of talk. Also, voices show up as the social facets of the construction of the knowledge in L2. Speaking voices gave learners the opportunity to practice varieties of vernacular German and to negotiate their discursive identities in the new language. Non-target languages provided cognitive support in solving problems with L2, serve social functions such as interpersonal work and expression of public self-image, and proved to be an essential tool enabling participants to work in the pursuit of the object of the activity as a collective achievement.

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Dedicated

To my Parents

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List of Abbreviations

CA	Conversation Analysis
GFL	German as a Foreign Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

1. Introduction

Firth and Wagner's (1997) publication instigated an entirely new generation of empirically grounded SLA research, in which interactions in an educational context have generated increasing interest. Firth and Wagner's publication promoted studies that intended to illuminate aspects of the relationship between interaction and language learning, or, more specifically, the ways in which participants construct learning through the use of interactional resources (Gass, 1998; Wells, 1999; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002; He, 2004; Block, 2007; Swain 2006, *inter alia*). These studies adopt a participant-relevant perspective on language learning, foregrounding the role of contextual and interactional dimensions in language learning processes (Markee & Kasper, 2004).

In addition, Firth and Wagner's research program provided the impetus for the new empirically grounded research agenda that applies CA techniques to explicate language learning in interactions, thus respecifying learning processes in sociocultural terms (e.g. Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004; Firth & Wagner, 2007b; Markee, 2008). Researchers suggest that learners gain knowledge of language through interaction, whereby interaction is a part of learning as opposed to being a momentary frame providing occasions for learners to receive comprehensible input (Long, 1996). According to the new interaction-based perspective, also known as the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning (Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004), or "strong view of CA for SLA" (Markee & Kasper, 2004 p. 493), knowledge construction is based on learners' participation in social practice. It is embedded in the fabric of social activity and interaction. In pulling both CA and sociocultural theory together, Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) specify language learning as being

...rooted in learners' participation in organizing talk-in-interaction, structuring

participation frameworks, configuring discourse tasks, interactionally defining identities, and becoming competent members of the community (or communities) in which they participate, whether as students, immigrants, professionals, or indeed any other locally relevant identities (p. 504).

Following this view, learning an additional language cannot be defined as a purely individual process taking place in a human's mind but rather needs to be understood as context-dependent and situated in social practices (i.e. purposeful activities). Thus, learning and mental processes are inevitably linked to social processes; in other words, social processes play a mediational role in learning.

For socio-interactionists, language learning and use are interrelated processes (Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004; Hua, Seedhouse, Wei, & Cook, 2007; Firth & Wagner, 2007a). On the one hand, the proponents of this research agenda emphasize the importance of studying language learning along with its use. On the other hand, for them, language learning and use are social acts. In these acts, the roles and relationships between speakers are constructed; attitudes and identities are shaped by the very process of acquiring knowledge of language as social knowledge. Thus, studying social acts of language learning and use can provide insights into regulatory forces involved in learning.

Around the same time of Firth and Wagner's publication, Coughlan and Duff (1994) presented important findings, which also initiated a series of publications in response. Coughlan and Duff (1994) found that the same task can generate different activities for different participants and that, therefore, the task does not equal the activity. Alternatively, a task should be seen as "a behavioral blueprint" (p.175), whereas activity should be viewed as a result of doing the task. Other researchers looked specifically at the collaborative dialogs

that emerge through interactive tasks in L2 classrooms. First, the studies report a high degree of variability in the ways students engage in group activities and interactions although working on the same task (e.g. Coughlan & Duff, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009). Additionally, it has been found that collaborative dialogs in group activities foster communicative skills and facilitate L2 learning (e.g. Swain 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Storch, 2002; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009).

In a most recent study examining pair work in the classroom, Mori and Hasegawa (2009) provide further insights into interactions in group activities. By employing CA as a central tool for analysis, they explore the ways in which foreign language learners organize pair work through word searches. The analysis reveals that, although the design of the instruction proposes what lexical items should be learned, and the task guides learners to familiarize themselves with newly introduced items, “it is the students who work with this workplan and ultimately demonstrate what the object of learning is for them at a given moment of interaction” (p. 89). These findings prove the importance of looking not only at how students learn in interactions, but also at what is learned from a learner perspective when investigating tasks designed for language learning. The insights from this study also show a great potential for using CA techniques to interpret learning.

Although CA proves to be a useful tool to conceptualize the use of language through organization of talk, it has been criticized for overlooking speakers’ individual aspects of identity, which are necessary to understand socially based aspects of language use (Pietikäinen & Dufta, 2006). In this regard, Bakhtin’s concept of voice (1981) deriving from a dialogic perspective and social view of language becomes the key resource in analyzing language use from an individual’s position in a conversation. It has been argued that the

notion of voice is a useful tool for looking into the interplay between social and individual as constructed through the use of linguistic resources (Pietikäinen & Dufta, 2006). Although research findings strongly suggest that individual aspects of identity can be identified as voices in interaction in the sense of a personalized appropriation of discourses (Günthner, 1999; Maschler, 2002; Pietikäinen & Dufta, 2006), dialogic research has not yet satisfactorily accounted for the relationship between the individual appropriation of others' words and language learning.

Researchers who looked specifically at the ways participants construct learning through interactional resources have found that learners overcome difficulties in accomplishing a task by strategically using the languages available to them, whereby L1 use plays a significant role (e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi, Souzuki & Brooks, 2009). Research suggests that using L1 as a cognitive and functional tool can facilitate the learning of complex content. Those who examined productive functions of L1 in L2 learning suggest that making use of L1 can lead to gaining knowledge in L2 (e.g. DiCamilla & Anton, 1998; Levine, 2003).

The current debate on educational SLA research initiated by Firth and Wagner's publication also brings up the importance of context when one is studying linguistic development. Approaching learning as context dependent, socio-interactionists emphasize the mediational role of the context in the learning processes, and criticize dominant research approaches for paying insufficient attention to context. They caution against narrowing the role of the context in social interaction to simply setting some factors of the social embeddedness of individuals' development while excluding others (Nicolopoulou & Cole, 1993; Hua, Wei, Seedhouse & Cook, 2007). Even if some studies claim to examine linguistic

development in its context, they often restrict their description of the context of activity to an outline of the task and the subjects of the study. Such studies are certainly useful because they provide empirical evidence based on naturally occurring conversations. However, they do not provide sufficient information of what makes up the context and how it frames the interaction.

Apart from this legitimate criticism, context seems to represent an unclear analytical territory. Researchers have not reached a consensus yet on what to look at when studying learning and how to approach it methodologically. For example, Serpell (1993) describes the notion of context as being loosely formulated in the framework of both psychology and other social sciences. He advances two reasons:

First, its lack of operational concreteness leads many psychological researchers simply to ignore it when designing their experiments. Second, the parameters of interest to sociologists and economists are often treated as based on a radically different kind of logic from that of psychological theorizing, and taking account of context is treated as somewhat analogous to washing one's hands before sitting down to eat: a necessary prerequisite that has no direct bearing on the next and more intrinsically interesting task. (p. 357)

The weakness of the socio-interactionist approach is that its proponents do not make an attempt to connect the analysis of local interactions to broader forces of activity. Although socio-interactionists introduce the idea of studying the construction of language knowledge within the context of its activities, they do not take account of context in its full impact by restricting themselves to only small chunks of processes. From Mondada and Pekarek Doehler's point of view (2004), when studying learning within empirical settings, one must concentrate on the organizational details of actions and interactions. According to this view,

then, the organization of activities can be understood through what surfaces in small fragments of interactions. Although interactions are constitutive in the organization of activities, they do not emerge simply for the sake of conversation (Y. Engeström, 1999). Other media in longer-lasting organization of activities are important for understanding group interactions (ibid.). What socio-interactionists tend to oversee are histories, and institutional and cultural forces, i.e. longer-term multiple argumentative threads grounded in the activity (Y. Engeström, 1999). These considerations have important methodological consequences, and, this is where activity theory can contribute.

Activity theory, being first formulated by Leontiev (1975) and further developed by Y. Engeström (1987), offers an analytical and theoretical tool of model of an activity system (Y. Engeström, 1987) that could fill the gap in the socio-interactionist approach. It is easy to agree with Y. Engeström on his suggestion to broaden the unit of analysis in CA-oriented research to object-oriented activity. Drawing on Leontiev's concept of activity system use, by which he partly explains the function of an action (1975), Y. Engeström's (1987) model of an activity system can be used to schematically describe practical activity. However, activity theory accounts primarily for the material activity and its outcome in the form of transformed material objects, whereby artifacts provide mediational means but tend to be material tools. In more recent work, however, the model has been proven to be a useful tool for the analysis of symbolic activity as well, in which texts function as objects or mediating artifacts (Bazeman, 1994, quoted in Wells, 2002). Surprisingly enough, as Wells notes, the theory has not been used to a great extent in education research that seeks to understand tasks, events, language use, and mediational methods in interactional practice (ibid.).

My research departs from the analytical approach criticized by scholars (e.g. Y.

Engeström, 1999, 2008; Wells, 2007) for focusing on situations of pure speech events as if they were not embedded in any object-oriented activity. The questions I asked myself during my conversation analysis of interactions were “Why did participants of one group engage each other more than another group in actions directed at searching for a word?” or “Why did group 1 formulate the utterance in English first and then in German and not vice versa as group 2 often does?” or simply “Why was this utterance here?”. What prompted me to go beyond an analysis of local interactions was Goodwin’s (1997) argument that the clearer and more systematic our picture of this local activity becomes, the more obvious it makes the range of phenomena and aspects of the interaction available for the observation and analysis. To convey the complexity of learning in interactions through giving, receiving, assessing, interpreting and alternating, I need to expand my analysis and examine activity.

The participants of my study did not come together for the sake of interaction. What coordinated students’ learning was the object-oriented activity, which simultaneously was a part of their social life. The centrality of object-oriented activity and its strong organizing potential were evident in the steps the participants took and the series of interactions they engaged in. The interaction emerged and existed in order to compose and practice the role-play.

This dissertation, drawing on findings of the above mentioned scholarly works bridges two research traditions: activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning. This analysis examines the ways in which participants construct opportunities¹ for learning German through the use of verbal and non-verbal resources while being engaged in activities around the production of a text in German. The delineation of the activity of each group

¹ In the context of this study, I draw on Mondada and Pekarek Doehler’s concept of opportunity for learning (2004). The the concept “opportunity for learning” denotes possibilities for actions to achieve a desired outcome which may turn into learning resulting from the interaction between the context and the individuals.

respectively is the initial step to launch the investigation. The prime units of my analysis are the activity systems, in which a task is configured by learners' interpretations of its instructions. Using Y. Engeström's model of activity system, I present each group's activity in the form of an activity system. The analysis shows how the activity system of each group is organized and what students are actually doing when working together on the task.

One of the ways to understand group interactions in an activity is to study language problems in interactions, whereby the knowledge of the mediating material artifacts, gestures and body postures must be included as an integral aspect of the analysis of interactions (Y. Engeström, 2008). Since knowledge of the mediating material artifacts, as well as gestures and body postures are important for understanding interactions, I will include them in the interactional section of analysis. In this section, I will concentrate on problems in interactions. More specifically, I examine actions directed toward searches for a word and re-use of word search solutions across different speech events. While word searches² are associated with repair in studies of conversation and appear as a regular feature in speaking (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks 1977), within an activity system in speech they are called "discursive disturbances"³ (Y. Engeström, 2008, p. 25). They may be managed in a variety of ways, for example through negotiation and problem solving (ibid.). My focus on word searches is also derived from an understanding that they may provide interactional opportunities for L2 development within the context of learning an additional language (Brouwer, 2003). Going beyond Brouwer, who argues that word searches are an interactional practice of problem-solving that can create a precondition for learning opportunities, I discuss what kind of

² The definition of word is broad in that it can also include phrases which go beyond a single graphemic unit and which constitute a semantic unit.

³ Y. Engeström (2008) also interprets (discursive) disturbances as symptoms of inner contradictions (p. 27). They may center on access of information and also point to a zone of proximal development (ZPD), which would imply that the group would move into a new developmental phase (ibid.).

interactional opportunities for L2 learning these actions provide. Furthermore, to interpret findings that may involve learning, I apply the socio-interactionist approach.

My next step is to investigate voices of participants when they speak German. The focus is driven from Bakhtin's theoretical legacy of the concept "voice" (1972) and Y. Engeström's understanding of this concept within an activity system (2008). For Bakhtin, voices generate a variety of different points of view and are reflected in utterances. From the perspective of activity theorists, artifact-mediated construction of an object is a dialogic process where different voices meet (R. Engeström, 1995). They are rooted in different communities and practices, and continue to exist in the same activity system (Y. Engeström, 2008). Going beyond Bakhtin (1972), who argues that speaking voices involves personalized and individual appropriation of others' utterances (i.e. to make other people's words one's own), I identify the ways in which L2 is invoked in students' voices and their relationship to L2 learning.

The model of an activity system reveals multiple mediations in activity (Y. Engeström, 1987, 2008). Language is one of those symbolic instruments that mediate the interplay between the subject and the object (Y. Engeström, 2008). Knowledge of the uses of language is also important for understanding group interactions in activity system (ibid.). In the final section of the analysis, I discuss the uses of non-target languages as a resource for learning German as a foreign language.

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What does the activity system of each specific group look like?
2. What kinds of learning opportunities are afforded by actions directed towards word searches and re-use of word search solutions?

3. Which role does voice play in L2 learning?
4. Which functions does the use of non-target languages in L2 learning serve from a socio-interactionist point of view?

The data on which I draw in this empirically grounded investigation are comprised of peer interactions in contexts of natural (as opposed to experimental) activities. To collect the data, I video-recorded peer-to-peer interactions that are a part of small-group projects to produce role-plays in German. Besides the video-recordings, the data also include questionnaires, class observations, interviews, stimulated interviews and in-class presentations that further inform the analysis, facilitate the interpretation of interactions, and provide the background of participants. The research is based on the data collected from two courses of GFL classrooms at a major Canadian University.

Significance of the Study

Three main features make this study distinctive: first, the nature of the data on which the analysis draws; second, the richly detailed explication of learning an additional language in interactions, and third, the analytical tools used.

My analysis is based on empirical evidence of emergent activity in a non-classroom environment. In most academic environments, unlike in the present study, students' interactional exchange as it progresses is monitored by the teacher. My project is unique in that it provides a detailed picture of language practice and learning opportunities that a task gives rise to in contexts where the teacher is not present. Unlike most L2 research studies, the present study examines students as they are working alone without the teacher.⁴ Hence, it

⁴ The presence of the researcher during the interactions was limited to switching the equipment on and off at the beginning and the end of each meeting.

offers an insight into the behind-the-scenes organization of learning.

The next goal is descriptive as well as explicative. An integral part of my study is minute examination of peer interactions, particularly the uses of material artifacts, gestures, and body postures. The analysis explicates the ways learners construct knowledge of an additional language, display that knowledge and negotiate it in the interaction.

The unique contribution to the field of SLA is the methodological approach I am using. By pulling together two theoretical lines (activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach), my study first exemplifies how the activity system model can be applied to inform the rich texture of mediated language learning practices. This research also exemplifies how CA procedures can complement activity-theory-oriented research. Our understanding of what makes learning opportunities in interactions is important for the interpretation of the usefulness of tasks designed to facilitate speaking an additional language.

The present study is organized in 8 chapters. This chapter has outlined the general design of the work. Chapter 2 offers a review of previous research on activity theory, providing the conceptual and theoretical background for understanding activity and the application of Y. Engeström's activity model. The chapter also provides an overview of terminology, as a precursor for the discussion of the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning. Scholarly contributions to the field of research in SLA on the concept of voice as well as the role of L1 in L2 learning contexts will be discussed here as well. In Chapter 3, qualitative methods and techniques employed for the collection and the conversation analysis of the data are explained. It also gives information on participants of this study.

In Chapter 4, I analyse the entire process of preparing for the skits in groups through the lenses of activity theory. The process consists of four meetings in group 1, two meetings

in group 2, and the final presentation of the role-play followed by a question-answer session, all within a period of two weeks. The activity of each group will be represented schematically, using Y. Engeström's model. Chapter 5 contains a detailed analysis of word searches selected from the interactions during the meetings. To identify and select those word searches in a theoretically justifiable manner, I outline the conceptual framework centered on the notion of word search from a CA perspective. To discuss affordances for learning German during word searches, I apply the conceptual tools of socio-interactionists. Chapter 6 provides a new understanding of voice as produced in non-native language and its relation to learning an additional language. In Chapter 7, I discuss the uses of non-target languages as a resource for learning German. In support of my arguments, I provide episodes selected from the transcripts and followed by analyses.

Chapter 8 summarizes the findings from the previous chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. It also gives limitations, and theoretical implications of these findings. For SLA pedagogy, this research shows teachers a promising way to get students to interact in meaningful ways using the teaching material provided by educational programs. I also offer some recommendations not only for teaching and learning an additional language in groups, but also for possible directions of future research.

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

People live and develop under concrete historical and cultural conditions. One of the most general and important aspects of human life is that individuals ensure their existence and development by *activity*...Human activity is, first of all, characterised by communication and cooperation between people. (Lompscher, 1999, p. 11)

In this chapter, I introduce the conceptual tools and theoretical constructs that I employ in my study of language use and learning in peer interactions. The chapter begins with a discussion about activity theory, introducing the conceptual background of this theory and then outlining the key contributions made by Vygotsky and Leontiev. Intended as primer for the origins of activity theory, this section introduces the key ideas, concepts, and principles that are useful for understanding new directions of the theory (i.e. object-oriented activities as systems). Next, I present one of the most influential approaches to activity theory, developed by Y. Engeström (1987). The overview of new directions in activity theory is oriented toward applications of this theory studied in interaction-based research. In the context of my study, I use activity theory as a basis to address the context and organization of group work. In the next section, I introduce the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning (e.g. Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004), using it to examine and explain processes of learning German language in peer interactions as revealed in my data. Next, I present the concept of voice as described by Bakhtin (1972) in the context of his theory on dialogism (1986a, b), which will inform the analysis of the social and individual dimensions in my data.⁵ Much discussion has taken place over the years about the advantages and disadvantages of using L1 or any other non-target languages in L2 learning settings. This chapter continues with a discussion of

⁵Voice is a concept needed in all chapters and therefore discussed here, while word search is not. I discuss word search in the introduction to chapter 5.

research contributions by scholars focusing on the role of L1 use in SLA contexts. Each section of chapter 2 is concluded by an up-to-date overview of research findings based on corresponding theoretical constructs.

2.1. Activity Theory

There is considerable research on task-based learning and teaching (e.g. Willis & Willis, 1996; Ellis 2000, Bygate, Skehan & Swain 2001, Willis 2005; Willis & Willis, 2007; Hellerman, 2008). The research findings advocate seeing tasks as a blueprint (Coughlan & Duff, 1994), that is, a plan to follow, whereby there is no guarantee that different people in different situations under different circumstances will follow the expected plan, as described by Lantolf (2005), who also stresses the need to devote research attention to activities arising from tasks. Being linked to the subjects' motives and goals, which tend to be unstable and can shift over the course of group work, activities should be understood as unsteady systems that constantly reconstruct themselves (Y. Engeström, 2008). Following Lantolf (2005), it is impossible to predict activities and the learning with it that arises from them, but it is possible to compose the circumstances and conditions required for learning to take place. What is particularly lacking in the available literature is empirical evidence of the actual emerging activity (or situated object-oriented activity), interactions and affordances for learning that tasks give rise to in different contexts. In line with this reasoning, activity theory seems to have properties particularly well suited for the analysis of local practices and learning.

The origins of activity theory are in Vygotsky's and Leontiev's cultural-historical theories. While Leontiev's activity theory has exerted one of the most significant influences on applied studies in Eastern Europe, Y. Engeström's work (1987) on activity theory

represents one of the most important contributions from the Western perspective. Yrjö Engeström (1987) extended Vygotsky's and Leontiev's research framework work in a significant new way to analyse organizations of social systems. Activity theory aims to study human beings and their relationships as well as the social products that they create in the course of interaction with the world during meaningful activities. The central tenet of activity theory is that it views the social environment as the very source for the development of the human mind.⁶

Used by a variety of disciplines, activity theory has been applied in studies of cognitive science, communications, psychology, applied linguistics, and anthropology. It provides a holistic research methodology to examine a human activity as situated practice, be it psychological or social. In its framework, any activity can be split up into actions, which are further subdivided into operations. Using these categories, researchers can examine organizations of object-oriented activities and the steps necessary for participants to carry out a task.

Cultural-historical theories have recently gained increasing popularity in SLA as well, giving rise to the recent shift from the cognitive to social perspectives in research (e.g. Block 2003, Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In the re-orientation from formalistic towards social concepts and theories, language learning and use are seen as a social practice (cf. Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) and not a transmission of rules and signs. Although a number of researchers (e.g. Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Ohta, 2001; Block 2003; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) have used Vygotsky's and Leontiev's theories to inform their research in applied linguistics and SLA, Lantolf and Thorne (2006) describe the body of research using activity theory as a modest,

⁶ The overview of activity theory in this chapter is oriented towards participants' interactions and involves in depth discussion of aspects which are most relevant to the context of my study. Issues such as structure of consciousness or mental processes, which are less closely related to my study, are only touched upon.

but significant enrichment to SLA. However, there is no widely accepted activity theoretical framework for examining L2 learning. In fact, what remains open to debate is the role and nature of language in mediated action and its effect on an activity in an educational context, particularly the role of language in mediating and shaping what we learn and do.

2.1.1. Conceptual Background of Activity Theory

Activity theory represents a complex theoretical construct. To understand its principles, it is useful to look at the origins of this theory. Activity theory has its roots in the Russian psychological school associated with Vygotsky, who sought to understand the nature and development of human behaviour. His ideas, further enhanced by his students, later constituted a theory known as “activity theory.”

Leontiev, who was one of his students, continued to work in his teacher’s line of research. His scholarly work, especially on activity theory, has had an impact similar to Vygotsky’s on educational and psychological research (Alanen & Pöyhönen, 2007). Leontiev, one of the central figures associated with activity theory research, explains activity as “the system of processes through which the interaction between the subject and reality is realized” (1978, p. 202).

The ideas of activity theory were first introduced to the international audience by Alexey Leontiev in the late 70ies in “Activity, Consciousness, and Personality”, a collection of theoretical notes, written in Russian (1975) and later translated into different languages.⁷ It is known as the most significant effort to formulate the theory, and I use it as the main reference source for description of Leontiev’s activity theory in the next section.

⁷ The English translation appeared in 1978.

Although it has been argued that Vygotsky's and Leontiev's theories belong to one school of Russian psychology, based on similarities in ideas, the research lines of the schools are different (see also Zinchenko, 1995; Robbins, 2007). Following Robbin's (2007) call for a clear differentiation between the two theories, I view them as two distinct branches. Understanding this distinction requires some clarification of the terms.

The term "sociocultural theory," associated with the theoretical school of Vygotsky, was initially labelled "cultural-historical psychology" (for a detailed explanation see Wertsch, del Rio & Alvarez, 1995; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). I adopt the view of Wertsch et al. (1995), who use the term "sociocultural" theory when dealing with the "heritage" (Wertsch, et al., 1995, p. 6) as is appropriate in modern human sciences, but I do not abandon the theory's Vygotskian roots.

A similar situation with terms can be observed in contemporary debates about activity theory in the human sciences, also known as "Leontievian activity theory" (Alanen & Pöyhönen, 2007, p. 1). The concept of activity has two functions in psychology (see Judin, 1978 for details): first related to the explanatory principle, activity is used as a descriptive tool; second, activity is the object of study. Although Leontiev focuses on both issues, he devotes special attention to activity as an explanatory principle beginning in the 1930s. He applies it to address psychological phenomena such as consciousness, mental functioning and personality development. For this reason, Leontiev (1975) claimed the title for this theory as the theory of activity, consciousness, and personality (see also Interview with A.N. Leontiev in *Pedagogica*, 1986). However, it has been collectively referred to, for example, as activity approach, activity theory or other relevant terms regarding activity, most recently as cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT), owing to theoretical origins in cultural-historical

psychology (e.g. Oers, Wardekker, Elbers & van der Veer, 2008). In the field of applied linguistics, the concept of activity often finds expression as activity theory. Due to the use of the term “activity theory” in the multiple lineages of Vygotsky- and Leontiev-inspired research in SLA (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004), I will continue with this conventional use of the term activity theory throughout my study.

2.1.2. Vygotsky’s Theoretical Legacy

The philosophical foundation of activity theory comes from the German philosophers Hegel and Kant. It also includes ideas of dialectical materialism developed by Marx. Vygotsky’s research focused on the problem of explaining the difference between human beings and animals. His early work, which aimed to find a new method of studying consciousness, evolved as activity theory ideas. Unlike researchers at that time, who were within the prevailing mentalist tradition of behaviourism, Vygotsky argued that meaningful activity serves as a generator of consciousness. His interest was centred on the ability of human beings to construct tools and orient to them while socially interacting with the world surrounding them. For him, the unit of analysis was object-oriented action mediated by tools and signs.

The first formulation of ideas about the mediation of consciousness includes arguments for a differentiation between technical tools (or instruments) which humans use to affect things and psychological tools (or signs, e.g. language, maps or instructions to a task etc.) which help humans to affect others or themselves. Both types of tools have one feature in common: they mediate human activity.

Vygotsky (2003) distinguished between natural acts of behaviour and instrumental

forms of behaviours, which have been developed in the process of evolution and have become intrinsic for humans (p. 1025). Figure 2.1.2.1 illustrates the structure of an instrumental act evolved by the method of viewing consciousness.

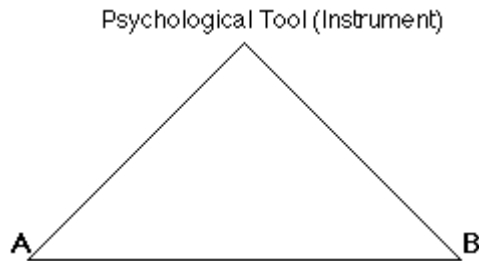


Figure 2.1.2.1. Initial Formation of an Instrumental Act (Vygotsky , 2003, p. 319)⁸

The link between A and B is associated with stimulus-response: stimulus A invokes reaction B. Vygotsky’s argument is that, in an instrumental action, a tool also may play a role in internal psychological processes of humans when attempting to solve the problem. Instead of one connection (A-B), two additional connections (A-X and X-B) come into play, helping humans to reach the result but in a different way than that of A-B. For Vygotsky (2003), any instrumental act becomes an intellectual operation; thus, he claims that researchers approaching any kind of action should first analyse the forms of this activity and then determine its components.

According to Vygotskian psychology, first, human consciousness has social origins and second, cognitive functions are socially formed and culturally transmitted through the use of culturally determined tools. For Vygotsky, ongoing human cognition develops through the interaction of tools, which he viewed as artificial formations, with reality of the world. In this way, culture and society play a definite role in the interaction. Human minds are influenced by language, considered the most important mediator of human internal mental activity.

⁸ In the original *Psychological tool (instrument)* is represented through “X”.

Yet, as Wertsch et al. (1995) point out, the concept of language in Vygotsky's writing "Thought and Language" (Myshlenie i Rech) needs to be clarified due to the misleading translation of the title. "Myshlenie i Rech" means literally "Thinking and Speech". The literal translation stresses the action orientation of the concepts. The author's focus is on the dynamic processes of thinking and speaking, which are interrelated. In this context, language should not be understood as a semiotic means that mediates the formation of human consciousness, but rather as speech, as viewed from a dialogic perspective (Bakhtin, 1986b). In this context, speech means the process of action rather than the result of action. The distinction between language as a set of rules and signs and speech as a manner of using language finds parallels in the orientation of many Russian scholars of that time (Wertsch et al., 1995).

Thus, in the context of this study, when students use languages, including German, to compose a role-play or, more specifically, to solve a lexical problem through searching for a word, they participate in the conscious processes of acting, i.e. thinking and speaking in German, which may lead to mental development. These considerations are promising in regard to studying L2 as a mediator of cognitive development. However, they open up a new question in relation to how acting with L2 relates to the development of skills in L2 in particular.

2.1.3. Leontiev's Activity Theory

Vygotsky's student Leontiev continued working in the research area, which later

became activity theory⁹. Drawing on the ideas of his teacher, Leontiev aimed to explain the properties which differentiate human beings and animals. His analytical efforts were directed toward characterising human motives and consciousness first as qualitatively different from categories observed by animals and, second, as socially and culturally constructed. Formulating the concept of activity, Leontiev extended it by adding features based on a need to separate individual action and collective activity.

In an interview (in *Pedagogica*, 1986), Leontiev devotes special attention to the fact that the concept of activity had been developed in Russian psychology before the term “activity” actually appeared. Rooted in the works of Vygotsky and Luria, the concept was initially expressed through the term “practical intelligence” (*Pedagogica*, 1986, p. 22). The second point that Leontiev stresses has to do with the initial attribute of the concept of activity. It is “a special form of *mediation*, i.e. which serves as a means, which determines, and which, most importantly, functions as a basis for the development of mental processes” (*Pedagogica*, 1986, p. 23). Thus, before the term “activity” even appeared and was in use, the ideas of activity and the view of mental development as embedded in human activities had substantially developed.

Zinchenko (1995) explains the two strands of research of Vygotsky and Leontiev. For Vygotsky, action mediated by tools was a fundamental unit for analysing mental processes, while Leontiev (1975) developed the concept of activity, which grew out of his more general concept of life (жизнь). Leontiev sought to explain why people act the way they act, the answer for which he sought in the context of activity in which mental processes emerge and develop.

⁹ While Vygotsky argued for the mediation of mind by cultural tools, Leontiev emphasized the mediation of mind through human activity. Leontiev stressed the roles of communities, the rules that structure them, distribution and negotiation of responsibilities and power among participants of an activity system.

Leontiev expanded activity theory and formulated its basic principles into a conceptual system which has to be understood as a whole rather than being viewed as predictive theory. The key principles of activity theory consist of a hierarchical structure of activity, object-orientedness, internalisation vs. externalisation, tool mediation and development. The constitutive categories of an activity are subject, object, and mediational means (tools and artifacts).

For Leontiev, the unit of analysis is activity as a system. The description of the general structure of activity was a special subject of his psychological research (Davydov, Zinchenko & Talyzina, 1983). He organizes each activity in a hierarchical system in three levels *activity, action and operation*, which correlate with need, and motive, goal and conditions for achieving the goal. The schematic representation of the hierarchy formulated by Leontiev (Fig. 2.1) is an effort to visualise the representation of human behaviour.

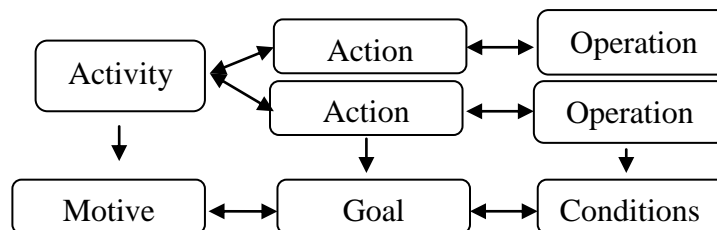


Figure 2.1.3.1. Hierarchical Structure of Activity (Leontiev, 1975)

Activity can be broken down into actions and further subdivided into operations on which subject, object and tools (artifacts) operate. A subject can be an individual or a group who carries out actions directed toward an object, which motivates the individual to satisfy his/her need. With respect to the form, Leontiev divides activities into individual or collective. However, he points out that they are always determined by social and cultural values and tools. Even if activities are not carried out collectively, they should be viewed as social and are tied to social relationships.

Although activity represents one of the components of the hierarchical structure, it is considered as a contextual framework for the remaining components. A meaningful human activity is driven by motives (i.e. an individual is doing something that is motivated by his or her needs or desires). Needs may have biological, social or cultural roots. On the next level, an action is driven by a goal and represents a goal-directed doing, which requires a doer's attention. Operations are "the manners in which an action is carried out" (Leontiev, 1975, p. 84)¹⁰. The main difference between actions and operations is that operations have a routine nature and barely require the subject's attention, whereby actions involve conscious doing. Both actions and operations are correlated to conditions and the material situation in which the subject acts. What kind of activity arises, and also what actions and operations are necessary in performing it, depends on the subjects and the affordable conditions of the context. Namely, individual differences, the past experience, or activity histories, of each of the participants will shape and determine a particular activity.

Leontiev also devotes special attention to the dynamics of the internal organization of activity. The bidirectional arrows illustrate the mutual transformations of activity levels. Actions can become unconscious with practice and turn into operations. To explain the internal organisation of activities more clearly, Leontiev offers an example of driving a car (Leontiev, 1975). An operation may first be an action, if carried out consciously (e.g. shifting of the gears appears as a goal-directed action which is carried out consciously). On the subsequent stages, this operation can be included in an additional action which may have a complex set of operations. The action of changing the speed of the car can serve here as an example. In this case, the shifting of the gears becomes one of the manners that carry out the

¹⁰ This sentence is quoted from Leontiev's original work (1975) and translated by the author of this dissertation.

action of changing speed of the movement. Thus, actions, when they become routinized ways of doing things, no longer require conscious attention in their performance and become operations.

Similarly, in the context of SLA, using a sign system (e.g. of L2) can become operational and no longer a goal-directed process. It does not require attention in performance and thus the attention focuses more on the mediated object. For example, an advanced L2 learner may not pay attention to grammar while being engaged in small talk.

The next basic principle of activity theory is represented through the object-orientedness. The decisive feature of activity is the interplay between the subject and the object, which constitutes a necessary relationship. The concept of object or предмет (predmet) in Russian is used to denote the objective orientation of activity. The intended meaning of “predmet” when translated into English (object) involves the reason why people are doing something (i.e. what motivates them). The properties of object as a concept include the ability to satisfy the subject’s need, which is shaped by a condition and which regulates a concrete activity. The object has to be understood as something that humans are oriented toward and something that they direct their actions toward. Since activity is dynamic (i.e. constantly changing) the object can also transform in the course of an activity. Then, activity is directed toward the transformation of the subject as well. The subject’s participation in activities determines the nature of the activity and may cause impacts on the subject. To understand the way object and subject interact, one must follow the dynamics of an action in activity.

The subject is the system organizer, the one who initiates the mediational interplay between the subject and object. In activity theory, the unit of analysis is the activity of the

subject, which implies the active participation of the subject (i.e. agency). In other words, agency means the subject's ability to act in order to satisfy a need. The need to act entails humans' ability to orient themselves towards reality and objects. Leontiev (1975) explains that, when need meets the object, the object becomes motive, which then directs the subject. It is the "true motive" of activity that grows out of the subject's need to attain the object. Thus, the object motivates and directs an activity. At the same time, it is a feature which functions as a clear-cut boundary between activities. Each activity is determined by a distinct object.

The principle of internalisation/externalisation is another key concept which characterizes activity theory. The theory differentiates between internal and external activities, which transform into each other and cannot be understood when analysed separately. For Leontiev, the human mind has to be understood through a system of activity since reality is reflected in the human mind and impacts the processes of its formation through practical or mental activities. Internalisation occurs when external activities become internal ones and, vice versa, externalisation occurs when external activities become internal. Externalisation plays an essential role, for example, in collective group work wherein participants need to perform activity externally in order to coordinate the collaboration. According to Davydov, Zinchenko and Talyzina (1983), Leontiev believes that internal activity is constructed on the basis of the collective activity of a group or individuals and that "collective activity takes place as joint practical activity and in the form of communication in language" (p. 34).

The next principle of activity theory is the feature of mediations in activity. The interplay between the subject and object is mediated by tools and artifacts. The term "mediational means" refers to assisting individuals when performing actions to carry out an

activity. Human activity is always mediated by artifacts of various kinds. Whether psychological signs or material tools, they are culturally constructed and transmitted. Leontiev devoted special attention in his research to mediational means, especially language, and to the division of labour. The form of a tool as well as the way it is used determine the way humans interact with the world and therefore shape action (Leontiev, 1978). Thus, mediational means form the way people interact with reality, shape their mental functioning, and at the same time generate historical and cultural knowledge. However, Wertsch et al. (1995) argue that a study of mediation should not focus solely on the culturally constructed mediating means themselves, but also on the use of mediational means: “mediation is best thought of as a *process* involving the potential of cultural tools to shape action, and the unique use of these tools” (emphasis in original, p. 22).

Activity theory discards laboratory experiments. Drawing on the ethnographic method, the theory combines in its basic method two features: data collection from naturally organized settings and monitoring developmental changes by participants. Leontiev describes activity as a process in which mutual transformations between the subject and object are accomplished. It is a source of development of both the subject and the object which leads to a change of situation, artifacts, or tools, in short it results in something new (Leontiev, 1975). Therefore, activity is understood as a human purposeful doing that results in development of objective and social reality. Researchers working in this framework direct their analysis towards the process of human interaction with the world and analyse the ways in which mutual transformation from subject to object is accomplished.

However, Leontiev’s theoretical approach to human activity has been criticized for paying insufficient attention to the social context of human practice (Lektorsky, 1999; Nelson

& Kim, 2001; Hardman, 2007). Nelson and Kim (2001) explain that to understand individual actions, “one must know the context in which those actions are embedded, namely a system of activity” (p. 4). Lektorsky (1999), for example, sees the theory paying the greatest attention to the subjective but not to the intersubjective side of activity. To him, the shared knowledge of a joint activity merits space for clear formulation in Leontiev’s theory (ibid.). In line with this critique, other scholars point out that, although Leontiev focused analytically on the role of division of labour as a social mediator, the theory fails to explain how the division of labour impacts individual actions (e.g. Hardman, 2007). This is where Y. Engeström’s further research (1987) becomes valuable.

Accepting Leontiev’s hierarchical system of human functioning, Y. Engeström (1987) examines actions in an activity by situating them more fully within the context of community, rules and division of labour. The knowledge about community members, rules of interaction, and issues related to the division of labour are important for understanding complexities of learning in the context of my study. Therefore, I rely on Y. Engeström’s model of the activity system and his understanding of the organisation of activities, which I discuss in the following section.

2.1.4. Engeström’s Model of an Activity System

Yrjö Engeström (1987, 1999) developed the mediational structure of an activity system and presented it in a model in order to allow a more comprehensive examination and deeper insight into human behaviour. In recent years, the development of activity theory has been the focus of the *Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research*¹¹ directed

¹¹ <http://www.edu.helsinki.fi/activity/>:

by Yrjö Engeström at the University of Helsinki. In particular, Y. Engeström’s formulations and proposals stem from research on human practice at work and combine analysis of interaction with historical analysis. His current research is dedicated to forms of co-configuration in health care organizations, banks, and telecommunications companies.

Yrjö Engeström’s work within the activity paradigm was influenced by authors whose writings have particular relevance to the current version of his activity theory. Drawing on works¹² of Karl Marx, Lev Vygotsky, Alexei Leontiev, Alexander Luria, Evald Il'enkow, and Michael Cole, Y. Engeström (1999) extends and introduces additional features to Leontiev’s system of activity. Y. Engeström identifies the artifact-mediated, collective activity system as a basic unit of analysis (Y. Engeström, 2008). As a result of the need to consider the shared meaning of an activity, Y. Engeström reconfigures Vygotsky’s triangle by adding rules, community and division of labour into the collective activity system (see Fig. 2.1.4.1, based on Y. Engeström, 1987).

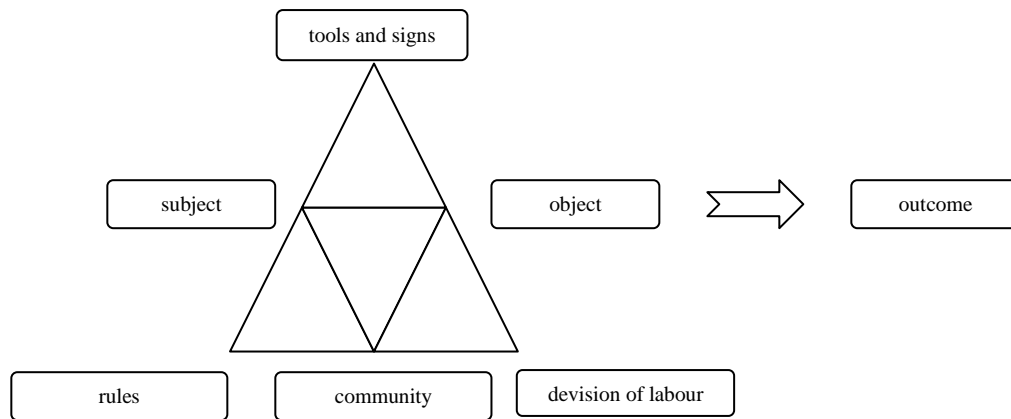


Figure 2.1.4.1. The Basic Structure of a Human Activity System (Y. Engeström, 1987)

The model shows a visual representation of activity in form of a collective activity system. This modern version of the activity structure provides an expanded framework for analysing

¹² For further details on theoretical influences see the website <http://www.edu.helsinki.fi/activity/pages/chatanddwr/influences/>.

human behaviour and practice in a larger context, depicted at the bottom of the scheme. Yrjö Engeström locates the triangle of individual action (the subject's object-directed doing mediated by symbolic or material means) in the context of "less visible social mediators of activity" – rules, community and division of labour" (2008, p. 27) that "brings together local human activity and larger social-cultural-historical structures" (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 222).

Yrjö Engeström (2001) argues that goal-directed individual and group actions as well as operations can be interpreted only against the background of the entire collective, artifact-mediated and object-oriented activity system. In order to understand individual actions and group interactions, one must know the context in which those actions are embedded (Nelson & Kim, 2001), namely a clear and systematic picture of activity (Y. Engeström, 1999). Rules are rather loose conventions guiding the individual's actions and interactions within the system of activity. Community shapes and directs the individual and the collective activity. More recently, Y. Engeström (2008) has argued for the concept of "social capital" (p. 169) that bonds communities and makes them more than the sum of their individual members. By seeing this concept as a collective good, Y. Engeström (2008) suggests that communities conceive factors that "enable collective actors to sustain themselves, to perform beyond routine expectations, and to reorganize themselves when needed" (p. 169). In the context of activity theory, community refers to the group of individuals of the same activity system who are motivated by the same object and demonstrate commitment to the same object. Consequently, it entails membership in a "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). The division of labour refers to the distribution of responsibilities and tasks among community members with respect to the power and status when carrying out object-oriented

actions. Situated within the complex model of the activity system, it refers to “both the horizontal division of tasks between the members of the community and to the vertical division of power and status” (Y. Engeström, 2010). Wells (2002) further elaborates on Y. Engeström’s concept of division of labour, but relates it to the educational context:

To return to the educational example referred to earlier, the class as a whole would be the community in question and the division of labour would clearly distinguish between the different responsibilities of teacher and students [...] A further feature of this model of an activity system is the way in which it alerts one to possible sites of tension and potential breakdown. For example, in the kind of lesson carried out according to the “recitation script” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988), the division of authority and labor between teacher and students, in which the teacher maintains the role of “primary knower” (Berry, 1981) throughout, casts the students in a purely responsive role and limits their active participation in the construction of knowledge. As a result, the outcome of the action from the students’ “subject” position is one of memorized information rather than the active appropriation and transformation of geographical knowledge that the curriculum designer presumably intended. (p. 47)

According to Wells (2002) then, the expert-participant (for Wells, it is the teacher) has greater resources available for participating in the activity. Hawkins (2007) further elaborates upon the division of labour in an educational setting by arguing that the relative inequality of expertise with respect to the action in progress reflects the division of labour between the subjects. The inequality of expertise is of an unstable nature and depends on the type of actions that subjects are involved in (Hawkins, 2007). For her, such actions can be witnessed in more conversation-like situations, whereby students’ expertise will be greater “when they

are conveying the “bits and pieces” of their understandings, making the teacher work to learn and sort out what it is that they know” (Hawkins, 2007, p. 250-1). The teacher’s expertise is greater when it comes to giving instructions for students (e.g. when the teacher is helping students to map their knowledge into the knowledge structure of the academic discipline).

Yrjö Engeström (1999) characterizes activity as chronological formations, i.e. *cycles* (p. 380), whose exact boundaries are not always possible to determine. Unlike activities, actions have a clear beginning and end both determined by a change of goal. Yrjö Engeström (1999) devotes special attention to the description of object wherein he cautions that objects should not be confused with goals, which are attached to specific actions. An activity system generates a set of actions through which the instantiation and transformation of the object of activity takes place. Next, Y. Engeström broadens Leontiev’s explanation about the properties of the object. Going beyond Leontiev, who states that the object has the ability to satisfy the subject’s needs, thus motivating subjects to do something and thereby directing their actions, Y. Engeström (1999) adds that the object also “determines the horizon of possible actions” (p. 381). While for Leontiev, the object has a motivating function, Y. Engeström (1999) introduces the concept of “projected outcome” (p. 31) into the system of human activity and classifies it as a motivating force. He explains the use of the term outcome as “it consists of societally important new, objectified meanings and relatively lasting new patterns of interaction” (1999, p. 31). The projection from the object to the outcome functions as a motive of an activity.

Most recent developments of activity theory can be summarized with the help of five principles (Y. Engeström, 2001). First, being the primary unit of analysis, one activity system is seen in relation to other activity systems. Actions and operations carried out by individuals

and a group represent units of analysis which can be understood only when interpreted against the entire net of activity systems. The second principle is the multi-voicedness. An activity system generates a diversity of participants' interests and desires. Subjects within the community of the activity system bring their histories and cultures. Varying in their level of experience with mediational means, subjects construct an object in their own unique ways by positioning themselves and others during the process of division of labour. The multi-voicedness is a source for innovation and development through emerging contradictions, which require actions of negotiation (Y. Engeström, 2008). The next three principles, which are less relevant to my study, are the contradictions, historicity and cycles of expansive transformations.

As a number of publications within the activity theoretical framework show, which I discuss in the next section, knowledge about activities on a large scale (i.e. their organisations and structures) proves to be a potentially powerful tool for understanding people acting and bringing about changes in themselves and the world surrounding them. However, these studies also point toward activity theory being useful in studies of discourse and conversation. Studies using discourse and conversation techniques have been criticized for limiting their analytical focus on partial pieces of interactions and for overlooking argumentative threads and reasons for people's actions that are based on macro-levels of activities. The theoretical and methodological construct based on activity theory, coupled with conversation analysis, appears to be a powerful tool for understanding the interconnection between local events (such as language practices) and activities (organisations in macro-level structures).

2.1.5. New Directions in Activity Theory

Although language acts primarily as a means of mediation, only a few studies have focused on language and communication in activities. This research line, also addressed as the “third generation of activity theory” (Y. Engeström, 2001, p. 135; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 225), has been gaining popularity recently, as is evident from the growing number of studies with a specific focus on communicative practice itself. Researchers aim to develop a conceptual framework to understand dialog and diversity, as well as the relevant changes and transformations that structure the ongoing activity. In fact, some scientists such as R. Engeström (1995), Rogoff (1995), Y. Engeström (1999) and Wells (2002, 2007) bring activity theory into contact with complementary approaches such as Bakhtin’s dialogical ideas of language and speech. Using discourse and conversation analysis, the studies discuss the role of language in activity without focusing on L2 use and learning in particular. The results of their scholarly work exert significant influences on our understanding of language practice in action and activity, a discussion which can be found in the research overview following this section.

Ritva Engeström (1995) seeks to place the analysis of institutional conversations about doctor-patient interactions through Bakhtin’s ideas on dialogism¹³ within the framework of Leontiev’s activity theory by applying Y. Engeström’s model of an object-oriented activity. Conversations are examined from two perspectives: from the perspective of culturally and historically organized situations and from the perspectives of local speakers. Using the Bakhtinian concept of voice, which I will discuss in section 2.2.3, Ritva Engeström develops a methodological tool for examining conversations in local dialogs as the outcome of

¹³ The key terms of Bakhtin’s concept of dialog are discussed after introducing the socio-interactionist approach in this chapter.

practices in interactions. Illuminating modifications in interactions triggered from conflicts between participants, the research suggests the dynamic but also contradictory (as opposed to harmonious) nature of the process of object construction in group. In this view, the artifact mediated construction of the object is a collaborative process in which different voices meet and merge. Although Ritva Engeström's work provides important insights into the interplay between object construction and subjects' interaction, it has been criticized for seeing consultation discourse as a purely linguistic activity and paying insufficient attention to the functions of the language use within the consultation activity (e.g. Wells, 2007).

While activity theory found its application to a large extent in workplace activities (e.g. R. Engeström, 1995; Y. Engeström, 1999), it has been used to address issues in the educational context of learning and teaching only periodically. As an alternative to Ritva Engeström's study, Rogoff (1995) conducts a study in the sociocultural research tradition and focuses on models of learning in apprenticeship with the emphasis on social interaction from the viewpoint of joint activity. The author explains the child's learning and therefore his/her cognitive development as the process of guided participation in activities with a partner whose level of expertise is higher than that of the child. Rogoff notes the importance of routines in fostering a child's participation in socially and culturally organised activities. This study has contributed to our current understanding of the relationship between development and learning and provided an impetus for further work in this field (e.g. Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004; Pekarek Doehler & Ziegler, 2007).

Wells' study (2002) exemplifies a direct most recent application of activity theory to applied linguistics matters in adult education. The study aims to examine the role of dialog in an activity by analysing a conversation between two students. Viewing education as dialogic

inquiry, Wells characterizes dialog as most powerful if it focused on an object during its unfolding transformation. The author highlights the importance of interaction in an educational context and describes the mutual relationship between outcome and mediational means by stressing that outcome may play a mediating role as well (2002).

In a more recent publication, Wells (2007) makes an effort to review the functions of mediational means in activity. This study echoes some key proposals from Ritva Engeström's study (1995) and extends her arguments to investigate the role of language practice within an activity. He suggests the redefinition of the dichotomy of two modes of mediation, by material and symbolic means. Although mediation is a central principle in activity theory, the distinction between tool mediation and discursive mediation has not been studied in depth. Wells (2007) argues that discoursing (i.e. using language in interaction with others) is omnipresent in almost all human activities, and should therefore be viewed as a means that mediates activity. Discoursing plays an essential role in reaching the shared meaning of activity (i.e. intersubjectivity between participants). One of the core functions of discoursing is then to direct and coordinate participation in joint human actions on the object and, therefore, the event. Drawing on his findings, Wells suggests that use of language in interaction with others should not be seen as an activity of its own but rather in a context of joint actions. This implies that organizations of activities may emerge through interactions, but they cannot be reduced to interactions only. The object of an activity has a strong organisational force. Still, because interactions are ostensibly in activities, especially in an educational context, Wells calls for future research to focus on the ways participants reach the shared meaning of activity through language use.

Next, I will summarize a core set of SLA research work informed by activity theory.

Following on Lantolf and Thorne's description of SLA research utilizing activity theory as modest, although significant (2006), I will briefly revisit some studies and illuminate their potential for coupling those two research lines.

Other research relevant to my study draws connections between activity theory and language going back to Vygotsky and Leontiev rather than Y. Engeström. This research links ideas of activity theory with learning theories and deals specifically with SLA (i.e. L2 learning). The most prominent of these studies are Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001), Block (2003), and Lantolf and Thorne (2006) as well as those of socio-interactionists Firth and Wagner (2007b), Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004), and Pekarek Doehler (2001).

Leontiev's activity theory has been deployed as a conceptual and theoretical framework in few studies aiming to explicate the different activities that tasks give rise to in an L2 learning context (Donato & McComick, 1994; Storch, 2004). As mentioned earlier (see Introduction), task and activity are different concepts. Although a group of individuals may be engaged in what seems to be the same activity (because of the same task given to students) and the interaction appears to be mediated by the same means, they complete the task in different ways (Block, 2003). Thus, every group working on the same task may generate unique activities. It is the participants who choose different ways of performing this activity and different ways of using the languages available to them in order to reach shared meaning of activity. Because all of them have a unique socio-history, their participation will be driven by different motives and, therefore they will assign different importance to the objectives of the activity. Since the task can give rise to interaction-rich activities which have a central role in human mental functioning and development (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) it is essential to investigate how such activities come to work in L2 context.

In line with the most recent direction of SLA, researchers have adopted and built upon an activity theoretical framework, addressing the scope of the parameters of the theory for a holistic analysis of L2 learning. The studies illustrate how activity theory can be used to understand the factors affecting the nature of the learner-learner interactions and thereby language learning through studying the use of language learning strategies and the ways that learners define the context and the nature of their goals (Donato & McComick, 1994). Since the most important characteristic of the task is the fact that its goal and results are directed towards the change of the subject, the *doer*, our understanding and design of the task should be based on its role and place in the learning activity. Activity theory has the potential to support researchers and teachers by explaining approaches to learning activity that see and structure problems, faced by people as they are learning during the task at hand. While working on a task, learners gain particular knowledge and abilities, develop their personal skills, and use strategies oriented toward knowing how to learn as well as knowing how to do this type of task. To enhance the likelihood of development and learning, researchers aim to discover the ways that learners access the opportunities to build up their knowledge and shape their own learning experiences (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001).

Although Y. Engeström's model seems to have attracted researchers' attention, it has been criticised for lacking a satisfactory account of the subject (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) and even treating the subject as an object thus neglecting his/her agency (Roebuck, 2000) and his/her social identity (e.g. Kramsch, 2000; Norton, 2000). Once people participate in an activity, they enter into different social relationships and learn from each other to utilize and to appropriate mediational means (including language). Although activity theory recognizes multi-voiced formations, Lantolf and Pavlenko's study (2001) on the relationship between

individual and language use, points out that activity theory on a large scale still focuses on individual actions, paying insufficient attention to individuals' histories and the dynamics of their objects. The analytical framework in activity involves mapping connections between factors within an activity system that may influence people's achievements. As the evidence grows, Ireson (2008) points out, it becomes clear that some of the factors may affect people's learning and development more strongly than other factors.

Following this critique, the properties of activity theory may not be sufficient to address questions such as language use and L2 learning in detail or to explain how their individual histories are related to language use and L2 learning within the framework of an activity. This does not mean, however, that a study on language use and L2 learning cannot be approached from an activity theoretical perspective but rather that activity theory is not a universal method to study all aspects, parameters, and dimensions of human life (Judin, 1978). Yet, activity theory can be a useful theoretical tool to analyse local organisation of L2 practice and learning for two reasons: first, it is deeply contextual and oriented toward understanding local practices, the object and the means of mediation; second, it seeks to explain qualitative changes in human practice. As criticism of activity theory makes evident, an SLA study that examines in detail specific aspects of human practice may provide deeper insights when informed by more than one theory. This greater depth can be achieved by complementing the research methodology with alternative approaches whose focus allows the details of L2 use and acquisition to be addressed as embedded within activity.

The focus of my study requires additional theoretical and methodological tools that are sensitive to the interactive practice associated with L2 learning, that allow a more dynamic analysis, and that have the potential to carry out pedagogical innovations. The socially and

interactionally oriented theoretical ideas formulated by Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004), constituting a socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning, are further discussed by Firth and Wagner (2007a)¹⁴, and Pekarek Doehler (2002). They reflect the contemporary views of activity theory in their focus on, first, the influence of social aspects (such as mediational means) on the knowledge construction and competence development and, second, their interpretation of learning activities¹⁵. However, more specifically, unlike activity theory, the socio-interactionist approach, aimed to study L2 learning as situated practice using CA techniques, holds properties which yield more dynamic analysis and allow L2 learning in practice within educational settings to be addressed more sensitively. Therefore, in my study, I combine activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning following.

2.2. The Socio-Interactionist Approach to L2 Learning

Despite numerous studies examining the relationship between dialog and learning, there are still open questions in scholarly literature related to the rich texture of learning events and interactions. The supporters of the universal grammar perspective claim that the language learning process follows universal rules, whereby the social and interactional dimensions play an auxiliary role. The theoretical work on language learning developed by interactionists offers another perspective. The theory formulated by the Russian linguists and psychologist Vygotsky serves as a precursor to the second language acquisition models which assign social interaction, social history, and culture major roles in the construction of new

¹⁴ The approach that supports the belief that L2 learning mainly occurs in and through social interaction is called *socio-interactionist* perspective in Mondada and Pekarek Doehler's work (2004) or *socio-interactional* approach to L2 learning in Firth and Wagner's work (2007a, p. 807). To be consistent, I will use the term socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning in reference to both throughout my study.

¹⁵ See discussion on socio-interactionist approach to learning in chapter 2.2.

knowledge. Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) draw on this conceptual legacy and open up new possibilities to address L2 learning in an educational setting. By viewing language as a social phenomenon, they seek to illuminate the processes involved in using and learning L2 interactively. Socio-interactionists assign interpersonal interaction as well as social setting a central role in the language acquisition processes: “[Individuen] werden viel mehr als soziale Akteure verstanden, die zusammen mit ihren Gesprächspartnern in ganz konkreten Situationen und in spezifischen institutionellen, sozialen und historischen Kontexten variable und kontextabhängige Sprachkompetenzen konstituieren” (Egli, Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 13).

This section of chapter 2 presents a detailed overview of conceptual tools from the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning, which will be used for the larger part of the analysis of the empirical data in my study¹⁶. It begins with an overview of the research that gave rise to the ideas of the interactionist approach in order to explain the theoretical scope that served as a precursor to the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning.

The impact of interaction on language learning and teaching has been known in the research literature of SLA since the 80s. This idea is rooted in theoretical considerations developed by Krashen; however, since then, it has undergone considerable theoretical enhancements and has been divided into two branches: weak and strong interactionist approaches to interaction. The weak approach has its roots in Krashen’s work on the role of input and interaction in L1 development. He formulated the Input Hypothesis (1985) and encouraged scholars to investigate the ways that linguistic input can be made comprehensible and therefore accessible in and through interaction with other speakers (e.g. Brown, 1985;

¹⁶ Since some theoretical concepts such as languaging, face and “we/they” codes do not apply to all episodes examined in the analysis chapters, I will introduce them as they become relevant in the respective section in chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Long, 1985). Soon after, Long proposed a systematic approach to explain the link between the linguistic input available in the interaction and L2 learning. He formulated his ideas in the Interaction Hypothesis, and introduced it to the scholarly world as an extension to Krashen's Input hypothesis (1985).

Long's proposal is based on two empirical studies, whose results propose that simplified texts facilitate better comprehension. While arguing for the direct relationship between linguistic environment and L2 development, Long attempts to determine which features of the linguistic environment promote L2 acquisition. The central claim is that input is more effective when it is made comprehensible through interactional modifications (Long, 1985). In line with Long's perspective, one of the more recent studies was conducted by Wynne Wong (2003). Indeed, the results echo Long's findings that input modified through interaction can facilitate increased comprehensibility and therefore learning. There was, however, evidence that interactions in which learners participate and the influence of the linguistic environment result in differences in learning.

Swain (1985, 2000) explains that deviations in learning may be caused by insufficient opportunities for meaningful language use. In her Output Hypothesis (1985), Swain suggests that language learning occurs when students produce modified output as a result of meaning negotiation and recasting in classroom interactions. In this view, she is one of the first scholars to look at learning from the learner perspective and to stress the importance of people using the L2 when learning it. In one of her more recent articles "The Output Hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue", Swain (2000) explores the role of output in relation to collaborative dialog and emphasises the dialogic nature of learning. She stresses the value of group work, learners' active participation in the learning

process and reflection on their own output. Moreover, it has been found that scaffolding in group interactions helped L2 learners to expand their own knowledge and the linguistic development of their peers (e.g. Donato, 1994).

Following the research agenda of interactions in group work, other researchers have sought to understand the relationship between interaction and learning by measuring uptake in learners' language as a result of exposure to the L2. Allwright (1984) was among the first who used the notion of uptake to determine lexical items learned in interactions. For him, uptake is "whatever it is that learners get from language lessons" (Allwright, 1984, p. 11). Since then, uptake has been investigated from different perspectives in SLA, to name a few, as modified student output (Loewen, 2004), as a specific type of pushed output (Smith, 2005), as a measure of the language learning success (Ellis, 1995) and as a learner's reaction in L2 that immediately follows teacher's feedback (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster 1998). These researchers have hypothesized the production of uptake to promote acquisition of L2. Following this line of thought, in the context of my study, I understand uptake as a learner's oral response, reformulation or re-use of a lexical item in a new contextual configuration (e.g. a different type of talk). Drawing on Ellis's definition of uptake (1995), I consider production of uptake as an optional move (action) that may result from situations when learners deal with trouble in speech, react to some preceding move in which an interlocutor provided the lexical item, but demonstrate an ability to incorporate the lexical item in their utterances. I take uptake as an indicator that noticing has occurred, whereas the absence of uptake production does not mean that the lexical item was not noticed since "language-learning processes may not always be reflected as observable behaviours" (Markee, 2000, p. 3).

In fact, the research tradition driven from the Input, Interaction and Output hypotheses

leads to a vital series of empirical investigations on L2 acquisition and has contributed to our current understanding of phenomena such as language learning in interaction, negotiation of meaning and noticing etc. Findings of those studies have led to the re-conceptualisation of SLA in general and of L2 learning in particular. This research has also had a solid impact on teaching languages in an educational context (e.g. the introduction of the communicative language teaching).

There are, however, limitations to this framework. First, most of the research has been conducted in North America. Due to the language barrier, Anglophone scholarly literature lacks theoretical insights and interpretations from the European and other research. Second, viewing a learner as an information processor who receives input that is transformed to intake by sufficient opportunities for output means that questions related to the role of interaction on the site of organisation of activities, learning opportunities and learning itself remain open for discussion. Both the interaction as well as the output hypotheses have been criticised for overlooking the social significance of the interactions which have been analysed as a data corpus (e.g. Breen, 2001). Researchers' interest in the units of analysis has remained focused on linguistic aspects that facilitate L2 acquisition, whereby such factors as the role of the context, the conversation partner, interpersonal relationships and the speaker's identity in the development patterns of L2 have been relatively neglected. Although viewing interaction as necessary for learning to occur, the researchers working in Long's tradition assign it an auxiliary role in the learning processes. As evidence from studies of naturally occurring interactions grows, it becomes clear that many more issues are involved in a dialog's collaboration process. For a more precise understanding of L2 learning in interaction, the research needs to move beyond the scope of collaborative dialog to something that provides

space for learning. Breen describes such an approach to studying interaction “asocial” (p. 130) and expresses scepticism towards the de-contextualised data analysis from the perspective of the interaction hypothesis. Other researchers, for example Block (2003) have also criticized SLA research for being imbalanced in favour of cognitive and metalinguistic rather than social and contextual theories and methodologies.

In their publication, Firth and Wagner (1997), who are examining the relevance of language learning within the interactionists’ paradigm, call for researchers to change the direction of SLA and open up to sociocultural theory and sociolinguistics. Looking at the most recent studies in SLA research, it can be said that Firth and Wagner’s publication had a conceptual, theoretical and methodological impact on the SLA field, an impact which the authors reflect on in a follow-up article ten years later. They assess the reconceptualisations of SLA by pointing out the increasing number of studies focusing on “sociocultural and contextual-interactional” themes (2007a, p. 804). The research bears witness to the need towards adopting an emic perspective that sees learning as a social accomplishment. Summarizing findings from materials collected in natural (as opposed to experimental) settings, Firth and Wagner write that linguistic and situational elements are interrelated. Firth and Wagner have provided an impetus for a new research agenda, which takes into account within data analysis the social, contextual and interactional dimensions of learning.

2.2.1. Concepts and Theoretical Framework

The interactionist research tradition driven by the Input-Interaction-Output hypothesis is based on the “weak” conception of the role of interaction in learning an additional language, as described by Allwright (1984, p.9) and Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004, p. 502). It is called weak because it says nothing about the mechanisms of linguistic

development, while it views interaction as conducive to creating learning opportunities. Contrary to this position, the “strong” interactionists, according to Allwright (1984, p. 9) and Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004, p. 502), view interaction as a part of learning. Allwright (1984) was one of the first researchers who cited the constitutive role of interaction in learning:

The second claim I wish to make, leading to my second interaction hypothesis, is that perhaps the process of classroom interaction is the learning process (or acquisition process, if that term is preferred). It may be that interaction is what somehow produces linguistic development. This is a much more ‘interesting’ claim, in a way, because it suggests a process to account for language development, rather than merely a process to account for the opportunity for language development (underlined in original; p. 9).

A point of critique of Allwright’s study is its setup. Although he says that classroom interaction is the learning process, to prove the hypothesis, Allwright examines learners’ achievements through uptake as an outcome of such interactions (i.e. what they have learned) but he does so using self-report data. The study devotes no attention to how learners reach those outcomes. Allwright’s position did not remain unnoticed: on the contrary, it contributed to the new research orientation of the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning.

In its theoretical conception, my study follows the strong socio-interactionist approach of L2 learning. As evident from the above discussion, the interactionist approach is not new. But having undergone theoretical modifications, this research tradition provides a base for a growing number of scholarly discussions on the role of interaction in learning (among others, Hall & Verplaetse, 2000; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002; Belz, 2003; Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004; Chavez, 2007; Firth & Wagner, 2007b; Pekarek Doehler & Ziegler,

2007). The ideas of social interaction in L2 learning have captured the attention of researchers with the last decade witnessing a change that involves conceptualising language learning as an accomplishment through talk-in-interaction.¹⁷ Of special interest are studies which address issues in the microanalysis of social interaction in the classroom.¹⁸ This new era of SLA research has had a strong impact on what we think interaction is.

Edmondson and House (2006) begin their chapter on interaction in FL classrooms with the following lines: “Interaktion ist die wechselseitige Beeinflussung von Individuen (oder Gruppen) in ihren Handlungen” (p. 238). This definition embraces at least two features of interaction that are especially important: first, the social aspect of interaction is emphasised, and, second, it acknowledges the dimension of acting as a result of learner’s activeness (i.e. agency) and mutual “Beeinflussung” or interference as a result of their interacting. The interaction itself gains credibility with regard to learning; it is not simply a frame for learning opportunities, but rather it is learning. Yet, Edmondson and House’s notion of interaction is based only on verbal acting. Henrici (2000) extends the definition by giving non-verbal dimensions a role in language development and the outcomes: “Erwerb kann ohne sprachlichen und nichtsprachlichen Input und dessen Verarbeitung innerhalb/durch interaktive Handlungen nicht stattfinden. Interaktionen werden wie Kognitionen durch eine Vielzahl von Variablen beeinflusst: u.a. motivationalen, affektiven, sozialen, institutionellen.“ (p. 105). Many researchers (e.g. Park, 2007; Markee, 2008; Firth, 2009; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009), follow Henrici’s argument and see gestures, mimicry, pauses, and body position as interactional resources and assign them a mediating role in the learning processes. The researchers expand their repertoires to include those non-vocal resources as an integral part of

¹⁷ The term “talk-in-interaction” comes from the research tradition of ethnomethodology which studies the social organization of natural conversation.

¹⁸ For details see discussion in the issue 88 of the *Modern Language Journal* (2004).

their analysis of interaction.

Pekarek Doehler (2002) describes key elements of the social interaction in the light of the socio-interactionist approach. The first dimension stresses the local accomplishment of a task and sees it as a collaboratively achieved social situation. The task is viewed not as a stable product but rather as an activity which is individualised by learners through interpretative processes. The second property is the “reciprocity-based” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 25) account of participants’ interpretation of and participation in social interaction. However, in essence, the focal issue in learning through and in social interaction is “what the learner is capable of doing *with* the other, not what he ends up being capable of doing alone” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 25). She invites us to view collaborative dialogs not as a dichotomy between novice and expert, but rather to see learners engaged in the process of the construction activities through thematic guidance, and creative use of linguistic repertoires (initiating and contributing etc.), which imply shaping mediational processes. The third key-element is “context-sensitivity” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 26). Drawing on Garfinkel’s (1967) notion of interaction, Pekarek Doehler (2002) views interaction as a locally accomplished activity which participants interpret and to which participants orient during the ongoing interaction. To sum up with the author’s words, “[t]his is of fundamental importance for understanding interaction as a sociocognitive frame for language development, as it is not only linguistic but also social and contextual dimensions of discourse that crucially shape the competences...” (2002, p. 27).

2.2.2. Understanding L2 Learning through Interactive Practices

Researchers’ work (Pekarek Doehler, 2001, 2002; Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004;

Pekarek Doehler & Ziegler, 2007) contributes to the increasing number of studies oriented toward a reconceptualised¹⁹ SLA by focusing on sociocultural and contextual-interactional approaches. The research agenda bears witness to adopting an emic perspective and seeing learning as a social accomplishment. In particular, by analysing naturally occurring interactions, the authors acknowledge the interrelatedness of linguistic and situational elements. In order to understand how L2 learning occurs and develops, it is essential to examine not only what was studied by learners but also how the outcomes were reached. To do so, we need to examine languages in use (Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004; Young & Miller, 2004; Firth & Wagner, 2007a, b; Pekarek Doehler & Ziegler, 2007).

Socio-interactionists combine two frameworks to approach and uncover the developmental processes of learners. The focus is twofold and is first placed on the method of data collection and data analysis and, second, on the theoretical perspectives. It includes analysis of data collected in non-laboratory settings using the conversation analysis approach to examine in detail the reasoning behind the actions and language practice involved in interaction. The analysis of L2 learning is built on the concept of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and informed by sociocultural perspectives on development (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Not only learning but also teaching are viewed as a joint social accomplishment:

...the roles and relationships of the learner and the teacher are socially constructed; their social identities are formed and transformed by the very process of learning and teaching; the knowledge of language that is being acquired and taught is social knowledge that is affected by the role, relationships, attitudes and ideologies of the

¹⁹ See Firth and Wagner (2007a) for details.

learner and the teacher. (Hua; Wei, Seedhouse & Cook, 2007, p. 1)

Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) argue that linguistic development and situation are in a dynamic interrelation. They reconceptualise the notion of competence by stating that when interaction is necessary for L2 learning to occur, competence cannot be defined as the individual development of the mind but rather as a co-construct of joint activities with other people. The competence development is linked to both the “context-dependent” and “context-renewing” process (Mondada & Pekarek, 2004, p. 503). In Firth and Wagner’s words, the socio-interactional approach characterizes learning as follows: “Learning is an inseparable part of ongoing activities and therefore situated in social practice and social interaction. In this sense, learning builds on joint actions and as part of joint action is publicly displayed and accomplished” (2007a, p. 807).

In this view, learning can be manifested and interpreted through observable behaviour (cf. learning behaviour, Markee, 2008), whereby behaviour should be seen as an optional move (Markee, 2008). Respecifying language learning in behavioural terms (Markee, 2008), the CA-based methodology offers suitable tools to identify and interpret learning in sociocultural terms. An idea in sociocultural theory that is central to SLA is that individual learning is a socially mediated process (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, *inter alia*) and depends on mutual support and shared processes in collaborative interactions carried out through language. Thus, learning is embedded in activities. It cannot be defined in individual terms, but needs to be conceived of as a plurality of capacities embedded and recognized in the context of activities (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Following the ideas of socio-cultural theory, socio-interactionists see the source of cognition and mental functioning in social relationships: “[I]anguage learning is understood as

learning to deal with locally organized and sequentially structured discourse activities and is hence rooted in the learner's participation structures or sequencing activities" (Pekarek Doehler & Ziegler, 2007, p. 85). This definition also supports the belief that investigating language learning and use involves an analysis of activities in which the social situation unfolds and cognitive processes take place.

The basic content of sociocultural theory offers a theoretical framework to study cognition in its social context. For Luria, the human "functioning system" (qtd. in Lantolf, 2000, p. 8) results from the integration of artifacts in activity. More recently, Luria's argument has been further investigated and respecified by Lantolf and Thorne (2006): "Participation in culturally organized practices, life-long involvement in a variety of institutions, and humans' ubiquitous use of tools and artifacts (including language) strongly and qualitatively impact cognitive development and functioning" (p. 1). The human interaction with the social context through material and symbolic means represents another fundamental principle of sociocultural theory, i.e. mediation (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Cognition and development are also seen as a correlation of psychological and social aspects, such as the interaction with the world surrounding people and, in particular, the social relationships with other people. By taking an active part in the process of interaction, people orchestrate activity in accordance with their short-term and long-term goals. Thus, social relationships and culturally constructed mediational means influence the way people think and therefore their cognitive development.

Within sociocultural theory, language is viewed as a constituent of cognitive development. It serves as a mediator to organize human activities, to construct shared meaning, and to shape humans' mental functioning (Wells, 1999). Socio-interactionists

elaborate on this view of language by adding that “[l]anguage is not only a cognitive phenomenon, the product of the individual’s brain; it is also fundamentally a social phenomenon, acquired and used interactively, in a variety of contexts for a myriad practical purposes” (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 768). Building on the knowledge that language is acquired through interaction, Firth and Wagner suggest focusing the analysis on how language is used resourcefully, contingently, and contextually.

Drawing on the concept of learning from a sociocultural as well as socio-interactionist perspective, it can be summarized that learning an additional language cannot be seen as simply an individual achievement either. It is rather an accomplishment which takes place on both individual and collective levels. Being linked to the surrounding context of a particular setting, learning an additional language represents a set of unstable processes and results from learners’ interactions with other learners and the immediate context. These interactions are embedded in culturally organised activities and mediated by culturally constructed means (e.g. language).

Based on the criteria that the socio-interactionist approach examines learning from two distinct theoretical directions (sociocultural theory and situated learning), Hall describes it as “thought-provoking” (2004, p. 609). Indeed, it is an innovative way to couple situated learning, which seems to avoid discussion of the inner state of the learner, with sociocultural theory, which focuses on individual learning processes. Both theoretical premises play complementary roles in the theoretical framework suggested by Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004). A brief evaluation of the empirical evidence shows the current state of research and reveals how the theoretical construct developed by socio-interactionists can be applied on data to examine L2 learning. In this evaluation, I will first draw on the analysis of

data collected in classroom contexts.

In their study, Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) analyse learners' practices in conversational classroom activities, in which French is taught as L2. The researchers' focus is on the processes involved in the learners' interpretation of a task and what is going on in interactions during the task completion. The researchers develop a series of arguments based on empirical evidence taken from recordings in classes. The first claim testifies that learning is predominantly socio-interactional. This assertion is built upon the belief that learning practice is interactional because it is always situated in and linked with activities. The results exemplify how even a traditional grammar exercise which was not initially designed as a conversational activity becomes organised and achieved interactively. Another argument states that the successful accomplishment of the task requires learners to activate not only communicative skills as well as linguistic knowledge, but also the complex set of competencies (i.e. social, cultural and historical). Here, the task unfolds into learning as social practice. During learning processes, linguistic knowledge and its development relate to other types of knowledge and skills and their development. Similar findings were documented in a national project which aimed to investigate the learning of French in FL classes (Egli, Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2002). The authors report:

Als wichtiges Resultat konnte gezeigt werden, dass das, was gewöhnlich als kommunikativ bezeichnet wird (z.B. Literaturdiskussionen oder Debatten über aktuelle Themen), in Wirklichkeit sehr verschiedene Formen annimmt – je nach der Rolle der Lehrperson im Gespräch kann das Spracherwerbspotential der Schüler und Schülerinnen gefördert oder behindert werden. Das weist daraufhin, dass die Bedingungen des Spracherwerbs vermehrt durch genaues Beobachten der konkreten

Sprachpraxis im Unterricht (und in anderen sozialen Kontexten) erforscht werden müssen und nicht pauschal im Rahmen von Aktivitätstypen oder Unterrichtsmethoden abgehandelt werden können (Egli, Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 14).

The findings lead to a conclusion that a study of the linguistic aspects of the situation involves dealing with its socio-interactional and contextual factors. Therefore, language acquisition goes hand in hand with processes of socialization (Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004).

Another argument of Mondada and Pekarek Doehler centers on the effect of social interaction on learning; in particular it defines the context and the shape of learning. Learners' practices lead to ongoing transformations within activities. New objects of learning and new learning situations give rise to new potentials for learning. Therefore, the participants and the learning situation sets up the context in which certain aspects become more relevant for learners than others, which then affect the outcome of the task. It predetermines which aspects or units of language will be used and practiced (or become pushed output cf. Swain, 1985). This explanation answers the question on why some linguistic entities turn into pushed output and some do not. It also suggests going beyond successfully produced language items and examining steps necessary for learners to accomplish the outcome of the task.

Additionally, the analysis also illustrates the fluid nature of task rather than a predefined entity. Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) explain: "It means that neither task nor learning situations have a priory definitions, nor do they trigger a predetermined individual capacity. Rather, they demand that the learner put to work variable resources and adapt them continuously to the local contingencies of the ongoing activities" (p. 514). The researchers also documented that since both cognitive competence as well as language skills

are shaped by and linked to the activities in which they develop, they cannot be studied as decontextualised post-factum. Having admitted that the socio-interactionist approach does not offer an accurate model yet to study cognitive development as observable in interaction, Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) conclude that “cognitive processes in general and language acquisition in particular are publicly deployed, socio-interactionally configured, and contextually contingent” (p. 515).

Firth and Wagner’s study (2007b) is another attempt to explicate L2 learning by applying the socio-interactionist approach. Its aim is to trace the process of learning in “micromoments” (p. 807) as well as interactional phenomena in everyday natural settings, in particular in L2 conversational activities which take place outside the classroom. The findings lead the researchers to believe that “[in] situated social practices, use and learning are inseparable parts of the interaction. They appear to be afforded by topics and tasks, and they seem to be related to specific people, with particularized identities, with whom new ways of behaving occur as the unfolding talk demands” (Firth & Wagner, 2007b, p. 812). This argument once again suggests that language use and learning are interrelated processes and cannot be viewed as separate entities. Firth and Wagner argue further: “Moreover, in order to understand how language acquisition occurs, develops, and is operationalized, we are surely obligated to observe and explicate language in use” (2007b, p. 806). However, they caution that doing learning and knowing how to set up a learning situation in an interactionally consequential way does not necessarily guarantee that learning is happening. The data from longitudinal corpora would have a potential for providing evidence of whether or not learning is actually happening in a particular activity. This determination involves tracing the use of uptaken items by learners in the ongoing interaction or in follow-up activities (Firth &

Wagner, 2007b).

Another study informed by the socio-interactionist perspective offers an innovative prospect of mediation (Pekarek Doehler, 2002). Pekarek Doehler²⁰ expands the Vygotskian idea of mediation (i.e. cultural artifacts mediate human actions) to the idea of social mediation in interaction. Drawing on the concept of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), the author (Pekarek Doehler, 2002) understands mediation “as being a constitutive part of social interaction as a complex sociocognitive situation” (p. 24), and formulates “a notion of mediation-in-interaction, which accounts for its reciprocity-based, context-sensitive, and culture-related nature” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 22). In this logic, learning involves problem solving and creating possibilities for learning through co-constructing the situation. More specifically, “processes of mediation-in-interaction can be understood as part of the methods by which members construct learning environments, tasks, identities, and contexts” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002; quoted in Mondada & Pekarek Doehler, 2004, p. 515). Therefore, a task accomplishment involves learning language, working collaboratively, and interpreting and dealing with the institutional and situational rules.

The limitation of the studies of the mediation processes and scaffolding is that they focus on overcoming linguistic difficulties and therefore monitor closely the development of linguistic competence at the expense of recognizing other aspects of social interaction that impact L2 development. Pekarek Doehler (2002) illuminates an alternative panorama of social mediation, in which social interaction co-constructs the process of mediation. The findings on mediational stance show that “the modalities of the interactional constructions and mediations in turn shape the sociocognitive dimensions of the task and thereby contribute to

²⁰ See also Mondada and Pekarek Doehler’s study (2004).

configuring interactional conditions for the development of the second-language communicative competences through various ways of participating in communicative practice” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 36).

With regard to the reciprocal nature of the activities, the results show that interaction is a mutually constructed and coordinated space, wherein also a novice (learner) shapes the process of mediation by an expert (teacher). Both a student’s development of interactional skills and a teacher’s professional skills function as mediators. Although it may or may not result in linguistic development by a learner, mediation in this context should be viewed as a mutually achieved and defined process. In this sense, the process of mediation functions as a “context-producing activity” (Pekarek Doehler, 2002, p. 39).

This argument is in line with Donato’s (1994) argument on the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in which learners co-construct their learning environment. However, as Seedhouse (2007) points out, the application of the construct of ZPD to L2 classroom interactions is not straightforward:

It provides a ‘prefabricated’ relationship between learning and interaction which derived from L1 contexts and which fails to incorporate the unique property of L2 classroom interaction; that is that language is both the vehicle and object of interaction. (p. 21)

I concur with Seedhouse’ cautionary remarks about the common conception of ZPD which views the expert/novice dichotomy as too rigid when examining the relationship between expert and novice among peers. According to the common understanding of the ZPD, learning depends on the more competent individual, which means that the less competent individual (i.e. novice) learns from the more competent individual (i.e. expert). I assume that

the social and material aspects of the context are in an interplay with participants' individual qualities that will make certain kinds of assistance effective for L2 learning.

Masats, Nussbaum, and Unamuno (2007) examine learner interactions while carrying out group work on three different tasks. Using the techniques of close monitoring of the process of the accomplishment of the tasks, the researchers investigated the possible effect of linguistic practices on learning processes, paying special attention to the function of language choice in each of the tasks. The findings show that learners deploy and make available, share and adapt, and creatively apply linguistic repertoires available to them to solve lexical problems and to carry out the task. Working on three different tasks, learners deployed different interactive practices to reach the task goal. Masats et al. (2007) argue that learners' preference for one over another procedure depends on their experience in L2 (e.g. code-switching served speakers in cases of task interpretation and management). The authors claim that learners' competences are inevitably tied to the activities learners are engaged in. Moreover, learners do not simply transfer their competences from one situation to another, but rather adjust their repertoire and skills to the context created through the interaction. In particular, learners fine-tune them according to both their own demands of the ongoing activities as well as their interlocutors'. In this view, Bausch (2000) claims that learners' participation skills, as well as their understanding of learning and skills acquired in a particular task, can be of help for learners when approaching another type of task in a new context.

Using the empirical base from the socio-interactionist studies discussed above enhances the understanding of the notions of interaction, learning, and mediation-in-interaction. Interaction cannot be reduced to the benefit of comprehensible input, the

opportunity to produce output and to atomize the knowledge; similarly, learning and mediation have a much richer nature for learners than simply being engaged in the acquisition of specific skills and linguistic knowledge during the accomplishment of a task. The findings offer strong empirical support for the argument that there is a link between learners' participation and development of L2 knowledge. Accomplishing an interactional activity involves acting and learning how to (re)-act in a particular situation, a lesson which requires fine-tuning and deploying various skills and competences. By viewing cognition as situated in social interaction, it is inevitable to consider learning and mediation as interactively achieved reciprocal constructs.

The discussed studies provide a further enhancement of our understanding of L2 learning in social interaction in different contexts. Their findings invite us to conduct more empirical studies in order to analyse learners' participation in context, such as learning activities carried out outside of the classroom. My interest in analysing small group work on a task from the learners' perspective leads me to examine activities that learners engage in during the accomplishment of the task when the teacher is not there. At this point, I position my study in the socio-interactionist perspective on L2 learning. By interpreting learning activities, I will lean on the principles discussed in the framework of this approach. My understanding of interaction is that it is a collaboratively achieved event in which speakers use verbal and non-verbal signs, leading to jointly accomplished cognitive and interactive processes and shaped by a dynamic interrelationship of linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural competences. To show social facets of the knowledge construction in German by participants, I draw in Bakhtin's concept of voice.

2.2.3. The Concept of Voice in Bakhtin's Theory

In interactions, using linguistic resources, speakers engage each other in processes such as negotiating, assessing, revising, reflecting (Ribeiro, 2006), through which they define and re-specify the interaction, but also coordinate the organisation and flow of the activity (Y. Engeström, 2008). Drawing on this knowledge, researchers working in the socio-interactionist framework analyse how learners accomplish the interactional and social work through the use of linguistic resources approaching learning in terms of the interplay between the social and the individual (Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006). In recent years, a debate has arisen criticising SLA pedagogies and research for assigning learners' ownership of the language produced in the interaction (e.g. Prior, 2001) and for focusing on speakers' achievement of intersubjectivity rather than on meaning constructions rooted in the referential contents of interaction (Prior, 2001). This criticism implies overlooking other aspects of language-use-based meanings and significations that speakers give to their use of languages by drawing on linguistic resources available to them, both locally and from past experiences. Looking at the use of language by learners through the lens of Bakhtin's dialogical view of language as a social entity and, more specifically, through the concept of voice may help us refine the analysis of those "other aspects", and, as I will argue in the analysis chapter on voice, clarify their interconnectedness with learning an additional language in the context of object-oriented activity. Next, I introduce Bakhtinian theoretical constructs and the conceptual tool of voice; then, in response to various criticisms, I revisit some scholarly work aimed at addressing gaps in the research.

Bakhtin is a Russian philosopher whose work is often associated with the concept of dialog in literary theory. To the Englishspeaking world, Bakhtin's ideas were introduced

through his work “The Dialogic Imagination” (1981). Bakhtin views any literary work not monologic but rather as a result of and, at the same time, a base for the continual dialog. Creating a literary work is a bidirectional process which is accomplished through interaction with other works of literature and other authors (Bakhtin, 1981). Each literary composition generates and reflects multiple views, traditions and influences from other writings and their authors. The concept of dialog finds its application not only in the literary works, but also in the studies of language.

The most important feature that distinguishes Bakhtin’s thoughts on language from those of formalists is the view of language as a social phenomenon. Language is not as a set of rules and meanings but a meaning-making process which exists in speech practice. Language is also seen as dialogic because it emerges in a speaker’s communication with others. For Bakhtin, any use of language and instance of speech has to be understood within the context of a dialog. He writes: “the nature of word is dialogic”²¹ (1972, p. 312)²². Hence, language emerges in dialog, can be understood in dialog and is a medium of dialog. It is the medium of language that makes the formation of personal identity and worldview possible (Bakhtin 1972, 1986a). Being constantly renegotiated and reproduced in social activities by speakers (Hall, Vitanova & Marchenkova, 2005), language represents an open and dynamic system which is fundamentally tied to the social and historical contexts of its use. Dialog is a core concept that threads its way through Bakhtin’s works on the dialogical philosophy of language:

The dialogic orientation of discourse is a phenomenon that is, of course, a property of *any* discourse. It is the natural orientation of any living discourse. On all its various

²¹ It has been translated by the author of the dissertation.

²² Bakhtin employs “word” in the meaning of language in use.

routes towards the object, in all its directions, the word encounters an alien word and cannot help encountering it in a living, tension-filled interaction. (Emphasis in the original, Bakhtin, 1981, p. 279)

Thus, Bakhtin centers his analytic efforts on dialogic relations, contextualisation in talk, and views them as applicable to a variety of categories and aspects of interactional practices. Although L2 interactive practices in an educational context have not been addressed in Bakhtin's work, his dialogic interpretations of language and voice equip researchers of conversation and discourse with a strong theoretical tool for analysing practice in a new language in the context of an interactive activity.

One of the key concepts of Bakhtin's theory on language is utterance, a "unit of speech communication" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 497). Bakhtin insists on examining it as a unit of analysis²³ in the context of its use with the focus on situated communicative action. He writes that "speech can exist in reality only in the form of concrete utterances of individual speaking people, speech subjects. Speech is always cast in the form of an utterance belonging to a particular speaking subject, and outside this form it cannot exist" (Bakhtin, 1986a, p. 71; Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 440). Following this notion, studies of the use of language need to focus on the local production of utterances as that is where the formation of linguistic skills of every human takes place. Bakhtin explains that people appropriate some utterances from other people by quoting, assessing, revising and utilizing them in their own speech and, in doing so, they create a unique way of speaking, giving those utterances particular traits of themselves.

According to Bakhtin (1986a), when people select words during the process of

²³ Bakhtin argued that linguistics cannot provide a satisfactory account of utterance. Utterance should be studied "in the realm of the concrete life of the word" (my own translation, 1972, p. 345) and therefore approached by a study which he called *metalinguistics*. For him, metalinguistics is concerned with aspects of the real life of the word.

building an utterance, they do not always choose words from the language system (i.e. those whose meaning can be found in the dictionary). More often, people appropriate words from the others' utterances, whereby a change of subject builds clear cut boundaries. In this sense, any utterance is dialogic because every utterance is a unit of a chain of other utterances belonging to somebody (Bakhtin, 1986a). The use of words in a social interaction always bears traits of individuals and the context of its use. Each utterance has its author (i.e. its creator) whose stance it expresses (Bakhtin, 1972).

Therefore, any utterance is a creative process (Bakhtin, 1986a). This statement opens up a question about the ownership of the language. What it means is not that people create their own new utterances, but that they create meanings and significations by utilizing other people's utterances taken from previous written or spoken interactions. People use utterances in a unique manner by loading each of them with meanings based on their understanding of self and the world that is surrounding them, as well as emotional orientation to the situation in order to express and objectify themselves. By saying that, Bakhtin emphasizes that:

the speech of another, once enclosed in a context, is – no matter how accurately transmitted – always subject to certain semantic changes. The frame of a word used by another author is responsible for its dialogising background, whose influence can be very great. (1981, p. 340)

Bakhtin explains the process of meaning construction in a dialog.²⁴ It is an active rather than a passive process. This idea echoes his concern with addressivity, which is based on his suggestion to see utterance as a link in the chain of speech communication (Bakhtin, 1986b). The author of an utterance always orients it to the subsequent utterance in dialog.

²⁴ Dialog is meant as a form of communication from a sociopragmatic perspective.

Every utterance is also oriented toward a concrete listener in a concrete sociocultural situation. Utterances also orient toward the future answer by reshaping themselves and provoking the answer. Next, the actual meaning of an utterance is “understood against the background of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 281). Bakhtin (1972) claims that understanding matures in the answer; understanding and answer are in a mutual relationship, and one cannot exist without the other. He saw responsive understanding to be a fundamental force that participates in shaping the discourse. Marchenkova (2005) emphasizes the socio-historical nature of utterance by stating that it is an individual entity whose use evolves as well. It implies a general principle that humans learn to understand and to use a language not through a book, but rather from people, more specifically through a dialog with other speakers, but also based on their own language use.

The understanding of the notion of “utterance” can be enhanced through the concept of “voice.” In Bakhtin’s account, utterance becomes viable only through voice. Voice is “speaking personality, the speaking consciousness” (Holquist & Emerson, 1981, p. 434). Voice is the argumentative thread running throughout Bakhtin’s analysis of a Dostoevskian novel which presents literary and philosophical considerations (1972). The concept of voice holds a central position in Bakhtin’s theoretical ideas on dialog. Seeing dialog as a precondition of human life, Bakhtin claims that it requires at least two voices for a dialog to occur. One voice alone has no existential value (Bakhtin, 1972). Hence, the main characteristic of voices is their dialogic nature. Viewing two voices as the minimum of life means that only discursive practices merit space in the dialogic interrelation between individuals (Bakhtin, 1972).

The perspective of voice is always reflected in an utterance, therefore exemplifying a social and psychological unit of analysis. “Voicing” (Couplan, 2007, p. 114) means the way a speaker represents ownership of an utterance, in other words the way of speaking. Utterance differentiates one voice from another not only between two people but also by one individual (e.g. by quoting another voice). By making a voice sound, people incorporate and appropriate the other’s (foreign) utterances into their speech. The foreign utterance unavoidably absorbs new intention, namely the intention of the speaker. However, utterances, before merging into a new speech, already have a certain shape as well as traits from the intentions from previous speakers. In this case, Bakhtin relates voice to intentionality by saying that two intentions (of the previous speaker and of the new speaker) can be combined in one utterance (i.e. two voices can coexist in a dialogic relationship in one utterance). The situation is different in case of imitation in discursive practices, whereby the utterance of another becomes fully appropriated by the speaker, who is imitating, and leads to a complete merging of one voice into another.

The process of incorporating someone else’s utterances in one's own is called double-voicing. The difference between the two voices can find its expression only through the varying nature of their interrelationships. In articulating a micro-sociolinguistics of everyday life, people consistently use foreign utterances. Some of them completely merge into voices, and speakers forget to whom they once belonged; some other utterances are used in support of the speaker’s argument and speakers evaluate them as authoritative, whereas other utterances get loaded with the speaker’s intentions, which are rather new or foreign for them. Thus, for Bakhtin, when telling a story, an author incorporates others’ words into his/her own voice, re-evaluating and re-orienting them toward his/her own “emotional-volitional tone” (Vitanova,

2005, p. 158) and current evaluative position.

The notion of addressivity is another conceptual tool that helps to redefine the interpretation of voice. Following from the above discussion, a voice always belongs to someone (i.e. has an author). Being dialogic, voice is always addressed to somebody. In this view, voice cannot exist in disjoint from other voices. Being applicable to the spoken and written communication mode, voice always exists in a relationship with other voices. Extending Bakhtin's discussion on addressivity, Wertsch (1991) suggests that the notion of an addressee is not exclusively concerned with the speaker in the immediate speech exchange. He writes: "[T]he voice or voices to which an utterance is addressed may be temporally, spatially, and socially distant" (1991, p. 53). This addressee can be an immediate participant of an interaction, a group of people, authority, someone from the community, family members, classmates, or any other person.

According to Bakhtin (1972), voice has a capacity for self-fulfilment in a dialog whereby everything (in a general sense of this word) is the medium for dialog. Basically every unit that constitutes context for the dialog, including participants, can be a part of what Bakhtin calls "everything". Through the discursive practices with others, the past and present of the society as well as the sociomilieu of everyday life shape an individual's being and ideological views, in other words his/her self. However, Bakhtin notes that it is incorrect to see an individual as a passive element in this process of shaping his/her self. In contrast, people find their unique self in a comparison with others, during which they affiliate their voice with others' voices or distance themselves from others. People shape their self through positioning in social situations, which implies that speakers are aware of their subject positions and are actively involved in the process of their formation.

Going beyond Bakhtin, Vitanova (2005) provides a more recent socio-historic perspective on interaction in explaining that having a voice is synonymous with being heard, addressed, and responded to. Voice is not simply a set of words and meanings, but rather a position, a reflection of stance and worldview, through which speakers express their personality (Vitanova, 2005). In this sense, voice in fact should be seen as a dynamic process and not a final construct. Voice can be understood in individual and social terms since it belongs to both a social milieu and has a capacity to accumulate speaker's attitudes and evaluations (Bakhtin, 1972). Vitanova (2005) writes "to be a person is synonymous with having a voice" (p. 166). Making a voice sound means displaying oneself's position, which is based on what one sees and what one feels (Vitanova, 2005). Wertsch (1991) comments that voice is based on the "subject's perspective, conceptual horizon, intention, and world view" (p. 51). Others argue more strongly that having a voice and making it sound, which is voicing, are involved in most acts of identity (Coupland, 2007). And yet, voices should not be understood as a sketch of other people in someone's consciousness because voice "characterizes the whole person" (Bakhtin, 1972, p. 157). In this way, dialog becomes a universal concept that goes through human understanding of self in sociocultural settings, speech communication, relationships, and all manifestations of human existence.

Both notions, dialog and voice, are establishing their presence in SLA research (e.g. Knoeller, 2004, Vitanova, 2005), which, by representing voice in the overlapping framework of identity, is layering a slightly different perspective over voice in bilingual discourse. Vitanova's study belongs to one of a few in SLA that use the concept of dialogism and voice as theoretical underpinnings to analyse the narrative discourse of Russian immigrants. Even though Bakhtin's work is not concerned with L2 learning, Vitanova's study suggests that his

ideas are applicable and informative to social aspects of L2 learning. Using the conceptual tools of dialogism and voice to refine her analysis, she shows how L2 learners through and in their participation in interactions shed light on their new identities. The findings illustrate the importance for L2 learners of being involved in the active construction of meaning in discursive practices (i.e. to hear, being heard and responded to). Vitanova (ibid.) stresses the importance of voicing and illustrates people's disorientation, that is, what happens when speakers cannot express themselves in the L2 and therefore are unable to make their intentions known and, in turn, their voices heard. Thus, language resources play a special role in bringing into interplay social and individual aspects of identity and possibly helping speakers to redefine their selves in a new language.

Marchenkova's (2005) dissertation offers a theoretical account wherein the author applies Bakhtin's theoretical concepts, such as dialog, utterance and voice, to address L2 use. She explains that Bakhtin's notion of voice is closely related to identity as this concept is known in the field of interaction-related analyses. Studies of identity using conversation analysis are concerned with the way in which and the means by which people display identity during interaction (Benwell & Stokoe, 2007). Voice is considered as the expressive projection of identity through linguistic resources (Marchenkova, 2005).

Prior's (2001) publication contributes to the growing debate about the interpretation of voice in SLA contexts in individualistic and social terms. In his work, linking voice to the notions of identity and self, the author expresses scepticism towards scholars who share the views about voice through sharp binary opposites of the personal and the social. Prior suggests alternative conceptualisations of the use and learning of an additional language in an overlapping framework of voice. Understanding voice, first, is being linked to social

identities; second, it acts as an analytical tool to examine “re invoicing” or other’s words through processes of repetition and presupposition; finally, it is a part of situated production of “persons and social formations” (p. 55). Prior conducts an analysis of written texts. From his perspective, voice offers the “resources for getting beyond the binary of the personal and the social, for taking a complex view of agency as distributed across persons, practices, artifacts, and cultural activity systems” (Prior, 2001, p. 79).

A dialogic, socio-historic notion of voice offers resources to examine narratives but also an alternative perspective to examine classroom discourse (Menard-Warwick, 2005). According to recent findings, it can be said that dialog and voice are omnipresent in human life, including L2 learning contexts. As it is essential for monolinguals to have a voice create new meaning and project self, it may be equally important for learners of an L2 to make their voice heard. The research also suggests that the concepts of identity, voice and the use of linguistic resources are mutually related. However, what we do not know very much about is how learners of L2, especially beginners, construct their identities²⁵ through discursive practices drawing on the linguistic resources available to them. Voice seems to be a suitable theoretical underpinning to address this issue, and CA, which aims to describe the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of interaction, can provide deeper insights into the construction of discursive identity and language use.

The notion of discursive identity I support emerges out of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic research tradition. From this point of view, in every act of communication speakers and listeners construct meanings through interactions that serve to position them as

²⁵ Discursive identity is identity constructed through linguistic resources in interaction. However, it is not the same term as discourse identity, that refers rather to identities people inhabit in the course of interaction, e.g. speaker - listener, repair – initiator etc. (for more details on the term discourse identity see Benwell & Stokoe, 2006).

particular types of people (e.g. competent, non-knower, expert) (Brown, Reveles & Kelly, 2005; Brown, 2004). Given this perspective, L2 learners engage in discursive practices and use language in a way that is not neutral with respect to their identity. Learning and using a language carries implications how students perceive one another as well as themselves (Brown et al., 2005). The act of discursive interaction involves also negotiation of activity histories, assumptions and sociocultural knowledge embedded in any interactional exchange (Brown et al., 2005). It also provides the basis for what constitutes discursive identity (Brown, 2004). The term “discursive identity” reflects “an understanding that speakers select genres of discourse with the knowledge (tacit or implicit) that others will use to interpret their discourse as a signal of their cultural membership (Brown, 2004, p.813).

To my knowledge, there is no study examining the nature of using voice in the L2 and investigating how speakers cope with different voices while learning to speak the L2, whether there is a link between L2 learning and voice, and what the properties of a voice constructed in L2 interaction actually are. Even more importantly, researchers in SLA need to begin examining the extent to which appropriating a new language and using it in social interactions necessarily involves the struggle for a new voice and therefore a reshaping of identities (Menard-Warwick, 2005). With a clearer understanding of these issues, L2 instructors will be better equipped to support learners as they struggle in using a new language for their own intentions and expressivity.

Other scholars (e.g. Swain & Deters, 2007) have argued that the current understanding of L2 learning needs to include consideration of learner identity and agency as expressed through linguistic recourses and studied in its context of use. Linking the process of meaning-making in interactive practices to the notion of identity of the speakers, Holland, Lachicotte,

Skinner and Cain (1998) explain:

Persons develop more or less conscious conceptions of themselves as actors in socially and culturally constructed worlds, and, these senses of themselves, these identities, to the degree that they are conscious and objectified, permit these persons, through the kinds of semiotic mediation described by Vygotsky, at least a modicum of agency or control over their behaviour. (as cited in Wardekker, 2008, p. 158)

According to the social constructivist perspective people construct identities in social interactions, thus simultaneously suggesting a partly controlled process of self presentation through language (Coupland, 2007). Wardekker (2008) makes two important suggestions in this regard. First, identity in an education context ought to be understood as a culturally constructed mediating tool that has to be appropriated. What is meant here is that “[every] human being needs to learn to use “identity” as a cognitive tool, as the integrating principle for other cognitive tools, for feeling, thought, and action alike” (p. 158). Wardekker suggests viewing identity and learning as interacting and interrelating processes. Wardekker’s second claim is that identity finds its expression predominantly in and through communicative resources (e.g. language, intonation, gesture, body stance etc.).

The identity that Wardekker refers to is interaction-relevant known as “discursive identity,” it is based on cultural discourse (Wardekker, 2008, p. 158). People inhabit discursive identities while participating in activities. Developing their identities as participants in interactive settings, they use language to tell a story about themselves. The word “story” means telling other people about themselves, sharing plans for the future, attitudes or desires. This process also involves being able not only to evaluate and react to what one has said (Edwards & Mackenzie, 2008) but also to envisage how other people are

going to react to what has been said (Wegerif, 2008). Wardekker (2008) stresses the interrelationship between identity construction in conversation and learning. When creating a story, people at the same time learn to tell the story, which also involves learning to incorporate the story into the current context of interaction, to express certain positions and specific meanings as well as to incorporate elements from social, national identities developed in the past (Wardekker, 2008). It can be said that the process of developing discursive identity takes place through a dialog with the dimensions of the speaker's life from the past as well as the speaker's understanding of herself or himself in the present.

Thus, from a dialogic perspective, the notion of identity examined through voice in L2 learning-related contexts can be conceptualized as both socially constructed and individually experienced (cf. Pöyhönen & Dufva, 2007). In its broad sense, (discursive) identity is neither an individual property nor an exclusively social or discursive construct. It is formed in interaction with others through a multi-voiced dynamic process, linked to historical and social contexts.

One of the important characteristics of the interaction in the context of L2 acquisition is that participants often use two or more different languages besides the L2 (e.g. Seedhouse, 2007). They can construct their self presentation, more specifically their discursive identities but also voice, through the target and non-target languages of their repertoire which may play a role in L2 learning processes. The use of non-target languages and its functions in L2 contexts awoke researchers' interest relatively recently. The next chapter provides the overview of current research on the use of L1 in SLA.

2.2.4. Use of L1 in SLA

To the extent that interactants employ other non-target languages, those other languages influence speakers' interpretation of the context (Young, 2007) and may serve as mediating means to access knowledge in L2 (DiCamilla & Anton, 1997; Levine, 2003). By creating an additional level of complexity in interaction and activity, the use of non-target languages needs to be accounted for when studying L2 learning in interaction.

SLA research has been involved in an ongoing discussion and controversy about the role of the use of two or more languages within the same conversation in educational settings. Up until relatively recently the use of L1 (or any other non-target languages) has often been associated with insufficient knowledge in L2, for example, with limited vocabulary (e.g. Chanseawrassamee & Shin, 2009). Most recent research in SLA offers another perspective on L1 practices in an educational context. Researchers who subscribe to a social perspective on language acquisition have observed that learners adjust their ways of speaking to a particular situation and to the specific interlocutor. Given the recent research findings that L1 use can serve a number of functions in L2 settings (e.g. Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), examining use of L1 and language alternation between two or more languages may help to explain the ways learners deploy plurilingual resources and orient to social settings as well as specific interlocutors in pedagogy-related contexts.

In the last few years, the number of studies that examine the use of linguistic resources in L2 learning contexts and, in particular, those informed by conversation analysis, has been growing. They describe L1 use as an important interactional device with numerous cognitive and social functions that help learners, to name few, to manage the task, interpret the

situation, and organize and structure the discourse (e.g. Chavez, 2003; Halmari, 2004; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005; Unamuno, 2008; De La Colina & Mayo, 2009). Other studies have more strongly suggested that the use of L1 can be beneficial for L2 learning (Anton & DiCamilla, 1999), especially at the beginner level (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Most recently, Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) have argued that L1 use provides learners with cognitive support that allows them to process L2 at a higher level that helps them to perform cognitively demanding tasks in L2. Other scholars also suggest that the L1 is a tool which students and educators use to establish a good climate of collaboration (e.g. De La Colina & Mayo, 2009).

The central concern of most studies on L2 acquisition has been the question of learning. As such, matters like self expression and construction of additional meanings through the medium of language in pedagogy-related contexts during learning processes, as well as their role in the development of sociopragmatic competence by learners, have not received much attention. Going beyond the interpretation of the L1 uses as deviations from the L2 norms and taking the view of L2 users and their social perception of L1 uses in the L2 sociocultural environment, may open up opportunities to look at the role of L1 from a new perspective, such as the interplay between the social and the cognitive. Furthermore, much of the existing research on language use is based on data gathered from teacher-managed classroom activities which are organised around the official timetable and curriculum. Most published research on L1 use in L2 learning does not provide sufficient accounts of its functions in learner interactions when the teacher is not present.

In sum, chapter 2 began with an introduction of the main tenets of Vygotsky's and

Leontiev's theoretical constructs of an individual and group activity. Also discussed were Y. Engeström's new contributions to the conceptual and theoretical constructs of activity theory including his model allowing a schematic representation of activity system. Drawing on theoretical edifices and especially on Y. Engeström's activity system, I will investigate the organisation of activities, collaborative constructs of learning and interactions during students meetings. Following Y. Engeström's argument that the components of activity system (mediating artifacts, subject, object, outcome, rules, community, and division of labour) should be viewed as a complex interaction, I will consider activities, as primary units of analysis to see how group work is organized. The insights into the organisation of the group work will then inform the analysis of interactions and learning. In a framework derived from activity theory, I will break down the activities of participants into actions, and further subdivide them into operations. Using these categories will provide me with an understanding of the steps and mediating means necessary for the participants of my study to carry out a task.

The principles of the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning and the theoretical underpinnings of Bakhtin's suggestion to address the role of voice in L2 learning contexts were then proposed. I will adopt a strong version of the interactionist approach to address interactive practices and especially L2 learning in interactions within activity systems. I will use Bakhtin's dialogic theory of both language and voice to clarify how the participants of my study experience the position of the German language in their life during the activity.

Since the socio-interactionists do not assign interaction an additive role but view it rather as a space in which cognitive development is linked to learner interactive practices, and where dialog is a precondition to voicing, the data of my study is especially suitable to

observe the interplay between the social and the individual aspects of the use of languages and learning. In line with the above theoretical discussion, especially with most recent developments of activity theory, the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning, Bakhtinian socio-historic accounts, and insights from research on the role of L1 in SLA educational contexts, I view language learning as a dynamic social process rather than as a social product. I acknowledge the agency²⁶ of the participants of my study, whom I see as active users of languages of their repertoire and active constructors of knowledge in L2. The next chapter will examine methodological issues that must be addressed with respect to the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2.

²⁶ The most recent interpretation of agency recognizes it as “a capacity to act on and transform the object of activity and to be able to evaluate what one has done” (Edwards & Mackenzie, 2008, p. 166-7).

3. Data and Research Methods

The method I use combines an analysis of the activity system with the socio-interactionist approach. This allows me to draw on the complexity of contextual factors laid out in the analysis of the activity system in the subsequent microanalysis of interactional data. The dataset consisting of qualitative “language data” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 19) comes from different sources and comprises recorded spoken as well as written data. Data elicitation for this research includes a questionnaire, taping of peer interactions, interviewing participants, and observations. Recordings of speech have been transcribed according to transcription conventions developed in *Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem (GAT)*²⁷ (Selting, Auer, Barden, Bergmann, Couper-Kuhlen, Günthner, Meier, Quasthoff, Schlobinski, Uhmman, 1998).

In this empirical study, I employ a qualitative research methodology (Dörnyei, 2007; Merriam, 1998), using techniques of CA (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Markee, 2000, 2008; Schegloff, 2007; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008) but also taking into account information from the sources other than peer interactions.²⁸ My intention is to examine the ways in which university students learn German as a FL as they are working on a task designed to facilitate speaking skills. I expand this method to the uses of symbolic artifacts (such as L2, non-target languages, body posture and gesture) as well as material artifacts (such as the textbook and computer) as integral aspects of the examination of the interactions and activities that the task gives rise to. My premise is that in order to understand socially meaningful phenomena such

²⁷ The transcription of non-vocal actions represent an exception. I substitute the conventions of the GAT system for non-verbal behavior with a different layout of signs. See an example below.

²⁸ Traditional CA relies solely on meanings and knowledge demonstrated by the interactants in a communicative exchange rather than other information the researcher has for analysis (e.g. interviews, observation) as it is the case here.

as learning in interactions, the researcher must be cognizant of the link between the interaction and the social situation in which participants interact, learn and live.

3.1. Participants, Location and Time

The data for the analysis come from a dataset collected from two courses of GFL classrooms at the University of Waterloo, a major Canadian university located in Ontario. The data gathering started in the Fall semester in 2007 and ended in the Winter semester in 2008. In the study, 31 students and 9 instructors participated, of which 5 students were selected for closer analysis. Students were from two first-year German courses: 24 enrolled in German 101 (first semester) and 7 enrolled in German 102 (second semester). The 31 students include 18 males and 13 females. The instructors were all female. As is typical of full-time GFL courses, most of the students were in their twenties. The learners included long-term Canadians from across Canada as well as recent immigrants from several countries (e.g. Mexico, Guatemala, China, etc.). The students came from a wide variety of language backgrounds and from a variety of disciplines.

The students began to participate in the study as they were completing the Fall term course. All groups were required to do a speaking test during the last two weeks of classes. This was a combination of a role-play (skit) involving two to three people and a spontaneous question-answer session based on the teaching material of the course. The role-play had to be in the L2, German, and was based on aspects of students' life such as housing, university courses, studying, entertainment or a similar topic of their choice related to the course. During the speaking test, all students were graded on their performance in German following several evaluation criteria for the skits including creativity and coherence, pronunciation, vocabulary,

language structure, accuracy, and fluency. The evaluation criteria for the question/answer session were comprehension, logic and spontaneity, pronunciation, vocabulary, language structure, and accuracy. Students may or may not have been given the information about these evaluation criteria for both skit and the question/answer session before-hand but there is a chance that they saw the evaluation sheets prior to the speaking test. Different groups of students met to prepare for and practice the role-play outside of the classroom. All meetings took place on the university campus.

3.2. Data Collection

One way to capture the dynamics and a holistic view of learning practices as well as to gain greater access to the actual mechanisms involved in using verbal and non-verbal resources in interaction is to use naturalistic data²⁹ collection, which is a base for this study. These data consist of recordings of interactions during meetings and speaking tests, which are primarily for the purpose of language analysis. In addition, the qualitative data consist of recorded spoken data (interviews) and written data (a questionnaire, field notes, and notes from class observations).

For the data collection, I used the following qualitative research methods: questionnaire, participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and recording of participant's interactions. The data can be split into two subsets: first, class observations and questionnaires, which were filled out by the course instructors; second, data elicited from student participants, which represents the main base for the analysis. The data gathering techniques I used for the second subset of data were a combination of questionnaire, in-

²⁹ Naturalistic data is „[l]anguage data that is captured in a natural (nonexperimental) setting“ (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 198).

class and out-of-class observations, interviews, video and audio recordings, and stimulated interviews. Next, I describe the data collection methods and procedures for each data type.

The procedures for the data collection took place in the following sequence:

1. The participants (course instructors and students) were recruited.
2. The participants completed a questionnaire that provided information about their language, ethnic background, and attitudes (e.g. evaluations of and interest in what learners and teachers contribute to the small group activities and the use of languages in such activities). A sample of a questionnaire for teachers and students can be found in Appendix A.
3. The observations can be divided into in-class and out-of-class observations. To gain detailed information on dimensions of settings for learning and teaching as they occurred, I observed participants in class. Observations in class also provided me with information on the teaching approach and strategies used in the course. When making observation in the classroom context, I relied on additional data collection procedures such as field notes. The out-of-class observations involved both making freehand notes (Gass & Mackey, 2007) and conducting informal conversations. During out-of-class observations, I focused on learners' behaviours after classes. In an attempt to win the confidentiality and trust of the students, I tried to involve participants in as many informal conversations as possible, especially before the recordings sessions. I also tried to build up relationships with other people involved in the research process (i.e. teachers, the course's coordinator, groupmates of my student participants and, most crucially, the student participants themselves). The informal conversations took place at random times and places, after class and during German club³⁰

³⁰ More details about the organization and aims of the German Club are in the next chapter.

(e.g. on the field trip to *Schnitzelabend*).³¹ I also taught a few classes in German 102, substituting for the instructor of the course, who was on a medical leave. However, I thought them very early on before they participated in the focus groups.

4. To guard against data being lost, I drew on Markee's (2000) suggestion and recorded learner interactions with both audio and video recorders. The video- and audio-recordings of students' interactions proceeded in two steps: first, students' preparation for the role-play for the speaking test, and, second, the presentation of the role-play and the question-answer session in class. Cohen (2004) advises researchers that the presence of the researcher may affect the initial reaction of participants, creating a challenge to collecting data that approximate authentic performance of linguistic and non-linguistic actions. To make students more comfortable about being filmed, before the first video recordings, I allowed them to video-record their acting for a few minutes and then watch the sequence. This gave them a better idea of the video-recording process.³² Most of the time during recordings, students were placed alone in the room. In an attempt to interfere as little as possible with group work, I limited my presence during the recordings to few minutes at the beginning and at the end, when the tape in the camera had to be exchanged.

5. I conducted two types of interviews with student-participants: structured interviews (Dörnyei, 2007) and stimulated recall interviews, each lasting from 10 to 20 minutes. For the structured interviews, I prepared a list of questions and elicited information about participant's attitudes toward planning, their expectation of group work, and their short-term

³¹ Such extra-curricular activities like this seem to be coining for students since the word *Schnitzel* became a part of the role-play of group 1.

³² Participants of group 1 seemed to enjoy this testing and told me that video-recording was a fun part of the process.

and long term goals for this task. The interviews with each participant were carried out individually and contained questions such as:

1. How would you describe your overall experience with foreign language learning in small groups?
2. How did you prepare in this course to take the speaking test?
3. How did you and your classmate approach the preparation for the speaking test (e.g., who contacted whom? when?)
4. How would you describe your feelings when you speak German in class and outside of the class?
5. What are your short-term and long-term goals for this task?

The stimulated recall interviews were conducted while watching the video together with participants of each group. This procedure was intended to discover the participants' view of the verbal and non-verbal behaviour after playback of parts of the data and, if necessary, to clarify some unclear points in the recordings. After the recordings of the interactions, I watched them and prepared for each group an interview guide consisting of a list with episodes. Students were asked to reflect on the episodes from the video which simultaneously served as stimulus. The purpose of stimulated recall interviews was to elicit participants' ideas about their language choice and use, processes, and the strategies they used when preparing and or presenting.

The interactions of each group were recorded in a separate room to avoid background noise, which can be caused, for example, when the presence of more than one group in a room

lead to intragroup conversations. Both the digital audio recorder³³ and the camera used during the planning sessions and presentations yielded high-quality recordings. The video recordings are the medium of choice, as they reveal how phenomena such as the direction of participants' eye gaze, facial expressions and body movements are coordinated with conversational behaviour.

My recordings contain a few short parts with low sound quality which occurred, for example, when participants moved their head away from the camera while speaking. In such cases, I took advantage of the multiple recordings technique and used audio files. For video recordings, three different cameras were involved because sometimes parallel meetings had to be captured. Each of these cameras delivered recordings of various quality levels, one of which was unintelligible, but the digital audio recorder continued to capture the talk. The disadvantage of the technique using audio and video recordings of the same conversation is that it creates a huge amount of data to listen to and to synchronise.

Next, I summarize how the different data sets inform each other. This brings us back to this study's original goal and to the activity theory itself. In this theory, the concept of activity is a crucial principal for personal development. According to Leontiev's perspective, any activity presents a certain integrity in which desire, emotions, plans, and tasks will play a role. I want to take into account the attitudes of participants as they enter the activity and their motivation. This information can be examined through the questionnaires and interviews. The recordings of the actual events will show what is happening in the planning and presentation settings, namely, what participants are acting on (cf. Bakhurst, 2009).

The number of planning sessions varies among the groups from five meetings to two

³³ For the audio recordings, I used a high quality Edirol R-09 digital recorder, which is excellent for professional recordings. Its features allowed the dynamics and details of sound to be captured and the sound level to be set precisely.

meetings. Such factors as the language proficiency of each participant and the previous experience with preparing role-plays may influence their decision regarding the number and duration of meetings. In the interview, some groups mentioned having discussed some parts of the role-play via chat, e-mail, or phone.

Because the aim of the study is to pursue a detailed qualitative analysis with the dual focus on the organisational issues of each group's activities as well as on their interactions, I had to concentrate on two groups. Three main criteria guided the selection of the focal-participants. First, my intention was to look, on the one hand, at the activities of groups from two different language learning levels, and, on the other hand, at activities that differ to such a degree that they can provide comparable data to understand how the phenomena which are the focus of analysis work differently in different contexts.

What I was looking for were group work interactions that provide a rich texture of interactive work and are suitable for analysis. Therefore, my focus was on groups who carried out the task in front of the camera. The third criterion concerns the phases of data collection. Since not all participants went through all phases of the data-collection (some participants did not complete the questionnaire or did not partake in the stimulated recall interviews), my focus was only on those groups that went through all phases of data collection, which I will discuss in the next section. Guided by these three criteria, I scanned the dataset, a process which involved reading written data, listening to all audio recorded interviews as well as watching all video recordings of interactions.

I chose two groups of undergraduate students from two different classes for closer analysis. One group consisted of three students, one male and two females (here called Rut, Sam and Lea) while the second group consisted of two female students (here called Amy and

Ira).³⁴ All five focal-participants self-selected to do their role-plays together. Detailed information about each of the participants is provided in the chapter analysing the activity system of each group respectively.

3.3. Transcription Preparation

Transcription of the audio and video files is most important in this research study, since I focus on the microdynamics of the interaction which is often only recognizable during the transcription process. Oral data, which include recordings of interactions and interviews, consist of approximately 50 hours of audio- and video-recordings. The recordings of interactions, presentations and all interviews of the two focal groups were transcribed entirely. I decided to use the German conventions (GAT) for my conversation analysis for two reasons. First, I gained extensive experience in transcribing with GAT during my research assistantship prior to starting this project. Second, since the main focus of the analytic chapter is on the German TL, and the data consists of a considerable amount of German speech, I found to use German transcription conventions appropriate to the language of the text. Since transcripts of students' interactions served as a basis for an empirically grounded description of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour in my research, I aimed to capture particularities of human interaction and to present interactional details as clearly and as accurately as possible. Non-vocal behaviour has been transcribed as well.

In some parts of the analysis, especially those dealing with socially distributed cognition as behaviour, it was analytically important to show the eye gaze (e.g. establishing mutual gaze) and facial mimicry (e.g. thinking face³⁵) at a particular point during the

³⁴ All names are pseudonyms in order to protect anonymity of the participants.

³⁵ I describe participants' behavior and the facial expression of focusing on something as a "thinking face", a term which is based on my interpretation. A thinking face differs from participant to participant (e.g. some raise

interaction. To accommodate the transcript for the representation of non-vocal actions, a layout of additional signs has been developed.³⁶ In the transcript, the figurative bracket, placed horizontally above the section of the turn, and the text describing the non-verbal action were inserted using a form available in the Microsoft Word program. The next excerpt represents a transcription example of non-vocal behaviour.

Looking away, thinking face

Amy: (1.0) yeah
Ira: okay

3.4. Data Analysis

Because a particular phenomenon in the interaction is a part of a complex system and involves human doing (Bakhurst, 2009), the disconnection of the focus phenomena from the object-oriented activity, which is, for example, often evident in CA, may mute the phenomenon under investigation (e.g. Engeström, 1999; Thorne, 1999; Bakhurst, 2009). In this case qualitative research is needed to capture both the general structure of the activity and the particularities of human interactional practices. Drawing on the activity theory as a method for analyzing activity systems (cf. discussion of new directions in activity theory, chapter 2.1.), Haneda (2007) advises that some communication events can be better understood in light of the fabrics of particular activity systems.

I begin by analyzing the context in which interactive practices under investigation are embedded. Therefore, the focus of my analysis is twofold. The analysis proceeds from the

the eye brow while thinking, and some do not, etc). I do not transcribe the different forms of the thinking face in my analysis.

³⁶ I decided to substitute the conventions of the GAT system for non-verbal behavior with a different layout of signs for non-vocal actions for ease of writing.

macro-level, where I am examining general structure and organization of the two groups' activities to the micro-level, where I take a closer look at the learners' use of languages³⁷. The analysis from the macro-level informs the detailed analysis of the peer interactions. To examine language use and opportunities for learning German, I analysed interactions during meetings using a socio-interactionist approach.

3.4.1. Unit of Analysis: Activity System

Especially suitable for the analysis of a particular phenomenon in interaction like language use and learning are events with “a reasonably well-defined object, a pretty good sense of desirable outcomes, a self-identifying set of subjects, a good sense of what might count as an instrument or tool etc.” (Bakhurst, 2009, p. 206). The group activities under scrutiny demonstrate the characteristics outlined above and therefore represent a suitable unit for analysis. Engeström's known triangular schema of activity system (1987) is a reference which I use for a visual representation of the activity of each group respectively. The activity system model enables me to examine connections between seven elements of the system (cf. chapter 2.1.) and to contextualize the language practices and learning that I examine in subsequent chapters.

Activity theory³⁸ should be viewed not as a universal truth (cf. Bakhurst, 2009; Lin, 2007), but rather as a working model that I draw upon to conduct analysis of activities from a

³⁷ The analysis of activities and the use of L1 and L2 were already determined as the research focus before the data were collected. During the initial examination of the data, I decided to add word searches and voice in L2.

³⁸ As mentioned in the theory chapter (chapter 2.1), the activity theoretical tradition distinguishes two strands: in the first, the concept of activity is the key to understanding the nature of the mind, while the second is a method of modeling activity system and tracking organizational change. However, the two strands should not be understood as two separate entities. Bakhurst (2009) outlines their relation: “the first strand forms the theoretical background to the second, so that conceptual problems in the second strand are to be addressed with resources supplied by the first” (p. 207-8).

more holistic (i.e. contextualized) perspective. For the analysis of data, I also use Engeström's model as my sampling plan (Dörnyei, 2007) describing the activity parameters (subject, object, mediating tools, outcome, community, rules, division of labour). In the analysis of activities, I couple two perspectives: structure and historical development. Next, I explain how I examined the structure and organization of each activity from each perspective.

The sampling plan guided the analysis of the full set of data which I examined for every component of the activity system separately. The procedure for examining all seven components was analogous. For a better understanding, I describe the procedure for analyzing an example of the division of labour next. I extracted information concerning the ways in which students divided the work from questionnaires, interviews and meetings. Having reached saturation in understanding what the division of labour looks like in a particular activity, I investigated the relation of this component to the other components of the system. For example, I examined the ways division of labour influences the object construction or how it correlates to the explicit and implicit rules, as well as what kind of actions result from the interplay of two components.

While examining the relationship between components, I also paid attention to changes and transformations in the activity. Once I noticed significant changes I was looking for their driving force. However, I did not restrict the analysis to internal changes only, but rather was open to examine possible influences from activity external events (e.g. interactions that took place outside of this activity). Seeing a system as an open enterprise helped me to discover what is relevant for students and what becomes an item for negotiation, which involves sharing with the other participants and learning while doing so. It also helped me to identify sources for information related to L2 that students draw upon to reach the desired

outcome of the activity.

From the second perspective, I examined the meetings in the sequence of the students' progression towards the outcome in order to track the historical development of each activity. Briefly, the analysis consists of breaking down and describing each activity into coherent episodes which constitute the steps towards task achievement.

3.4.2. Interaction and Learning

The socio-interactionist approach (cf. chapter 2.2) offers a methodology for understanding language use and learning practices as reflected in my data. Within this approach, the conversation analysis technique provides one solution to the methodological impasse of activity theory, namely overseeing fine details that can be useful to understanding the use of languages in terms of what learners are trying to achieve in L2 or what part of the language they are working on.

Socio-interactionists emphasize the need to uncover the socially and interactionally accomplished development through a CA-driven microanalysis of joint activities. This is an approach which represents an important methodological contribution to SLA. Through emic epistemology, it stresses the dynamic nature of language learning. However, CA has been known for providing an insufficient conceptual basis for application within a learning theory (e.g. Markee, 2008). To add this basis, the socio-interactionist approach involves using socio-cultural theory as a complementary tool to address learning in interactions. Next, I will outline the basic assumptions, as well as some of the strengths and limitations that CA offers as an approach to social interaction and as a methodological technique for SLA.

CA was initially developed to analyze monolingual texts in a non-educational context.

The use of CA as a specific analytical method for conducting qualitative research in L2 classroom has its roots in ethnomethodology (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999). Originating in North America in the late 60s it is associated with Garfinkel's research (1967). Ethnomethodology resides in the branch of sociology which deals with social order, organisation, and interaction. As Jaworski and Coupland explain, "[e]thnomethodology means studying the link between what social actors 'do' in interaction and what they 'know' about interaction" (1999, p. 19).

Following his teacher Harold Garfinkel, Sacks introduces CA to study humans' routine activities. CA acknowledges human agency as mediated by language; therefore, language and interaction are viewed as a form of social action. CA researchers use naturally occurring conversations to investigate how the organisation of social interaction echoes speakers' mutual understanding and their knowledge about social structures and organisation in which they act. Mondada and Pekarek Doehler (2004) suggest that CA is a suitable tool to study learning as a situated social practice with its own routines, such as change of topic, turn-taking, recasting, repairing, negotiating meaning, opening and closing conversations, etc.

Only in the last few years have researchers started to address the link between CA and language learning. Numerous publications have attempted to establish a relationship between the CA perspective on interaction and language learning and teaching (Markee, 2000; Rampton, Roberts, Leung & Harris, 2002; Markee & Kasper, 2004; Kasper, 2006). The discussion centers on the topic of whether and how CA can be used to study different types of interaction and how they relate to language learning. However, CA's potential as an approach to examine language learning is still a new research paradigm.

In my approach, the following categories, for reasons outlined below, guided the

examination of transcripts: searches for a lexical item in L2, use of L1, and layering of voices in L2. I oriented mainly toward the behaviours of gaze, mimicry, and laughter, as well as the use of material tools, individual action or reaction related to a partner's behaviour, learning behaviours across the speech events (cf. Markee, 2008), and reference to activity external facts during interaction (e.g. events in the class).

My selection to focus on word searches was guided by the fact that they offer affordances for language acquisition (Brouwer, 2003), since they involve the presentation of a gap of knowledge and the attempt to fill this gap. Word search as an interactional mechanism has been studied within CA to an extensive degree (e.g. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003; Lerner, 1996). In CA, word search is a specific kind of repair, whereby repair is defined as "trouble in speaking, hearing, or understanding" (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977; cf. disturbances, Engeström, 2007). As any kind of repair, a word search has two parts: initiation and repair. To identifying word searches in transcripts, I concentrated on two points: invitation and the interlocutor's reaction to it. First, my focus was on searches initiated by the speaker or by another person who interprets some action by the speaker as searching for a word (cf. Park, 2007). Second, I examined the data for cases in which the speaker takes up the invitation and tries to involve the interlocutor in the search, a process which is called a *substantial* word search (Kurhila, 2006, p. 96). My focus was on lexical searches rather than grammatical searches³⁹ (Kurhila, 2006, p. 97). Lexical searches involve a search for an L2 lexical item, which can be a word or a phrase. More detailed discussion on word searches is in the introduction to the analysis of word searches in chapter 5.

³⁹ Kurhila (2006) notices, however, that the distinction between lexical and grammatical searches is rather symbolic because it is not always clear what kind of linguistic the unit speaker has in mind. On the other hand, it is operational, since it refers to what speakers orient to when initiating word searches (ibid.). In grammatical searches, speakers usually are searching for a unit within the lexical item. An example for such a grammatical search could be the search for a proper article or an ending of a word.

Once all word searches had been extracted, my next step was tracking the word search solutions to see how learners make use of those items in the word searches. I examined interactions for word searches, but tracked word search solutions throughout all interactions as well as transcripts of performances, including question-answer sessions. For the interpretation of the word searches and tracking items, I used information from the entire set of data from the focal groups, as well as results from the analysis of the activity system.

In the analysis of voice, three main criteria guided the examination of the transcripts. First, I selected instances of voice in German. Second, I considered instances that clearly illustrate interplay of different voices, e.g. when speakers uptake a lexical item, appropriate it through some changes to their needs, and incorporate it into their own speech, but in a new context and for a new purpose. Such items could stem from the interlocutor's speech from the local situation or from interactions that learners participated in or witnessed outside of the activity. Third, going beyond the interactional data, I searched for information in all sources of data. In this way, I was interested in instances that, on the one hand, show the ways learners appropriate language items into their speech but, on the other hand, reveal indexical traces of speaker's sense-making of an utterance through speaking voices.

For the purpose of selecting uses of non-target languages in the transcripts, I identified the languages students employ during meetings. For example, unlike group 1, who use several languages, such as English, Spanish, Italian, French⁴⁰ and German, participants in group 2 speak only two languages, English and German. All uses of non-target languages used by the participants were identified for cursory analysis, including instances of code-switching, as well as cases of L1 use when learners employ L1 knowledge in the production of L2 utterance

⁴⁰ To interpret the Spanish, Italian, and French parts of the transcripts, I consulted native speakers.

or in order to clarify a lexical item in L2. The cases in which the relationship between L1 use and L2 learning could be clearly observed through learning behaviour, were then selected and underwent a conversational analysis similar to the method used in studies on bilingualism (e.g. Auer, 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005).

In this chapter, I described and specified analytical tools offered by activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach as a methodological framework. I also provided details about participants, location, and time, as well as procedures used during data collection, preparation, and analysis. The present study uses CA for the analysis of bilingual interactions organized around production of a text, taking into account the object-oriented activity in which these interactions are embedded. Activity theory has been employed as a method for analyzing activity systems in numerous studies that seek to understand what people are doing, and how they are acting and interacting on in actual social situations. However, to my knowledge, there are no research studies dealing with issues of the interplay between activity and interactions in which participants learn to speak a foreign language. Finally, by facing the challenge to use CA for multilingual interaction and for SLA, I show how CA may be employed to develop an understanding of interactive practices, and the longitudinal relationship between L2 use and learning across speech events within the same activity.

4. Contextualized Analysis of Group Work: Perspectives from an Activity-Theoretical Tradition

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the activity systems of the two focal groups. The analysis is broken down into several sections following the components in Y. Engeström's model of an activity system, which is chosen to present the activity of group 1 and 2 in a systematic way and in manageable portions. Before I proceed with the analysis, I explain the unit of analysis in the context of this study.

Drawing on the theoretical consideration that interactions are connected to activities (e.g. Y. Engeström, 1999) in a sense that what students are acting on and the way they organize their work may define the interaction, and possibly be relevant for L2 use and learning, I examine activity systems of group 1 and group 2. Each section (Activity System of Group 1 and Group 2) examines the context in which the peer interactions are embedded. The analysis of activity systems will help to analyze interactions not as units of talk that are isolated from an argumentative social fabric, but as a vehicle for broader and deeper interpretation of the use of languages and L2 learning through interaction.

The purpose (object) of students' meetings in both groups is to prepare for the speaking test, which includes the creation and practice of a role-play as well as the preparation for the question-answer⁴¹ session. Students organize their activity around this object in order to present the role-play and spontaneously answer questions from the audience during the speaking test which represents the projected outcome of this activity (cf. outcome in Chapter 2.1.4). The object of both groups may be characterized as the trajectory from the task to the projected outcome, which has been elaborated through the construction of the

⁴¹ Corresponds to Q/A in Figure 4.3.2 and 4.4.2.

object. Since the speaking test consists of two components (role-play and question-answer session), the object also has a dual focus. However, following the regulations outlined in the guidelines for the speaking test, the role-play is worth 70% of the grade while answering the questions is worth 30%. Since learners in both groups focus from the first meeting more on the creation and practice of the role-play and less on the preparation for the questions, this task regulation influences learners' initial conception about how the activity should be organized.

The preparations for the speaking test and the speaking test itself took place within two weeks. The activity of each group will be described and represented schematically, applying concepts and tools of activity theory as advanced by Y. Engeström (1987). I examine group work and interactions in meetings in the sequence in which they occurred. Although the analysis addresses all components of each system, my central concern will be the object of the activity.

4.1. Defining the Unit of Analysis: Activity System

The unit of analysis is the group work conceived as an ongoing system of group activity. By "group work," I do not mean a single meeting, but rather an ongoing activity system that involves several meetings concluded by a presentation of the role-play during the speaking test in class. Each meeting fits into the larger system of the whole activity of a particular group, but its own distinct characteristics are also related to different work phases as learners progress with the role-play. Each meeting varied in duration from 23 to 91 minutes, time of the day, and location (room). Yet, all meetings of all groups took place at the University of Waterloo. Figure 4.1.1 represents a model of the context of activity embedded

in the educational institution.

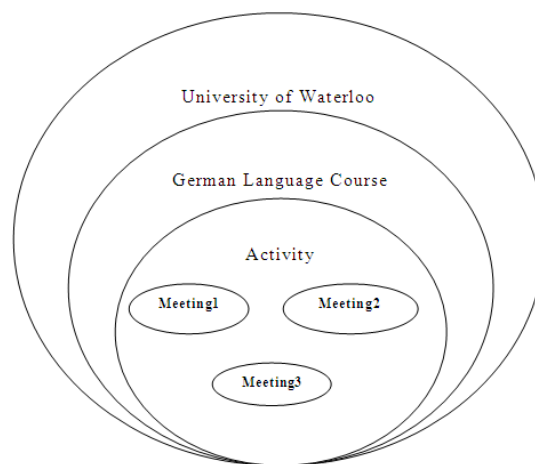


Figure 4.1.1. General Representation of Activity in Institutional Contexts

The group activities are a part of the larger educational activity of the task in each course to which those groups belong. Furthermore, the course is a part of a larger activity unit of learning to work and acquiring a degree at the University of Waterloo. All these activities represent a set of interacting activity systems. Thus, each activity under investigation is interconnected with other activities (i.e. is situated in the network with other activity systems) all embedded within the educational establishment and the community of the University of Waterloo. In this sense, students' understanding of and participation in the activity under scrutiny are framed by their participation in the course and in the institutional life of the University of Waterloo.

In such a case, the community aspect of each activity connects members of the two groups to other activity settings. Members of the wider community, such as university management, teachers, researcher, family, ethnic activities, university and friends, exert a direct and indirect influence over the participants and what they are doing or not doing. Thus, throughout this chapter, the activity systems of group 1 and 2 should be seen as open and

dynamic systems, in the sense that they interact with larger activity systems (e.g. the activity system of university). The role of the other activities in the present activity and the ways in which the present activity interacts with other systems will be analyzed for each group respectively.

The set of participants in each group remained constant throughout all meetings. Hence, each activity under examination has a degree of continuity and stability, allowing on theoretical grounds the focus on the dynamic context of situated practice and development.

My richest sources of data for modeling activity systems are video-recordings, interviews, field notes taken during class observations, and conversations with participants. All these sources provide different perspectives, whereby video-recordings of the series of meetings examined in the sequence they occurred make it possible to reconstruct relatively long-term patterns and changes in activity systems.

To illustrate the overall atmosphere in which both units of analysis are situated, I begin the analysis by briefly describing the educational institution and the orienting sense of administration in which groups' systems are embedded. The activities should be understood as systems within the larger educational system of the University of Waterloo.

4.2. Setting

The goal of this section is to picture the university setting in which group activities have been conducted. The University of Waterloo offers strong teaching and research programs in arts among other sciences. When people think of Waterloo, they may first think of Engineering and Computer Science. However, while the university is justly famous for these programs, it is also home to a range of language courses in foreign language education

offered by the Faculty of Arts, of which the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies is a part.

In the courses offered by Germanic and Slavic Studies students enjoy smaller classes, personal connections to the instructors, and a close-knit language learning community. The department offers a full range of required and elective courses for any German Academic Plan, divided into different levels progressing from elementary to advanced. However, only the courses relevant to this study will be addressed in detail. Known in the department as German for beginners, these courses are Elementary German I (German101) and II (German102), the latter being a continuation of the former.

The teaching philosophy of elementary German language courses is based on the communicative language teaching approach. The course helps learners to develop the ability to communicate in German, teaching grammar and language structures in an entertaining and communicative way. The courses teach students to comprehend, read, write and speak German, thus equipping them with the ability to accurately produce L2. Students usually meet three hours a week in the classroom and one hour a week in the multi-media language lab. The program offers students a number of opportunities to put into practice the language skills acquired in class, including practice for the speaking test.

Both German language courses are based on the *Vorsprung* textbook and materials that cover the chapters in the textbook (from 1 to 3 in German101 and from 4 to 6 in German102 respectively). Each chapter is accompanied by audio material provided online including web exercises. *Vorsprung* is designed to provide beginning students of German with the necessary skills for successful communication in everyday life. It combines spoken and written texts with interactive, in-class assignments that offer opportunities to converse

with classmates in role-play situations. Each chapter of the *Vorsprung*-set (Lovik, Guy & Chavez, 2007) contains featured activities that focus on developing of communicative skills. The sections called *Sprache im Alltag* (*Everyday language usage*) briefly describe variations in spoken German that highlight vocabulary and colloquial expressions. *Freie Kommunikation* (*Free communication*), a type of task which appears at regular intervals in each chapter, has a strong focus on the development of productive skills. In this task, learners are guided through role-play situations in which they can practice the communicative functions that have been introduced to them in the *Strukturen* (*Structure*) and *Vokabeln* (*Vocabulary*) sections.

The German Club offers students another opportunity to practice the language. Trying to be inclusive as possible, the club has no membership fees, welcoming students of all levels of German language skills who are interested in the culture and language. Once a week in the evening, except during the summer months, everybody can participate in activities such as movie nights, discussions, and presentations on German related topics, cooking, music, *Stammtisch* at a restaurant, going to the cinema, and much more. Almost all activities are offered free of charge. When this study was conducted, some of specific field trips (e.g. *Schnitzelabend* at Transylvania Club) were sponsored by the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies and Waterloo Center for German Studies, making the club accessible for students from all level incomes. Furthermore, the philosophy of the club is to maximize learners' freedom of choice and to give them some flexibility in initiating and participating in different events. The German Club creates a unique opportunities for its members to learn about the country's culture and people, to socialize with each other using the language and to meet international students from Germany.

In sum, the department of Germanic and Slavic Studies offers students interested in learning the German language and culture a wide range of opportunities to do so. The productive tasks in *Vorsprung* allow them to practice speaking German in class in small groups. The format of the *Freie Kommunikation* tasks offers a good deal of practice before the speaking test at the end of the term. The German club represents an extra effort of the department to provide students with an authentic space where they can put into practice their German in an interactive and entertaining way, potentially increasing their motivational level for learning. It also prompts students to use German spontaneously, acting as a source of confidence and simultaneously as a linking mechanism to facilitate the use of L2 acquired in educational context in out-of-university situations. In this way, the setup of German language courses demonstrates direct relevance of institutional activities to the demands of everyday life as preparation for the speaking practices in out-of-university life.

4.3. Group 1: Activity System

The activity of group 1 took place during four meetings, the duration of which varied from 24 to 61 minutes. The four meetings were video-recorded from November 16 until November 29 in 2007. The composition of the role-play in this group takes place collaboratively in front of the camera. Participants are working on a story, in which two students meet on the first day of classes, go on a date in a restaurant, and then proceed to a club to take Latin dance lessons. The story ends with the student couple falling in love with each other.

In this chapter, I will show what factors play a central role in shaping activities. I will also show what resources participants use (e.g. the histories, socio-cultural knowledge, and

voices) to compose the text for the role-play. The analysis also discusses the role of the learners' orientation towards the audience in the construction of the object, i.e. the construction of the community. I will then address the system of rules in activities which in both groups consists of two levels: institutional rules and group internal rules. Since the activities of both groups take place within the same institutional context, and the speaking test format applies to both groups as well, the institutional rules, that I discuss will relate to both groups 1 and 2. The institutional rules are transmitted to the students by the teacher, for example, through the syllabus and task instruction. Then, I discuss the group internal rules of group 1 when I analyze its activity and of group 2 when I will analyze its activity.

The group internal rules are those that emerge in practicing in the activities and therefore are specific of each group's activity. The rules at the level of each group operate within the framework of a shared and voluntarily accepted system of rules. The analysis undertakes a concrete assessment of how group internal rules and principles are distributed and how they work out in the practice in group 1. I also monitor the ways these rules emerge and develop over time. The analysis of the division of labour discusses how participants achieve authoring collaborations when composing a script that involves writing out the scenes on the laptop, revising the final version of the text, and proofreading the text. In the next section, my aim is to provide a general outline of the use of both material (e.g. textbook, laptop and cell phone) and psychological tools⁴² (e.g. non-target languages, writing and memorization) in the activity of group 1. I also address the role of tools in the organization of group work and the construction of the object. A visual representation in the form of a model of the activity system of group 1 concludes this chapter.

⁴² Given the interrelatedness of both psychological and material artifacts as suggested by Y. Engeström (see theory chapter), I am differentiating between psychological and material tools but only for descriptive purposes.

Subjects: Rut, Sam and Lea: The subject in this activity system should be viewed as a group of three participants, undergraduate students in their mid-twenties, one man (here called Sam) and two women (here called Rut and Lea). They come from the German 102 course. The women, who knew each other before class, made friends with the man during the semester. Participants self-selected to do their role-play together, and they had worked well together in previous group activities in this class, as they reported in the interviews. The students are of diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Rut, a Mexican student, immigrated to Canada as a young adolescent. Sam is of Swiss-Greek descent, and Lea is from Guatemala. They all went to high school in English-speaking Canada. Rut and Lea reported in the questionnaire that Spanish is their first language, while Sam's is English. They all speak French as their second language. In addition, Rut and Lea speak Italian, and Sam speaks some Greek as stated in the questionnaire.

Table 1, outlining the profile of participants' characteristics, is based on the information from the questionnaire, the interviews as well as written notes taken during field observations and in conversations with students.

Student	Age	Program at the University	Academic Year	Ethnic Background	L1	Language most used in School	Other L2
Rut	21	Engineering	3b	Mexican	Spanish	English	French & Italian
Sam	20	Civil Engineering	2a	Swiss-Greek Canadian	English	English& French	French & Greek
Lea	19	Spanish & French Studies	1b	Guatemalan Canadian	Spanish	English	French & Italian

Table 4.3.1. Group 1: Profile of Participant Characteristics

The goals for learning German vary among the participants. Prior to elementary German II, all they took an elementary German I course at the University of Waterloo. According to responses in the questionnaire, Rut's reasons for taking the course were based

on both personal preferences and career orientation:

I think German is a very nice language, and will be a great tool for my career since that sector of technology is greatly advanced in Germany. Also because I have family there and I am planning on going. [Questionnaire]

Sam also identified having personal preferences for German as well as his long-term wish to learn this language. Lea's reason for continuing with another German language course was slightly different from those of the others. She decided to enroll into German102 because she enjoyed the previous course of German101. Hence, when signing up for the course, Rut was oriented more towards future career and personal travel plans, and Sam towards his preferences in the present. Lea's motivation was linked to an emotional stance based on her positive experiences with learning German at the University of Waterloo in the past.

Judging on the information student provided in the questionnaire about grades which they received for German101, their proficiency in German varied from intermediate (Lea) to superior (Sam and Rut). However, all three admitted to difficulties conversing in German. Lea's situation in this regard was slightly different than that of her peers. She admitted to having trouble not only with speaking German utterances, but also in understanding colloquial German, since many words sound alike to her.

Community: The members of the German 102 class share this system and represent the community for the present activity. The community consists of adult students enrolled in various programs at the University of Waterloo and the teacher of the course. The course students had a variety of linguistic backgrounds and different reasons for taking the course. Typically, students opted to complete the university language requirement, to be able to read research literature in its original language, to travel, to go to Germany on an exchange program, or simply be able to communicate with family members and friends. Rut, Lea and

Sam are typical students in the sense that they come from various programs, their linguistic backgrounds differ, and all three of them have various reasons for learning German.

The course was taught by a female instructor, who is a native speaker of German with 10 years experience of teaching German at the university level in North America. She had earned her graduate degree, Master of Arts, at a North American University and received formal training in teaching foreign languages. Her philosophy, as expressed in the questionnaires and observed in class, is to create a fun and pleasant atmosphere in class, to implement interactive tasks, such as role-plays, and to teach grammar and German culture in a communicative way. During German classes, she encouraged students to produce interesting and creative texts in German.

Object: In this section, I focus on factors behind practices of object construction. More specifically, the analysis discusses resources that learners use such as histories of activities that took place in the past and are rooted in different communities, socio-cultural knowledge of their ethnic background, and voice. I also discuss how learners' orientation to the audience influences the content of the role-play.

Although the object construction takes place in the framework of this activity, it seems to be linked to many venues of other activities. In general terms, the object construction can be described in three phases. During the first two meetings, students spend a considerable amount of time working on the outline of the story for the role-play. The group work begins with a long negotiation of the topic and then continues with collaborative authoring of the storyline in English. Once participants have agreed on the storyline, they start formulating it into German sentences. In the third phase, students are mainly practicing speaking their roles (speaking the character's words) and polishing their German pronunciation.

In episode 4.3.1, I examine the link between the object construction and a venue of a classroom activity. To construct the object of this activity, students use information from an activity in a language class that lays back in the past, i.e. in the history. This episode shows students working on the first scene of the role-play, in which the student couple (Sam and Lea) first meets in a language class. I will show how this activity history becomes a part of the object in the current activity.

Episode 4.3.1.

```
1 Rut: if we are gonna do the first day in class second day of class
2     third day of class and FORTH day of class its gonna be great
3     because we are gonna review all the vocabulary like I am the
4     tea(h)ch it to you (.) <<acts>to day we [hm I am gonna teach
5     a dative>
6 Sam:                                     [it cannot be take
7     THAT long
8 Rut: no=no=no but i=we could talk in our own wo:rds
9 Sam: yeah=yeah
10 Rut: like its good
11 Lea: ((nods her head)) yeah
12 Rut: it funny right because its nice where you like are reviewing
13     Past
14 Lea: ((nods her head))
```

In lines 1 to 5, Rut suggests composing a role-play that conveys a story of four days of classes. In this episode, she refers to the first few days of classes (lines 1-2), which probably took place in the German language course. In this way, Rut re-contextualises the experiences from the broader context of the class community to the local setting of the group activity. The transcript contains numerous episodes in which learners in a similar way use activity histories of the language class community as a resource for the composition of the role-play. The re-contextualisations of experiences from classroom events seem to be a strategic approach that helps learners to create a storyline.

In episode 4.3.2, I discuss another resource upon which learners draw while composing the storyline. Prior to this episode, students were working on a scene in a dance

club, in which the student couple (Sam and Lea) meets a Latin dance teacher (Rut). Episode 4.3.2 shows participants composing a name for the Latin dance teacher, drawing on their socio-cultural knowledge of Hispanic customs and traditions.

Episode 4.3.2.

1 Rut: like do some (mary) names [i don't know
2 Sam: how come you=
3 Rut: bartolomé
4 Lea: <<quite>WHAT>
5 Sam: () her(h)o
6 Rut: Bartolomé haha or something like that
7 Lea: make it like superlong name you know ha
8 Rut: ha Bartolomé coronel del::
9 Lea: del
10 Rut: quinto serio haha
11 Lea: haha
12 Rut: del bosce serial larga vella capia ha
13 Lea: () haha

Rut suggests a name of Hispanic origin for the Latin dance teacher through which she creates an authentic image for this character in the role-play (lines 1 and 3). The Spanish name attached to the character, performed by Rut in the role-play presentation, creates an additional meaning, namely an image of the dance teacher with a Hispanic background. Lea responds with a suggestion to make the name *superlong* (line 7). What she refers to is the Spanish custom of giving children several names. By doing so, both girls are linking this particular episode of the object to their socio-cultural knowledge of Hispanic customs and traditions. Their knowledge is possibly rooted in the practices in Hispanic communities in which Rut and Lea grow up and still participate in, according to the information from the questionnaire and talks with the researcher.

Episode 4.3.2 represents many episodes identified in the data, in which both girls spend a considerable amount of time explaining to Sam and discussing among themselves some other aspects of the socio-cultural knowledge related to their cultural origins (cf. learning spiral, Cooper, 2006). Thus, Rut and Lea draw on their knowledge about customs

and traditions from their cultural background to construct the object, a practice that also involves sharing information with Sam (cf. Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

As discussed in regard to episode 4.3.1, the object of this activity contains traits from learners' experiences of language classroom activities. The analysis in the next episode traces one of the participant's experiences from Italian language classrooms. In this episode, students are working on a scene that involves the teacher (Rut) explaining the plan of the class to the students. Sam, Lea and Rut are seeking opening lines for Rut's character.

Episode 4.3.3.

- 1 Rut: haven't I told you I was a t=kind of teacher
2 Lea: no you (haven't) told me
3 Rut: okay so this is what I said oggi vedremo un po di
vocabulary
today we will look at some
vocabulary
4 (o tabloro)
()
5 Lea: uhm
6 Rut: oggi vedremo un po di vocabulary (o tabloro)
today we will look at some vocabulary ()
7 okay (.) german nouns
8 Sam: how you were italian teacher
9 Rut: yeah I know
10 Lea: oh:
11 Rut: i know a lot [is not it nice
12 Lea: she is=
13 Sam: [say it in spanish
14 Rut: no=no=no its like today we are gonna say some (vocabulary) how
15 do you say **heu=heute heute wir sehen einbisschen**

In line 3, Rut tells Sam and Lea about the opening lines in Italian that she used while working as a teaching assistant in an Italian language course during her stay in Italy (the information she shared with Lea and Sam during one of the meetings). After repeating the words in Italian in line 6, she says *okay (.) german nouns* in line 7 which signals to Sam and Lea that she intends to incorporate these words into the German role-play. This is also evident in line 15 through her spontaneous attempt to formulate the same phrase but this time in the German language. By introducing the same words to Sam and Lea in English in line 14, Rut

makes her action inclusive, giving Sam and Lea the opportunity to collaborate in formulating the German sentence. Thus, the construction of object does not happen in isolation; it is a collaborative process even if it builds on Rut's individual experience.

However, Rut is not simply offering an opening line for the character. She shares her history with the peers by giving background information about the source of her knowledge of what a teacher may say at the beginning of the class. The analysis shows, that for Rut, locating individual experience in the new context of the present activity means sharing its history with the peers. Indeed, these opening lines from the Italian language class, though formulated in German, become a part of the role-play. In this way, Rut's experience rooted in the Italian language class community emerges and continues to exist in order to produce the object in this activity.

Once learners of group 1 agree on the story for the role-play, they start acting to transform the storyline utterance by utterance into German. This involves not only reshaping of the object in terms of its form from English to German but also expanding it since the object underlies further adjustments which students accomplish through adding new phrases to the dialogs in the role-play. Thus, the role-play undergoes changes in both: not only in the transformation from English into German but also in the content. This leads to the reorganization of the activity system in a sense that the goals of participants' actions are to formulate the storyline in German sentences and to expand the role-play to the required length of 5-7 minutes.

Another observation to make is that learners orient the content of the role-play towards the audience. In the next two episodes from the transcripts, students orient towards the members of the class community who share this activity system but do not participate in the

process of object construction directly. I use episode 4.3.4 to demonstrate that construction of the object happens in a unison with the teacher. In this episode, Rut, Lea and Sam are deciding on a location in the scene, in which the student couple meets for the first time.

Episode 4.3.4.

```
1 Rut: HOW ABOUT you guys meet in a restaurant
2 Lea: what are we [just meet'
3 Sam: [GERman class
4 Rut: [( ) yes
5 Sam: German class (1.0) that was funny you are gonna be ((name of
6 the teacher)) ha
7 Lea: hm.
8 Rut: haha
9 Sam: <<to Lea>no'>
10 Rut: and then she will kill us with the QUESTions
11 Sam: SO' (.) i would (.) kill her back
```

In line 3, Sam proposes that they model and act out a scene of a German class, suggesting that Rut role-plays the course instructor and creates a funny situation. Rut and Lea, however, seem to react with skepticism to Sam's idea (lines 7 and 10). Rut even pictures the possible negative consequences of role-playing the teacher, who is the member of the class community but has the authority to grade the performance. The girls' reaction to Sam's idea reveals that besides the speakers in the speech situation, they orient the content of the role-play also towards the teacher, who is not present. One can sense in this episode a possible tension between different standpoints stimulated by the dual orientation. On the one hand, the learners are trying to be creative and compose a funny scene (line 5); on the other hand, they are afraid of the teacher's possible negative perception because she may not like the fact being role-played by a student. It has been argued that participants of an activity are not fully conscious of the consequences and social significance of their activity (Miettinen, 2005). While this may be true here, this episode suggests that participants do consider the possible consequences of the object of this activity. As the next episode shows, however, participants

do not orient the object solely towards the authority but also towards fellow students.

The transcripts contain numerous episodes, in which participants orient to the group mates who, like the teacher, are members of the community, but do not participate directly in this activity. I use episode 4.3.5 to argue, first, that Sam, Rut and Lea see the performance of the role-play, which is a part of the projected outcome of this activity, as an act of communication with classmates. Second, I suggest that orientation to the classmates defines the content of the object. In this episode, participants are discussing what Lea's character could reveal about herself and her idea of spending spare time on the first date.

Episode 4.3.5.

1 Lea: you are looking not that weird
2 Rut: ((reads)) I like to watch people (1.0) **puppe machen**
3 Sam: NO
4 Rut: MAKING dolls people do actually dolls
5 Lea: people make dolls
6 Sam: yeah I know people make dolls
7 Rut: SO
8 Sam: but they don't know what **puppe** is
9 Rut: that's why that is the funny part
10 Sam: it is not that funny part
11 Rut: it sounds it sounds like you are saying poop and know it is
12 **puppe**
13 Sam: no it's funnier if we would say lea because people would(.)
14 oh yeah

In order to achieve a humorous situation and expand the role-play, Rut suggests including in Lea's words the phrase *I like to watch people making dolls*, but formulated in German. However, her attempt to expand the object using the German phrase *puppe machen* (line 2), which corresponds to *making dolls*, contradicts Sam's understanding of what would be appropriate to include in the role-play. He makes it clear through a stressed *NO* in line 3. Lines 8 and 10 show that Sam's disagreement is based on his assessment of his group mates' perception of the German utterance *puppe machen*, namely that they may treat both words *puppe* in German and *poop* in English as cognates. Because of the similar pronunciation of

the two words, peers may treat them as being similar in meaning as well. Sam's concern is perhaps that the use of the phrase *puppe machen* will cause the peers to misinterpret and misunderstand it rather than to see the phrase as comical (*funny part*, line 9 and 10). What it also reveals, is that Sam, and possibly Rut and Lea, see the performance of the role-play not simply as a delivery of a German script but rather as an act of communication with the community members, to which they orient the content of the object.

The fact that the German utterance *puppe machen* did not become a part of the role-play at the end shows that participants decide what to include or not into the role-play based on their assessment of the German language knowledge of the class community as well as on their perception of the outcome of the activity. Thus, students demonstrate the intention to compose a role-play that is comprehensible and socially acceptable for the listeners.

In episode 4.3.6, students are rehearsing the role-play scene, which requires that the teacher (Rut) asks two students (Sam and Lea) to introduce themselves to the class. Drawing on Y. Engeström's (2008) argument that an activity system accumulates a variety of different viewpoints or voices which are sources for collective achievement and compartmentalization, I use episode 4.3.6 to show how Y. Engeström's argument works in this activity and to demonstrate which role voices play for the construction of the object.

Episode 4.3.6.

1 Rut: ((stands up)) guten morgen studenten. willkomen to
2 euere erste (.) englische klasse
3 Sam: hahaha
4 Rut: ich heiße ((teacher's name)) ha
5 Sam: haha
6 Rut: wie heißen sie und woher kommen sie
7 Lea: ich heiße isolda und ich komme aus Guatemala
8 Rut: und sie?
9 Sam: ich heiße tristan und ich komme aus griechenland
10 Rut: heute (.) üben wir vokabeln

Lea, practicing the words of her character (Isolda), says *ich komme aus Guatemala*. Similarly, Sam practicing the words of his character (Tristan) introduces himself by *ich komme aus Griechenland*. Both German utterances represent more than just the characters' introduction of themselves in German. In the questionnaires and also in the conversations with participants, Lea introduced herself as Guatemalan and Sam as Greek and Swiss. I suggest that both German utterances are indexing speakers' voices related to their ethnic background. This information casts a particular light on speakers' sense of themselves, which, I suggest, learners reported through voices represented in the information about their background.

By incorporating the utterances *ich komme aus Guatemala* and *ich komme aus Griechenland* in the German role-play, students do not simply speak characters' words, but reproduce their own voices and the sense of who they are in the context of the role-play. Sam and Lea are re-contextualizing their voices, connecting the object of the role-play with their ethnic background. In Bakhtin's terms, what we observe here is the way learners construct, not just a simple object, but rather a multi-voiced object born out of real experiences, ethnic backgrounds, and the need to express the self and voices of its creators.

In this view, the object construction generates histories that learners build in and express via the voices of their characters. The transcript contains numerous episodes where students are incorporating into their role-play (in addition to the information related to their ethnic background) utterances that index their preferences for food (e.g. the scene in the restaurant when Lea and Sam are ordering food), activities, as well as stances and viewpoints (e.g. on ideas about the first date etc.). Thus, speaking the characters' words does not simply invoke another speaker. In fact, Lea and Sam are also speaking the voices of who they are in

such episodes. This use of voices possibly helps learners to make the activity more meaningful to them. Since students are layering their voices through voices of their characters (i.e. characters' voices include also speakers' voices), contributions to the object through voices are valuable because they also promote inclusion and participation and, with them social accomplishment of interactional opportunities for learning through the meaningful use of L2. Therefore, the multi-voiced and multilayered nature of activity system (cf. Y. Engeström, 2008) and especially the entry of voices into the object constitute another significant factor in the construction of the object (role-play) in this group.

The examination of factors underlying practices of object construction illuminates the resources that the learners draw upon in order to compose the German role-play. Learners draw on histories of activities that are rooted in different communities in both educational and non-educational contexts, in this case, socio-cultural knowledge of Hispanic traditions. The use of these resources for the object construction involves a re-contextualisation of experiences into this activity, which is a strategic approach used by Sam, Rut and Lea.

Thus, incorporating experiences into the role-play appears to be a necessary step for the group to compose the role-play. However, as the analysis has shown, incorporating individual experiences involves additional actions of sharing an individual's history (Rut) with other participants (Sam and Lea). While acting upon histories from activities that took place prior to this activity, students try out how different elements from their experiences might be linked to the object. The experiences from the past not only become constitutive elements of the object and continue to exist in the present activity but also define students' doing (what they are acting on) in the present activity. Also, students orient the content of the role-play not simply to the interlocutor of the interaction. The class community (teacher and

group mates), also influences the content of the role-play, but indirectly. Another significant factor behind the construction of the object (role-play) is the intervention of speakers' voices. For a learner, composing characters' words also involves incorporating their personal and ethnic history by reproducing their voices in the characters' words.

Institutional and Group Internal Rules: During the language course, students receive a hand-out with an outline of requirements for the speaking test as well as detailed guidance for the group work on the task. Students are asked to work in groups of two or three individuals to prepare a skit (role-play) of 5-7 minutes to be presented in front of the class and to answer questions about the skit for approximately two minutes per person. In an attempt to encourage creativity, presentation topics are not pre-selected for students.

The task instruction stipulates that students cannot seek help from the instructor while preparing the role-play. They are strongly advised to refrain from using a dictionary (apart from the one in the appendix in their text book), emphasizing the importance of demonstrating the knowledge acquired in class at the risk of not being understood by the audience. The *Helpful Guidelines* section in the hand-out provides learners with detailed instructions about the steps that need to be followed and the issues that need to be considered during the preparation for the role-play, things as to establishing a context for the scene, developing the relationship between the characters, and resolving the conflict, etc. Students are allowed to use props or simply to mime them. They are encouraged to speak freely, without holding the script in the hand while presenting. The guidelines recommend not asking native speakers for help, since the test's aim is to examine what learners can produce based on their own knowledge acquired in the course. Overall, the instructions provide a detailed description of the procedure of the speaking test and the required format of the outcome.

Next, I discuss the group internal rules, the application of the task instructions in the activity, as well as their impact on the group internal rules.

Episode 4.3.7 shows learners already negotiating one of the rules in the first few minutes of the first meeting. The rule of “not translating” appears to be important to the group, since they lean on it throughout the object construction.

Episode 4.3.7.

```
1 Rut: [ah( )
2 Sam: [i am=i am not translating we will only
3 write in german lang only (german) we know no
4 trans[lation
5 Rut: [its okay=its okay
6 Lea: mh
7 Sam: [because it will be hard ()
8 Rut: [no=no=no=no lets think of what we know
9 and what know that could be used of two people
10 (running/random) in the meeting because you guys know
11 each other
12 (1.0)
```

Sam speaks in an authoritative tone when he explicitly asks the group to write the role-play in German and not to translate the text from English into German (lines 2-4). The analysis of video recordings of group meetings shows other groups from German 101 and 102 courses writing out the role-play in English first and then translating it into German. Unlike participants from other groups from German 102, Sam produces the role-play in the L2 directly, a rule which Rut and Lea accept voluntarily.

This rule is also linked to the collaborative process of peer mentoring and guiding each other’s participation (cf. community of practice, Lave and Wenger, 1991). Sam uses social resources of interaction to arrange the way of participation for all group members in the activity. This organization of group work also defines the actions of forming German sentences of the entire script by working with his peers. Constructing these sentences in collaboration with others may result in a high degree of L2 use, creating affordances for

learning through the “active appropriation” (Wells, 2002, p. 47) of the L2 through interactions. The detailed analysis of interactions (section 5.1) will shed more light on learning issues.

A few minutes later, students negotiate another rule, namely “talk in our own words”.

Episode 4.3.8.

1 Rut: no=no=no but i=we could talk in our own wo:rds
2 Sam: yeah=yeah
3 Rut: like its good
4 Lea: ((nods her head)) yeah

Rut’s suggestion to compose the text for the role-play using the resources of German, which are already a part of students’ repertoire, and her elaboration through an assessment of *like its good* in line 3 point toward her awareness of the benefit of using available linguistic resources of L2, rather than constructing the dialog using unfamiliar language. Sam and Lea accept this rule explicitly and voluntarily in lines 2 and 4, demonstrating their recognition of the usefulness of the approach that Rut suggests.

A point to mention is that, while composing the text, students draw on their own resources, but they make extensive use of a dictionary as well, namely the online dictionary. In doing so, while they seem to contradict the task instruction, they are rather re-appropriating the use of the dictionary here. Rather than using it in the initial process of translation, participants use the dictionary mostly to revise the grammatical forms or meanings of vocabulary even though some seemed to be familiar to them at first. For example, participants compose a phrase in German and, before making a note of it, double check the correctness of the phrase in a dictionary. The findings in this episode interrelate with Nicolopoulou and Cole’s argument (1993), which emphasizes the in-group construction of rules: “What this kind of activity requires, and what it simultaneously helps people to grasp, is the sense that

the rules are not necessarily handed down by a superior; rather, they are inherent in the structure of the activity itself and are necessary in order to be able to carry out a practice or form of activity that is valued by its participants” (p. 293). The way this group employs a dictionary points toward the dynamic nature of the knowledge construction of German, whereby the use of dictionary is one part.

Rules related to timing represent another important dimension of the analysis. In this activity, timing has a significant impact not only on the ways learners organize the activity, but also on the form of the object. Episode 4.3.9 illustrates one sequence, in which learners negotiate the frequency and the duration of meetings.

Episode 4.3.9.

1 Lea: how many classes we are gonna meet in case she will be
2 asking about it because its
3 Rut: two more maybe when is this monday THIS monday
4 Lea: next monday
5 Rut: how about lets meet
6 Lea: cuándo?
when
7 Rut: this weekend we are not going to finish
8 Lea: its due monday
9 Rut: on sunday
10 Lea: sunday
11 Rut: on sunday
12 Sam: maybe ()
13 Rut: like a little bit
14 Sam: okay I'll do it
15 Rut: sunday afternoon (1.0) right after or before dinner
16 Lea: I don't know
17 Sam: we didn't go for dinner ((keeps typing))
18 Lea: hahaha
19 Rut: good idea

In this exchange, Lea takes an authoritative position and initiates a discussion about the plan for the subsequent group meetings, information that she also needs to give the researcher.⁴³ The group accepts her request by launching a negotiation of the possible dates

⁴³ During the data collection, Lea was the one who actively communicated with the researcher (me) when it came to schedule a meeting for the group.

for the subsequent meetings. Although the researcher’s indirect interference maybe seen in the way that the group deals with time planning, the analysis of the transcripts yields different insights. Students constantly deal with time in the activity (e.g. planning the number of meetings, the duration of each meeting, the speed of work etc.). For example, Rut, Lea and Sam encourage one another by telling each other “let’s do it fast” each time the group goes off-task or keeps working on one issue for too long. Students work together, monitoring each other’s efficiency, an action which is possibly rooted in their goal to finish the work in the shortest possible time.

Time is an essential factor behind the object construction. According to the task instructions, the skit should be 5 to 7 minutes long. In response to this requirement, students establish the rule to measure the length of the role-play both as they proceed with the script and as they practice speaking their roles. Once a scene or a larger part of the role-play is formulated in German, students rehearse it simultaneously measuring how long it takes the group to speak out this part. The object then can be characterized not only by what the participants are trying to achieve, but also by how long they take to achieve it.

However, the negotiation and set up of rules does not necessarily happen in harmony with all participants in this activity. Episode 4.3.10 shows Sam's rule of “no Spanish” not being accepted by Lea.

Episode 4.3.10.

1 Lea: do you know what’s funny? Se parece a mi papá
he looks like my father
2 haha you are like
3 Rut: what? what do you mean que se parece a tu papá
he looks like your father
4 Sam: no no spanish
5 Lea: tu novio
your boyfriend
6 Rut: my boyfriend looks like her father
7 Lea: yeah

8 Rut: that is what she said

Rut and Lea enact a vivid conversation in Spanish, the language of their community and families, as the questionnaires show. By conversing in Spanish in this activity, they implicitly re-contextualize into the present activity the rule of speaking Spanish between members of the Spanish community. In doing so, they seem to contradict Sam's expectation of which languages will be accepted for use during group work. Sam, who does not speak Spanish, requests "no Spanish" in line 4. Nonetheless, the subsequent line shows Lea ignoring Sam's request since she continues the conversation with Rut in Spanish. Only in line 6 does Rut follow Sam's request and switches back to English.

Although Rut and Lea seem to accept the rule of "no Spanish" at first, the analysis of all interactions reveals that both girls recurrently prefer to speak their heritage language. This finding suggests that the rule of language preference between heritage speakers has been brought in from previously established communities, in which Rut and Lea participated prior to this activity. Not easily displaced, this rule is engraved as one of a set of in-group rules for the present activity. I will discuss in more detail the role of this rule in Rut and Lea's learning of German in the analysis chapter on the use of non-target languages.

Episode 4.3.11 demonstrates a rule emerging from the institutional authority and entering into the set of group internal rules. This rule defines the content of the role-play. Prior to this exchange, Rut and Sam are actively engaged in an off-task German discussion with sexual content.

Episode 4.3.11.

1 Rut: **langsame langsame** OKAy we should make it funny like that
2 you guys should do that
3 Sam: yeah but we should sex=keep the sexual content DOWN she
4 said hey
5 Rut: hm that's something new (.) okay.

Rut's words, *we should make it funny like that*, in line 1 imply a suggestion to incorporate this exchange into the object. However, because of the sexual content, Sam reminds the group about the teacher's instructions for "no sexual content". Therefore, the scene with the sexual content has not become a part of the role-play. This episode demonstrates the powerful impact of the authority represented through the teacher on the setup of rules in this activity and others. By specifying what is or is not allowed into the dialog of role-plays, the teacher determines what learners will practice, act on, and possibly learn in this activity even though she is not present.

In sum, learners are trying to find a balance between the rules outlined in the task instructions and the group internal rules. Not all of the members accept the group rules. Rut and Lea's rule of using Spanish emerges into the system of rules in this activity even though one of the participants (Sam) disagrees with it. Thus, the rules rooted in community practices outside of this activity continue to exist and shape the system of rules in the present activity. Students also discuss rules to a different extent, some intensively and others implicitly due to the omnipresent reasons and general logic of the activity (e.g. to finish the work with a minimal outlay of time). Time seems to play a role in both managing the task in a rational manner and in meeting the institutional requirements for the object.

Division of Labour: A way to understand the organization of the activity system is to investigate how participants organize and divide the work among group members.

I have discussed in the theory chapter that Yrjö Engeström (2010), in addressing the concept of the division of labour, distinguishes between horizontal (between members) and vertical (power and status) division. The analysis of student interactions identifies a

distribution of responsibilities and tasks among participants with respect to both the horizontal and vertical division of labour.

The summary of horizontal divisions includes literacy and authoring collaborations. Students discuss the storyline, and the task requirements, divide the role-play into scenes, and then, utterance by utterance, compose German sentences. Taking turns, they type and modify the German text. While writing the first draft of the role-play, Lea is responsible for referencing mostly the textbook (e.g., to look up missing vocabulary, grammatical forms, etc. and to check topics covered in the course) whereas Sam checks words or expressions in online dictionaries. Once the script is ready, participants divide the scenes among themselves for proofreading the German as a take home task.

In the follow-up meeting, students put the scenes together, time the role-play, and expand the content of some scenes to equalize the amount of speech for each of the participants. When the final version of the script is ready, they plan the staging of the role-play (e.g. the distribution of prompts, position of each character's movements, individual actions such as who picks up the phone and when, etc.).

Another example of horizontal division of labour is peer-to-peer questions, answers, and appeals for help. Rut und Lea frequently ask Sam for help and, in one episode, Rut explicitly acknowledges Sam's expertise in German. Although Rut and Lea seem to assign Sam a role as expert in German throughout the activity, many of the troubles with the L2 have been resolved through their collaboration of the whole group, each of the participants contributing to the search for a solution. The data set contains numerous examples of students assisting each other when one is trying to recall a correct grammatical form or word. Often, students stimulate each other's memory by making references to the learning histories in

class. The analysis of the subsequent chapter on word searches examines in detail a few such episodes.

At the end of the activity, Sam takes on the responsibility of making sure that his friend, who is a native speaker of German, proofreads and corrects the script. By doing so, he contradicts the task instruction that encourages students not to ask native speakers of German for proofreading. In a broader view, however, proofreading not only reflects learners' understanding of how this type of task should be carried out, but also seems to be a necessary step for other groups, most of which asked native speakers of German for proofreading at the end of the activity.

The divisions on the level of power structure among participants can be identified throughout several meetings. However, these divisions are not stable and do not have clear margins. In general, even though the establishment of the activity rules, assignment of take-home tasks (e.g., proofreading scenes), planning of meetings, and other arrangements are initiated by one of the students, in general, they represent more of a collective than an individual achievement.

Sam stands out from Rut and Lea on several occasions, particularly since his knowledge of German seems to be more advanced than theirs. For example, often, when he and I met on different occasions, he asked me to speak German with him. According to my observations, Sam was able to participate in a German conversation, whereby Rut and Lea had difficulties following our talk. Sam's expertise in German may explain his leading position on several occasions. The transcripts of students' interactions also show Sam giving instructions and assigning work on his laptop (e.g. asking Lea or Rut to search in an online dictionary, or to type the script), which he offered for the group work. Many of the errors that

both girls make do not escape Sam's correction. Thus, Sam's expertise in German and the provision of the laptop for the group work seem to account for his occasional demonstration of power and control over the other two participants.

Overall, the analysis of the horizontal and vertical division of labour in group 1 suggests that Rut, Lea and Sam prepare the role-play using a high degree of collaboration. The composition of the role-play involves writing out the scenes on the laptop and proofreading the text by the participants as well as by a native speaker. Although learners demonstrate power relations (e.g. through assigning responsibilities to each other), the power structure is dynamic.

Tools: Both material and psychological tools are involved in the processes of object construction and are repeatedly manifested throughout the transcript.

Material artifacts such as the laptop, online dictionaries, cell phones and the textbook are central to the activity in group 1. Each of them serves multiple purposes. In all meetings, group 1 heavily relies on the laptop to collect the information for the role-play (e.g. searching for German names, checking vocabulary etc.) as well as to record the script of the role-play in writing.

Cell phones are another material tool which students use for two purposes. Most of the time, cell phones serve as a device to measure and keep track of time. Participants employ cell phones to keep track of the duration of each meeting as well as to measure the length of the dialogs in each scene while constructing the object. Cell phones also serve as prompts when students are rehearsing and then performing in class the scene in which two friends are talking on the phone.

The textbook plays an important role in this activity, especially when students are

composing the text of the role-play in German and recording it in writing. They use the textbook to orient towards the teaching material covered in the course, that is, to meet requirements of the task instructions, specifically grammatical units, speech patterns and utterances. Learners also consult the vocabulary list available in separate chapters of the textbook as well as in the appendix section for meaning and form clarification. The use of both laptop and textbook gives rise to numerous word searches and discussions, for example, about the pragmatic meaning of words and the grammatical concepts of German, therefore a floor for the L2 use and knowledge construction of the language.

To master the presentation of the role-play, group 1 relies on psychological tools of non-target languages, (written) language, and memorization. The next section summarizes the role of the psychological tools in the context of the activity system of group 1. Chapter 7 addresses the functions of non-target languages in detail.

Students use a broad range of non-target languages such as English, German, French, Spanish, and Italian to a different degree and for different purposes. Peer interactions show that, in actions directed towards organization of the meetings, in communication with the researchers and partly with peers, as well as in the generation of ideas and information of the role-play, English is the language of preference.⁴⁴ As students' entries in the questionnaires and interviews suggest, Sam, Lea and Rut assign English important functions, especially in the process of creating the storyline and transforming it into the German text. Rut points out both the productive and organizational functions of English in learning German:

In order to make something funny, you need to understand it well, and using English would be much easier because we understand it well. By using English the preparation will go more smoothly and fast; there won't be any misunderstandings or

⁴⁴ While English is the first language for Sam, Spanish is the first language for Rut and Lea. However, all three students identify English as the language that they most frequently use in school, suggesting that English is the language that all three of them are most familiar with (cf. lingua franca, Firth, 2009).

tenses to learn. Using English is like a highway that is around the dirt road we are trying to build something in. The dirt road is German; since we are not proficient in it, it would go much slower. Also the change from English to German goes much smoother (when the meaning is already planned) than to go through German.
[Questionnaire]

Her response makes clear that the use of English is linked to the low proficiency in German. Sam and Lea point out this link in the interviews as well. By seeing understanding a language and learning as interconnected processes, Rut explains that, for her, English is crucial for building up knowledge in German whereas English is a key to understanding its meaning. Thus, for students, English seems to be a cognitive tool to mediate building up their knowledge of German. This finding contributes to the research that sees L1 as a facilitator in learning complex content (e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 2000). In this activity, the use of English facilitates the acquisition of knowledge in German, in terms of both understanding the content and learning the language itself. Moreover, in mentioning *the change from English to German* in the last sentence of the above quote, Rut refers to the phase of the transformation of the script storyline from English into German. From Rut's perspective, then, the process of producing German can be facilitated by using English.

Another point of discussion is the role that English plays in the time required for students to plan for this activity. Drawing on participants responses in questionnaires (including Rut's response above) and in interviews, one can see that the use of English helps them to finish preparing the role-play and to gain knowledge in German in a speedy fashion.

Besides English and German, learners also use French and Italian. They use French not only when they are socializing and playing with languages, but also when assigning tasks and responsibilities among group members. Students also draw on their knowledge of French to clarify grammar issues such as verb conjugation and declension of pronouns. Also, Italian

is used when grammar issues need to be clarified. Learners employ Italian to solve psychological problems like recalling and accumulating the information for the role-play. Both languages function, then, as auxiliary means for both managing the task and solving problems with German.

Although Sam makes a few attempts to pick up a couple of Spanish phrases during interactions, Spanish is used mostly between Rut and Lea. The translations of the transcripts from Spanish into English suggest that they speak Spanish for the purposes of socialization, but also often for clarification of some grammatical issues, with the meaning of words forming the content of the role-play and organization of work. Moreover, one of Rut's responses in the interview suggests that she speaks for the group:

We like to compare different languages like we know Spanish and French and Sam knows French too so trying to like mix up let German come into open up a lot of bridges and then German can come into it. [Interview]

Therefore, participants see the knowledge of non-target languages as a tool to master the target language as well.

Next, while composing German sentences, students also record them on their laptops, a process which evolves into further writing actions like revising, analyzing, and reformulating some text units. Writing out the script in German seems to act as a psychological tool to transform their ideas in English into the text in the L2 and to record them.

Memorization of the German script is another psychological tool. Rut and Lea mention in one of the conversations with the researcher, as does Sam in the interview, that they tried to memorize the German script before the performance of the role-play. In this way, students seem to use the psychological tool of memorization to mediate their memory and

possibly do more. When talking about memorization, Sam explains in the interview that *it really helps you to sense how those sentences work like how things go*. This comment points out that for him memorization mediates understanding of German in the context of the role-play. In addition, as identified in the interviews, participants were anxious during the presentation of the role-play, worrying about forgetting their lines or failing the question-answer session, and speaking in public. The instruction requirement to speak freely in a dialog for 5-7 minutes certainly contributed to the ways students felt about this task. It is possible that they use memorization as a tool to overcome the anxiety of delivering the role-play freely in front of the class.

The analysis has shown that, to carry out the task, students use both material as well as psychological tools to frame their activity. Rut, Lea and Sam employ material artifacts such as laptops, online dictionaries, cell phones and the textbook, which mediate their actions in composing the text for the role-play, practicing the dialogs for the performance, as well as planning the meetings of the group work. To prepare the role-play text and to practice it for the performance, students also use psychological tools like non-target languages, written language, and memorization. The data show that Rut, Lea and Sam deploy English, German, French, Spanish, and Italian. Learners appear to assign particular functions to different languages of their repertoire that they exploit to help organize the group work (e.g. English, French, Spanish), build up knowledge in L2 (English, French, Spanish, and Italian), as well as accomplish the task (English and German) (cf. Haneda, 2007). English, however, is a working language and a central tool in all phases of the activity. It has functions that are important not only for the organization and timing of the activity, but also for understanding and producing German. Writing of the script also functions as a psychological tool that mediates actions and

operations related to transferring the ideas in English into sentences in German. For Sam, Rut and Lea, memorization seems to be a necessary step to deliver the role-play freely in class. For Sam, it is also a tool that assists him to develop pragmatic knowledge of the L2.

Drawing on the analysis of the data, the activity system of group 1 may be outlined as in Figure 4.3.2.

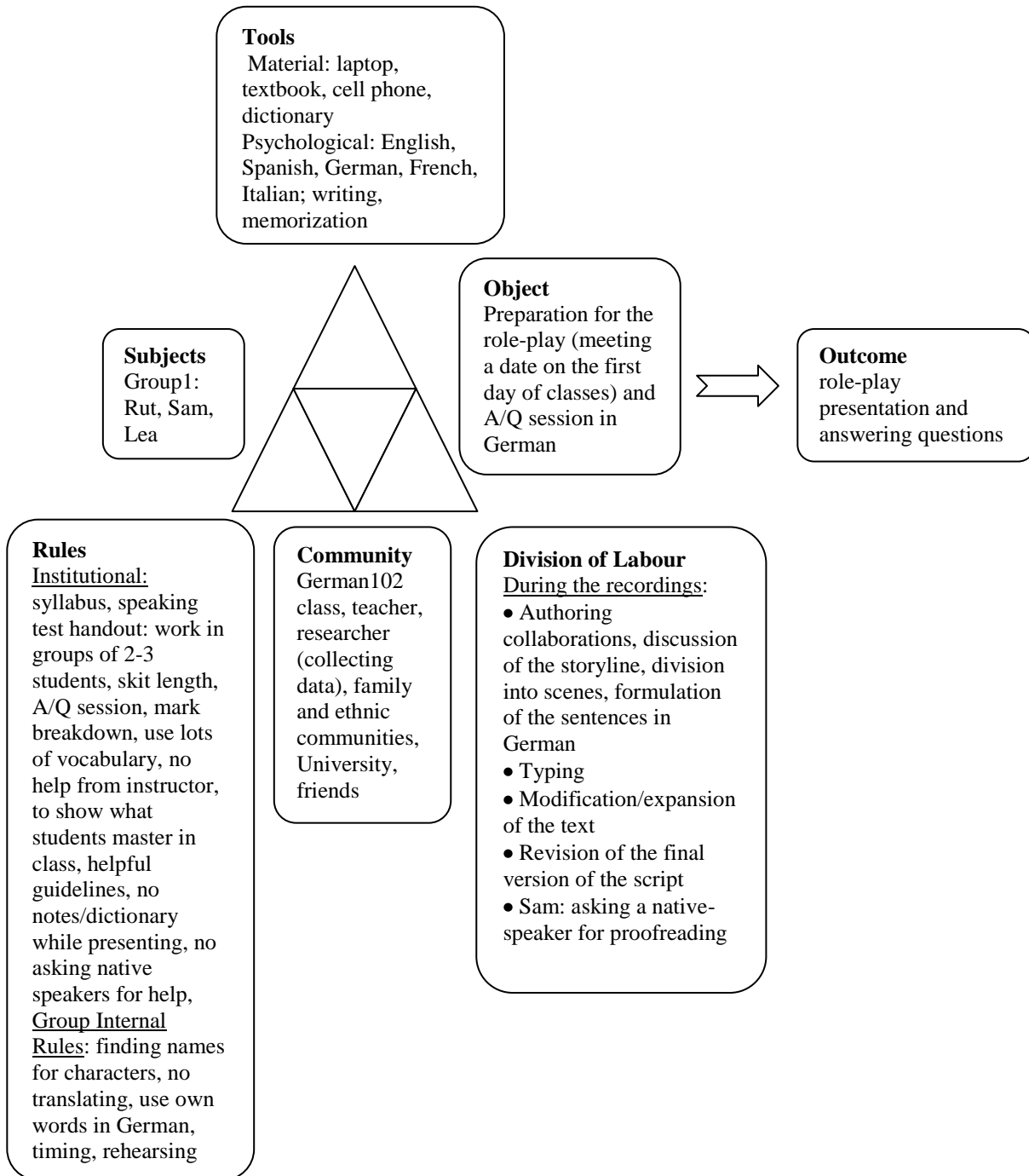


Figure 4.3.2. A Model of the Activity System of Group 1

The analysis has shown that the object undergoes transformations from the storyline in English to the role-play in German, including the written form. The transformations of the object also lead to the reorganization of the activity. At different times, group 1 focuses on different forms of the object (storyline, formation and practice of the role-play). This involves prioritizing different resources from activity systems outside and inside of the University of Waterloo, incorporating their history through voices into the role-play, orienting to the class community (group mates and the teacher), concentrating on different work (e.g. collaborative authoring, typing, modeling German sentences etc.) and putting into practice expertise in using material (textbook, dictionary) and psychological (e.g. non-target languages) tools. During the composition of the German script, a dictionary (online and in the textbook) is an essential tool with students, which they use frequently. The use of dictionary should be viewed as a part of language use and the learning process, not simply as a source for vocabulary (as the task instructions explain).

The actions of re-shaping past experiences and constructing something new in collaboration with other group members frame the present activity. Some researchers describe this effect as “the old sense in new clothes” (Bujarski, Hildebrand-Nilshon, & Kordt, 1999). Yet it is clear that the organizations of this activity are driven by something larger and more durable (such as a class community) than just the specific goals of particular actions. By orienting towards this activity as a continuation of past experiences, participants demonstrate their understanding of the ways the construction of the object can be carried out (cf. Bujarski, et al., 1999). These observations are in line with Nardi’s statement (2007) that examining the object of activity is critically important for understanding what animates activities.

Also, the analysis of rules yields some results worthy of mentioning. The rule of “no

translating” seems to be essential for the way students organize the whole activity and the steps they do to carry out the task. Forming sentences in collaboration with all participants is based on the goal of producing and not translating, perhaps creating an affordance for learning in interaction through active use of German (cf. active appropriation, Wells, 2002).

Next, the examination of the system of rules provides evidence that rules can be both constraining and enabling for the practice of German in interactions. Some activity rules closely relate to teacher’s view of what activity rules should be like, this indirectly identifying for students what should be talked about and practiced in German. The analysis of the next section, *Learning German through Word Searches: Group 1*, will shed more light on the issues related to German language learning in this group.

The rule of speaking Spanish among the heritage speakers, which has been brought in from previously established Hispanic communities, could not be easily displaced and is thus engraved in a set of in-group rules of the present activity. Combining learners’ responses about the role of time with the observations of their actions (keeping track of and measuring time), it can be said that time plays a crucial role in this activity for both the organization of the activity and the construction of the object. The analysis illuminates the interconnectedness between the tool (use of English to speed up work), time, and rules (institutional and group internal) in this activity.

4.4. Group 2: Activity System

This chapter examines the activity system of group 2, which is based on an activity that took place in two meetings (lasting 32 minutes and 91 minutes on November 20, 2007 and November 23, 2007).

In the first two sections (subject and community), I provide background information about the subjects Amy and Ira as well as the community members (the teacher of the course and the classmates). The next section is an analysis of the factors behind the object construction in this activity, which suggests that Amy and Ira use their experiences in the past, such as employment and learning histories, as well as other speaker's voices as resources to compose the script of the role-play. Since portions of script have been accomplished individually prior to the video recording of the two meetings, I discuss the role of clarifications of the content when participants work on the scenes (which they wrote in German alone). The analysis also addresses the ways participants orient to the community members, toward achieving social recognition, and how this orientation impacts the object of the activity.

The next section describes the core rules by which learners organize the group work and construct conditions for their own learning. The examination of the system of rules in group 2 addresses the rule of collaboration, use of vocabulary, memorization, and time measurement during rehearsals. The subsequent section analyses the distribution of responsibilities and work between Amy and Ira. I address the division of labour for the preparation of the role-play that takes place both prior to the recordings and in the group work during recordings of the two meetings. The last section examines material (e.g. laptop and textbook) and psychological (e.g. non-target languages, writing, and memorization) tools that

mediate actions in the activity of group 2. A schematically represented system of the activity of group 2 and a summary of findings conclude this chapter.

Subjects: Amy and Ira: Group 2 consists of 2 undergraduate female students, Amy and Ira, who were enrolled in the German language course (GER 101). Amy and Ira met in the course for the first time and self-selected to work together on the task. In this activity, both students are working toward the same object in order to create the outcome (i.e. the role-play as well as the preparation for the question-answer session). Both participants were born in Canada and grew up in English speaking homes. Table 4.4.1 outlines the profile of participants' characteristics. The responses of students in the questionnaire, and interviews, as well as field notes from class observations serve as information sources for this table.

<i>Student</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Program at the University</i>	<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Ethnic Background</i>	<i>L1</i>	<i>Language most used in School</i>	<i>Other L2</i>
Amy	21	History	1. year	Canadian	English	English	French
Ira	19	Environment and Resource Studies	1. year	Canadian	English	English	French

Table 4.4.1. Group 2: Profile of Participant Characteristics

The reasons for choosing the German language course slightly vary among the participants in this group. While Amy identifies in the questionnaire that her decision is based on a core requirement for Arts students as well as on friends' recommendations, Ira's enrollment in the course is motivated by her interest in gaining more experience with the German language. For Amy, the elementary German language course is the first time she studied German, whereas Ira took German language courses prior to her admission to the University of Waterloo. In addition, Ira mentions in the questionnaire and then elaborates in the interview that she occasionally comes into contact with German through the family (her

sister, who also learned the German language), friends, and newspapers. Therefore, Amy's incentive involves attaining the requirements for her degree at the university, whereby Ira's motivation is a personal preference developed throughout her experiences with learning German in the past.

Given the information she provides about her learning history and the contacts with the German language, Ira's proficiency can be anticipated to be higher than Amy's. Nevertheless, according to the information students provide in the questionnaire about grades that they expect to receive for the German 101 course, both assess their proficiency in L2 as intermediate (Amy – 72% and Ira – 75%). However, as the next excerpts from the interviews with participants show, the distribution of knowledge and skills in L2 seems to be unequal between the two women. Participants admit experiencing difficulties in auditory comprehension and speaking German. Amy explains

... I am not very great at languages so and I don't know like I am not (auditory with it) like I can read it but if someone is saying it to me in a normal diction I have no idea what is happening it has to be like really slow and like per word. [Interview]

According to Ira's response, she seems to be more confident in her German than

Amy:

...sometimes it's ok and then just everyone is like hesitant on certain words but overall pronunciation I can say in my head and it just comes out a little funny because I am nervous speaking in front of everybody but I have a basic idea sort of. [Interview]

Therefore, while Ira's difficulties with German are rooted in perceptive skills, Amy seems to be less confident with her productive skills. This difference suggests that, as in group 1, the perceived L2 knowledge and skills distribution between participants in group 2 is asymmetrical, a situation which leads to a diversity in interactive dynamics (Verba & Winnykamen, 1992) and provides a condition for building new knowledge in the target

language (Verba & Winnykamen, 1992; Anton & DiCamila, 1999). In this view, the activity dyad composed in group 2 provides conditions for fostering other- and self-guided learning of German.

Community: Amy and Lea are members of the German 101 class community. The German 101 classes include young adult students enrolled in various programs at the University of Waterloo. Like group 1, group 2 is situated in a community which is not homogenous, but includes members of diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. It represents a typical Canadian class in a sense that students come from different countries and can apply to the task a variety of language resources and cultural backgrounds.

The instructor of the course is a female native speaker of German with 4 months experience of teaching German at the university level in North America. The instructor assesses her teaching experience in the questionnaire as follows:

I am in a learning process. Teaching is fun and I feel confident in front of the students. I am average proficient in teaching I would say. [Questionnaire]

In the questionnaire, the instructor also admits to having used a great deal of English to explain grammar, announce events or important things for the students (requirements for the class etc.) in class, yet, simultaneously, trying to involve students in conversations in L2 during both whole class activities as well as small group activities.

Object: In this section, the analysis discusses resources students draw upon to construct the object (role-play) in the activity under scrutiny. I will show how students use activity histories (e.g. Ira's employment history, Amy's learning history in class, Ira's witness of a phone talk) and how they re-contextualize and build them into the role-play in this activity. The other factors, like clarification of the content and the social recognition through amusement, are essential to the construction of the object. I will address each of them individually.

The object of the activity system in group 2 can be characterized as a continuous effort to prepare for the speaking test (consisting of a role-play and question-answer session). The video recordings capture both phases, when Amy and Ira are working on the role-play and when they are preparing for the question-answer session. The analysis shows that students spend most of the time of two meetings composing the script and practicing the role-play. The preparation for the answer-question session includes a brief discussion, in which participants are guessing a few questions which the teacher and the peers might ask and speculating how these questions could be answered.

The role-play conveys a story about two students who are planning a dinner party for their friends. It includes such scenes as deciding what kind of party it will be, who should be invited, and what kind of food and drinks should be purchased.

The construction of the object (role-play) can be described in phases. However, not all phases have been captured on the camera since some of the work was accomplished at home. The analysis of interviews, questionnaires and interactions make it possible to reconstruct the set of steps necessary for Amy and Ira to carry out the task prior to and during the recordings. The following phases of the role-play composition can be identified: first, brainstorming ideas into a storyline and dividing scenes between participant after a class; second, individually formulating the story in each scene first in English and then in German. In the third phase, students meet and pull together the scenes. The fourth phase involves rehearsing and practicing the performance.

As the video recordings show, both students enter the first meeting of the activity already holding a script with most parts in German. Students' responses in the interview provide insights into how they approached the preparation for the speaking test. Participants

identify that they started the preparation shortly after the instructor announced in class the guidelines for the upcoming speaking test. Amy and Ira met after class to flesh out the ideas in English and to decide on the vocabulary they wanted to use. Then, they split up the outline of the scenes, and each of participants became responsible for a part of the script which involved composing words for both characters (played by Amy and Ira) in German. In the first meeting, Amy and Ira focus on joining together the pre-written parts of the dialogs into a coherent role-play, editing the text, and composing few new episodes (e.g. the closing sequence of the dialog in the role-play). This phase also involves simplifying the text to make it more understandable for the classmates.

The analysis of data, especially of subjects' interactions during the activity, reveals several connections to activities in which students participated prior to this activity. According to students' responses in the interview, the reason for choosing the topic *Dinner Party* rests on their decision to use vocabulary about food and drinks (chapter 3 in the text book). The course instructor introduced the vocabulary in class shortly before the speaking test. In this way the main idea for the topic of the story in the role-play is linked to the task that instructs students to demonstrate in the role-play grammar and vocabulary units covered in the course. To master the script, Amy and Ira draw on their experience of activities originating in different communities. For example, the idea to incorporate two shopping scenes in the role-play is based on a language exercise in which both students participated in the German language class. One scene is about shopping for groceries and the second scene is about shopping for beverages. The class activity is *doing shopping*, which the course instructor incorporated to practice newly introduced vocabulary in class. Such activities are

also known as simulations⁴⁵ (Crookall & Oxford, 1990). In the activity *doing shopping*, students engage in simulated processes of grocery shopping, a process that involves simulations of actual language behaviour in a shopping situation in a store in Germany. Thus, by constructing the object, students use their learning history from this specific type of class exercises as a resource to model two scenes in this activity.

Moreover, Ira identified in the interview that, for her, the scene where she acts as a sales assistant is directly linked to her experience outside of the educational institution. Ira identifies in the stimulated recall interview that she worked in retail and learned there how to deal with customers, experience that helped her in creating the situation in the role-play. She elaborates:

...because I have been in retail a little bit so dealt with customers you just kind of get that persona about it...[Stimulated Recall Interview]

For Ira then, her employment history emerges into the construction of the object in this activity and becomes a part of the scene.

Without being specific, Amy admitted to Ira in one of the conversations (cf. excerpt 5.2.3a in chapter 5.2) that she heavily relied on the knowledge and experiences gained in class while working out her portion of the script at home. In this way, although students compose several scenes individually, for both participants, the histories of learning and employment practices play an essential role.

Because activities are not isolated units but are often interconnected with other activities, they may influence each other (cf. Kuutti, 1996) and each other's objects as the next episode shows. I use episode 4.4.1 from meeting 1 to demonstrate that Ira draws on an

⁴⁵ A *simulation* is a situation in which the students play a natural role, i.e. a role that they sometimes have in real life (e.g. shopping at a clothing department) (Crooklaa & Oxford, 1990).

experience that corresponds to an activity external event (a phone conversation) in order to determine the closing words for a phone conversation in the scene. More specifically, in the initial version of the script, in the scene *phone conversation*, the adjacency pair *gut-gut* coordinates the closing of the interaction. After a rehearsal of the scene, participants find the telephone closing of *gut-gut* unsuitable.

Episode 4.4.1.

1 Ira: okay now the PHONE the phone like honestly we have to
2 have like you know. something
3 Amy: hm
4 Ira: okay usually you just say **tschüß** [at least that's what I know
5 this
6 Amy: [okay
7 Ira: every time my ((name)) comes over to our house like when she
8 is talking to (her) parents
9 Amy: mhm
10 Ira: **tschüß** and then hang up EVERY time
11 Amy: okay
12 Ira: hm so [should we b=
13 Amy: [ha
14 Ira: should (.) should we both say **tschüß**?
15 Amy: sure
16 Ira: okay we'll just say **tschüß** ((takes notes))

In line 1, Ira invites Amy to search for closure lines that would be a better alternative for the unsuitable pair of *gut-gut*. Amy accepts Ira's invitation (line 2); however, she does not provide her with any assistance, possibly because she does not know any alternative closure for a phone conversation in German. Ira, in line 4, suggests the German closing *tschüß* as a replacement for the unsuitable construction. Simultaneously, she shares with Amy her learning history from an activity external account when she overheard a phone conversation in the German language in her home (line 7 and 10). Lines 14 and 16 provide evidence that the closure of the phone conversation, which Ira observed at home, becomes a part of the scene in this activity. Ira re-contextualizes the German greeting *tschüß* from the conversation at home into the phone conversation in the role-play. But note that before learners build in the

new closing into the script, Ira provides Amy with the background information about the source for her knowledge (use of *tschüß* to close a phone conversation) possibly to receive her approval. The interlocutor's approval seems to be a precondition before *tschüß* can be built into the role-play.

Thus, re-contextualizing the information offered by one of the participants in order to adjust the object, which is of collective nature, involves the actions of providing the interlocutor with the source of knowledge. The analysis also points toward the importance of looking at the links between the activity systems, including those from outside the educational setting, in order to clarify what students recycle from their histories and how they do so to build up knowledge in the present.

In addition, the refined analysis of this situated exchange reveals how a part of somebody's speech can be invoked in the students' dialog. It points toward Bakhtin's (1972) idea of relationship between self and others, namely that every person is influenced by others. The fact that Ira brings into the interaction and incorporates into the object, a closing greeting used by somebody else shows the influence of others on what she thinks of as a correct way to close a phone conversation. This episode also illustrates the *multi-voicedness* (Y. Engeström, 1999, p. 178) of the discourse in the activity. Seeing voices as speech actions, Ritva Engeström (1995) spells out ways individual speakers invoke social languages in voices, namely one voice speaking through another. When applied to the re-contextualization of *tschüß*, its use by a character blends two voices, whereby the voice of Ira's family member speaks through the voice of Ira's character, that is, a process of building multi-voicedness into the discourse.

Another factor behind the object construction can be described as clarification of

content. I mentioned at the beginning of this section that participants composed the scenes in German individually and then pulled them together into a script during the meetings. When rehearsing the script, both women face difficulties comprehending each other's texts in German.

Episode 4.4.2 represents one of the numerous instances identified in the transcripts in which the rehearsal of a particular scene results in a clarification of the content. Here, Ira interprets for Amy the part of the dialog in German that she produced at home. The analysis illuminates in closer detail the steps leading to clarifications of content. Drawing on this analysis, I argue that proceeding from English (L1) to German (L2) alone requires a clarification of the content for the interlocutor. The shared understanding of the story-line has to be achieved first before the group can begin collaborating on the text in this activity.

Episode 4.4.2.

1 Amy: ich denke so dass sie dieses erhalten begonnen okay so
2 what we saying there?
3 Ira: uhm okay i have it in english here <<reads speedy<who should
4 sit at the head of the table I think peter should who should
5 sit next to her let us put lora and alina and arin to the
6 left they all should sit next to john yes and ann [should
7 Amy: [ha
8 Ira: sit next to peter we better don't put him next to
9 lora because they would never stop joking well
10 everyone [should be happy
11 Amy: [ha
12 Ira: wherever we place them i=I think so let's get started>
13 Amy: okay that's cool
14 Ira: okay
15 Amy: all right
16 Ira: hm ((Ira starts typing))

This episode follows the rehearsal of the dialog section, in which Amy and Ira discuss the seating arrangements at the table at the dinner party. In lines 1 and 2, Amy requests a clarification of the rehearsed part of the dialog that was written by Ira. Ira interprets the meaning of the text for Amy, an action which Amy acknowledges through *okay that's cool* in

line 14. The episode says something important about the procedure in which Ira constructs the object. Following on Ira's statement in line 3, she writes out the text in English first and then translates it into German. In this way, she heavily relies on her L1 and uses the approach of translation, an approach typical for L2 beginner learners (cf. Sunderman & Kroll, 2006). However, what this episode also shows is that moving from L1 to L2 at home alone becomes a problem for participants, who have not agreed on the groundwork and who all have their own objects, which is a problem when they then get back together. For collaboration, participants need to be on the same ground before they can continue work on the role-play. This involves going back to the groundwork done in L1, so that all members of the group can follow what the group is acting on in L2.

In the analysis of the next episode, I argue that social recognition through amusement plays a role in the construction of the object in this activity. Participants' orientation to the class community and, more specifically, to the perception of the outcome as amusing by the classmates appears to guide the construction of the object (role-play) in this activity. In episode 4.4.3, students have a discussion about L2 in the script. This metalinguistic discussion illuminates, that while working on the script, participants orient not only to each other, but also toward the projected perception of the role-play by the class community.

Episode 4.4.3.

1 Amy: that is true uhm (1.0) okay so for this part like when we
2 are talking like the shopping list do you think we need
3 all the (.) [(articles)
4 Ira: [I think it would be more amusing like I mean
5 it is a word that they KNOW
6 Amy: HA like **DIE DAS** haha
7 Ira: and like if I like I am saying it right (.) like
8 Amy: hm

Line 4 exemplifies those cases identified in the transcripts which provide evidence that learners aim to achieve amusement for the audience as the emotional outcome of the

performance of the role-play. Creating an amusing situation is then a substantial aim for the projected outcome of the present activity and displays participants' view of what the role-play should be like. To create such a role-play involves using a *word that they KNOW* as evident from line 5, which indicates an extra effort to achieve the projected amusement of the audience. In this effort, learners are seeking to use L2 in such a way that it is comprehensible to the classmates.

Participants may simply be trying to please the teacher by demonstrating through the performance that they have followed the task rules, which instruct them to make sure that the rest of the class can follow the role-play. This episode shows, however, that students do more than this. They are ensuring through the language they use that the audience gets the joke. Through humour they seek to receive recognition from the community for their role-play (cf. Miettinen, 2005). For Amy and Ira, amusement is not a by-product of the role-play but rather appears to be a significant aspect of the whole text composing activity. Because it comes up so often, it can be hypothesized that the social recognition is a necessary component of the projected outcome for participants. In this way, the social recognition through amusement is a significant factor behind the composition of the role-play in group 2.

The next episode represents another case in which students orient toward the class community but, this time, more to the fellow students than toward the teacher. Following the task rule to make the content understandable for the fellow-students, Amy and Ira orient to the classmates who do not participate in the meetings. I suggest that their orientation is based on the assessment of L2 proficiency by the community members. The transcripts contain numerous episodes in which participants clearly show concern for the audience.

Episode 4.4.4.

1 Amy:ha okay
2 Ira:so we just i'll just try to find other (1.0) words to put
3 in that it might be easier for us to pronounce (.) and for
4 them to understand what we are talking about because this
5 is pretty high tech german so

In line 2, Ira asks to replace a word in the text in order to make the text more accessible for *them*. The people referred to by the pronoun *them* are the classmates, since the teacher would presumably understand what they are saying. However, the voice of the teacher is also observable in the desire to make it understandable to students. The orientation toward the classmates represents a link between the projected outcome of the activity in progress and its comprehension by the community members. This suggests a connection between the selection of linguistic elements that students incorporate into the role-play and the expected recognition of the outcome of the activity by the community members. What students do in the activity, which L2 units they enclose in the text, and what they possibly learn by doing it are linked to Amy and Ira's knowledge about the community and, more specifically, to their assessment of the community members' L2 proficiency (cf. audience design theory, Bell, 1984⁴⁶). Therefore, the class community, who is not present in the activity and does not participate in the interaction, may indirectly define the interaction between Amy and Ira as well as affect the object in this activity.

In sum, the analysis has shown that the emerging object of the activity can be characterized as complex and boundary crossing (cf. Y. Engeström, 1998). In their words, the participants use past activities as resources for this text composing activity. In addition, such factors like clarification of the content and the social recognition through amusement are

⁴⁶ Audience design is a sociolinguistic theory proposed by Bell (1984). In this theory, Bell claims that speakers design their speech according to their knowledge about the audience's expectations, and this determines what linguistic forms and content they use (Bell, 1991).

essential to the construction of the object. The former factor becomes a necessity when participants produce scenes individually and then get back together to work in group. The latter factor is based on learners' assessment of skills in L2 by the classmates. Finally, the forms and the content of the German language that Amy and Ira use when composing the script are selected in response to the community members.

Group Internal Rules: I have already discussed that the systems of rules for both groups exist on two levels: institutional and group internal rules. Both groups share the institutional rules, as I addressed in the analysis of the system of rules in group 1. Because the activities take place within the same institutional context and the same speaking test format applies to both language courses, I will not repeat the institutional rules for group 2 here, but begin my analysis with the group internal rules.

The analysis of interactions shows that the rule of collaboration is central to this activity. This rule involves working together, dividing labour, assisting each other in problem solving and using e-mail to share updates on the script. Students cooperate by leading peer-peer interactions, jointly create feedback exchanges, and guide each other through the preparation process.

Learners also apply this rule when it comes to solving a linguistic problem (e.g. finding a missing word). As video recordings show, often both participants simultaneously initiate a search for a word in the online dictionary via laptop and the vocabulary list provided in the textbook. The rule here is the practice: once the problem is identified, both participants orient toward it and look for the solution. Knowing that such actions directed at solving a problem create conditions for L2 learning (c.f. Y. Engeström, 1999), it can be argued more strongly that this rule is linked to a particular type of collaboration, namely one that fosters

development (cf. Rogoff, 1990). According to Barbara Rogoff's (1990) interpretation of the experimental data, not every social interaction facilitates development. What matters is the nature of the interaction between the partners (ibid.). Her argument is that joint problem solving is crucial for development to occur. In Amy and Ira's case, through collaborative problem solving, they engage each other in interactions that may lead to learning.

Another central convention found in the activity system is that the participants keep their original names for the role-play, even though each girl has been acting two types of characters, both self and other (a sales person). In the stimulated recall interview, Amy and Ira elaborate on the question of whether they used any names:

Amy: oh we were just ourselves and then we did not give ourselves names when we were store clerks right. [Stimulated Recall Interview]

Iry: occasionally we would be ourselves and one would have to be a shop keeper and then we switched up. [Stimulated Recall Interview]

The rule of using speakers' names for characters in the role-play and just being themselves is worth mentioning because it closely relates to the organizational issues of the activity. It could also be argued that just being themselves and speaking for themselves possibly evoke a feeling of personal relation to the situation and therefore lead to more meaningful use of German.

The instruction to incorporate as many words as possible takes a central position in the system of rules of this activity system. During collaborative work participants mention several times the need to implement numerous lexical items in the script. Such deliberate attention to this rule is certainly linked to the task instruction: *Use as much vocabulary as possible – the more vocabulary used, the higher your mark will be*. A close examination of all rules in the task instruction reveals that this is the only rule that explicitly mentions the relation between

its fulfillment and an increased mark. This connection places an extra emphasis on the rule. Therefore, students' strong focus on vocabulary (e.g. two shopping lists incorporated into the text) may have its roots in the task instructions and be motivated by the higher mark, thus impacting what participants are working on.

In this activity, time is another important issue, which in this case is linked to the rule of measuring the length of the role-play. When rehearsing a new scene or just a part of it, Amy and Ira measure its length. Participants pay deliberate attention to the length of the role-play in response to the task instructions about the specified length of 5 or 7 minutes. Measuring the length is central because it occurs so often and defines the horizon of further actions. Depending on the achieved length, students coordinate their actions as to what to include or not into the script and when to consider the work finished. Thus, the dynamics of the object construction as well as the organization of the activity system includes measuring the length of the role-play. The analysis of the next episode provides a more detailed picture of the issues of time measuring in this group.

In episode 4.4.5, participants negotiate the rule of measuring the length of the scenes of the role-play, an action that involves also rehearsing the role-play in German aloud. This exchange takes place immediately after Ira and Amy meet the first time for the video recording session. Prior to this exchange, students put together the scenes which they wrote in German alone. In the analysis of this exchange, I discuss the rule of measuring time, which involves speaking German aloud.

Episode 4.4.5.

- 1 Ira: if you have a watch we can time it and then
- 2 Amy: okay
- 3 Ira: haha
- 4 Amy: do you want me just say it then
- 5 Ira: well you can say and then we kind of like we do it what we

6 actually do and say
7 Amy: okay
8 Ira: so it is then more like real
9 Amy: okay
10 Ira: okay do you wanna say first
11 Amy: sure just give me a sec
12 Ira: haha

In line 1, Ira carefully walks the line in negotiating the condition for measuring how long it would take to speak the scenes that students just put together. Her suggestion of taking care of time finds an agreement with Amy (line 2). Timing the object involves rehearsing a scene or the whole role-play by speaking German. In lines 5, 6 and 8, Ira invites Amy to practice rehearsing the dialogs, and Amy agrees (line 7, 9). Participants implement the rule of measuring time in the following way: if the rehearsal does not last the required time, the students will try to solve the problem through subsequent actions that lead to a reorganization of the activity. Actions like word searches, alternation of grammatical issues, expanding characters' words by adding new phrases, or sometimes polishing the pronunciation and double checking the meaning of vocabulary represent the most common follow-up actions after the rehearsals which exceed this episode.

Thus, the rule leads to the organization of the activity such learners involve each other in multiple rehearsals and, with them, in engaging practice of L2. In this way, the rule also determines L2 practiced through problem solving in the activity and, with it, conditions of participants' own learning (cf. Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). The examination of subsequent exchanges shows that students carry on this rule throughout the two meetings and use it to determine how the unfolding activity can best accommodate the requirements of the task and their own needs (cf. Hadjistassou, 2007).

Memorization of L2 is another group internal rule that Amy and Ira discuss. Episode 4.4.6 shows first that this rule is linked to the rehearsals and second that the applications of

this rule, as I argue, may create affordances for learning German during rehearsals.

Episode 4.4.6.

1 Amy: okay we have to practice this like (imagining) over the
2 pronunciation [down to=
3 Ira: [yeah just the pronunciation and like
4 memorization I mean uhm for the vegetables like if like if
5 we hold them up so that the class can see that we can always
6 be like you know
7 Amy: yeah if [we do that
8 Ira [if we need them because there are so many of both
9 that we have to
10 Amy: mhm
11 Ira: remember too but I mean it's not too bad

This episode represents an exchange that took place between two rehearsals. Amy suggests that they practice pronunciation (lines 1-2), with which Ira agrees (line 3). Ira also invites Amy to memorize the lexical items (line 4), a process that involves consciously paying attention to L2 during the rehearsal. Line 7 shows that Amy acknowledges Ira's invitation. What we observe here is that students jointly attempt to engage each other in more than automatization of the lexical items for vegetables in German by speaking them aloud, possibly in response to the task instruction to use as much vocabulary as possible. They also use rehearsals as an opportunity to memorize the list of vegetable (i.e. take those words as learning). Such a focus on lexical items in L2 during rehearsals fits into the strand of *language-focused learning* (Nation, 2001, p. 2) during which learners pay deliberate attention to vocabulary, thus, once again, showing the way in which learners actively engage in constructing conditions for their own learning (cf. Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001).

In sum, students create a set of shared rules trying to balance the instruction related rules and the strategies they choose to follow in order to compose the script as well as to practice its performance. By doing so they create an activity setting that best accommodates their understanding of how the task can be carried out. Namely, when applying the rules, Amy

and Ira turn their collaboration into pedagogically meaningful practices (cf. Hadjistassou, 2007) and much more. In this preparation process, the students also maintain, and reinforce their relationship by turning their cooperation and possibly their learning of German into a socially meaningful event.

Division of Labour: The division of labour in group 2 has been examined from Y. Engeström's (2010) perspective on horizontal (between members) and vertical (power and status) division. On the level of the horizontal division of labour different responsibilities can be distinguished that participants have distributed among themselves prior to the video recordings of their group work. They divided the role-play into scenes so that each of them was responsible for few scenes of the dialog, a process that involved writing out the scenes in German. Therefore, students came to the first recording with pre-written scenes of the role-play, which they then joined together into a complete script during two meetings.

Beginning from the first meeting, the students act jointly as the group subject. Once the text of the script is ready, Amy and Ira select lexical items for food and drinks from the textbook, and they prepare a list of vocabulary in English and then in German. For each item, participants draw a picture of each food and drink item on a card, color it and code with the respective equivalents in German. Amy and Ira also prepare a few cards identifying change of scenes and place to use during the performance. While working on the text and cards, Amy and Ira also carefully plan body posture, mimicry, gestures and their positions in the scene, as well as the distribution of props (cards, telephone and shop keeper signs) for the performance of each scene. Therefore the preparation for the role-play in this group involves not simply composing and practicing the dialog in the L2. Participants also invest a considerable amount of time preparing the cards and shop keeper signs (nametags) as well as planning and

practicing the artistic part of the performance.

As soon as Amy and Ira each finish their own scripts, they divide the responsibilities of proofreading between them. Each of the participants is responsible for incorporating the discussed updates into the written version of scenes respectively. In this way, they accomplish the updates individually (i.e. outside of the meetings). They mention in the interaction that they will exchange the updated version of the scenes with each other via e-mail. Such organization of labour is directly linked to the low number of problem solving parts of the conversations in L2 that could be identified in the data (in contrast to group 1). In a few of the episodes, students deliberately do not engage in collaborative problem solving (e.g. word searches) once the problem area has been identified but rather put off these actions to do alone at home.

I use episode 4.4.7 to show how students deal with a missing word in a German phrase spoken by Amy's character's words. My argument is that learners occasionally distribute work in ways that may be less beneficial for the learning of German. After one of the rehearsals, Ira suggests adding a conflict into the shopping scene, in which she acts as a customer. To make the scene funnier, as Ira says in the interaction, she wants to act as if she cannot find her shopping list, and, while she is searching for it the shopkeeper gets frustrated. Amy agrees with her suggestion and tries to construct the sentence in German which they have just planned in English (line 2).

Episode 4.4.7.

1 Ira: okay so ((making notes))
2 Amy: and then is there (.) **ich (.) sucht meine** <<grocery list?>
3 very quiet> ha
4 Ira: well I'll figure it out how to say it in german
5 Amy: okay (1.0) and then you will be like here it is ()
6 Ira: okay oh how about i just say wait i need my shopping list

As lines 2 and 3 show, Amy is unable to finish the sentence because the word *grocery list* appears to be missing in her vocabulary repertoire. This is evident from her switching back to English in a lower volume but with rising intonation, a response which can be understood as an invitation for help. Ira, on the other hand, instead of offering help, informs Amy that she will finalize the search on her own (line 4). Two subsequent lines suggest that students start planning the next part of the dialog in English.

As mentioned earlier, difficulties in talk may be managed in a variety of ways (Y. Engeström, 2008) including collaborative efforts to solve the problem, which may ease language learning and development (cf. Rogoff, 1990). In episode 4.4.7, students do not engage each other in the problem-solving conversation (finding the equivalent for *grocery list* in German) and therefore do not participate in knowledge building in German in a collaborative way. Although the conditions for interaction and working together exist in the activity, students do not necessarily exploit them as opportunities for learning (cf. Rogoff, 1990). They occasionally insist on solving some problems related to the L2 individually.

The concept of vertical division of labour has been investigated, especially as it relates to the distribution of knowledge and roles, as well as to initiative taking as seen in Amy and Ira' case. The relationship between two students can be characterized as non-hierarchical because the authority for planning and decision making is hardly noticeable.

The more detailed interactional analysis shows several occasions when Ira is taking the lead position unobtrusively in regard to the organizational issues of the group work. She is often the first to suggest who is doing what in the activity, for example, she asks Amy to draw shopkeeper sings, initiates measuring the length of the role-play (see above episode), and prompts negotiations regarding the meetings' schedule. Amy seems to adopt a position as a

follower and Ira as a group work organizer. This is evident in Amy's behaviour, especially in the drawing phase, when she constantly asks Ira which color to choose for her picture, a request which may be due to Ira's ownership of the crayons. Ira is also the one who takes the responsibility for revising and editing the final version of the text, as well as finding a proofreader for the end version. Ira's active efforts to organize the activity are possibly linked to her expertise in German (see above on subjects). In her interaction with the researcher, she also occasionally claims to know more German than other students in the class. Her behaviour is most likely linked to the self-assessment of her expertise in L2 and possibly ownership of tools (laptop, pencils).

In sum, the analysis of the horizontal and vertical division of labour suggests that, although students collaborate during two meetings, in a broader view, they accomplish the first draft of the role-play individually, outside of the meetings, and in this way, do not exploit the potential affordances for knowledge building in German in this activity. Drawing on students' interpretation of the task instructions and their understanding of how the activity should be organized (as evident in the data), one can see that group 2 (similar to group 1) use strategies (e.g. strong focus on writing) that seem to stray from the focal aim of the task, which is fostering speaking skills in L2.

Tools: The mediational means of group 2 include material tools (pen and paper, computer, online dictionaries, textbook and watch) as well as psychological tools (L1, (written) language, memorization as well as visual aids). The analysis discusses first the use of material and then psychological tools that could be identified in the activity of group 2.

Some of material tools serve multiple purposes. Amy and Ira use a laptop for collecting information, especially when solving trouble in conversation (e.g. searching for

missing lexical items in an online dictionary). The watch is another material tool that students use to measure the length of the role-play in order to make it fit the task requirements. The videotapes show participants consulting the textbook frequently. For them, the textbook is a source of information (e.g. when searching for a word or grammar rules as well as for writing conventions of L2). To meet the requirement of the task (i.e. to cover material mastered in class), students also orient toward the teaching material covered in the first three chapters of the textbook. In this way, the textbook functions as a tool that helps learners to orient toward the rules of the task and L2 (both written and oral) conventions.

Amy and Ira use the following psychological tools: L1, (written) language, memorization, and visual aids. I discuss each of them, and, in chapter 7 provide a conversation analysis of non-target languages used as a resource for learning.

The analysis of data reveals that Amy and Ira heavily rely on English (L1) while composing the role-play. Amy and Ira identify the following purpose for their L1 use in the interview:

Ira: to get our thoughts in order

Amy: just to see how this story progresses

Ira: and it would be easier for us to follow when it was kind of in English first of all and then to get German in there because then we know exactly what we are trying to say in German.

[Stimulated Recall Interview]

In general, group 2 follows a sequence while composing the text for the role-play: generate the ideas in L1, write the outline in L1, and transfer the story-line into L2, some of which they accomplish alone. Thus, the preferred language for planning and accomplishing the task is L1, which appears to be a necessary tool to apply to the task. Haneda (2007) analyses group work in Japanese composing activities and finds that the more proficient student are, the less they depend on their L1. Thus, the use of L1 in this activity is possibly

linked to student's low proficiency in the German language. Nevertheless, it plays an important role in the task management and helps students to organize their own learning in accordance with their current capabilities in German.

As stated earlier in this chapter, Amy and Ira wrote out the script in German first and then tried to memorize it while practicing their dialogs. In this way, students seem to use writing to transfer their ideas from English into German. Thus, writing acts as a psychological tool, but this issue is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Another psychological tool is memorization (recall the discussion in episode 4.4.6). Students develop for themselves the strategy of memorizing the language first and then presenting the script by speaking without notes. Amy and Ira use this psychological tool to mediate their memory. Since both students identified in the stimulated recall interview that, after this task, they felt more confident speaking German publicly, it is possible that they use memorization to ensure their L2 speaking skills (cf. Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006).

In addition to memorization, participants develop a set of mnemonic tools. Amy and Ira design and employ visual aids, which represent another psychological tool that mediates their memory. As I stated above, students spend a considerable amount of activity time creating cards, on which they draw food items and drinks, as well as write out some complex phrases (e.g. *der Gemüseladen, der Getränkehandel, or die Geschäftsinhaberin...Meine* Name ist...*). They draw these cards to use during the presentation in class, however, they also use them each time they rehearse the role-play. Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006) write that, when students use visual aids, they rely on them as "external mediators" (p. 45). Following this statement, one can see that visual aids function for group 2 as mnemonic tools that stimulate memorization of lexico-grammatical issues.

Analysis of the interactions suggests that Amy and Ira's use of visual aids to review previously learned items and possibly memorize new expressions (e.g. *die Geschäftsinhaberin*)⁴⁷ during preparation is intended to ensure group mates' auditory comprehension of what they are saying during the presentation. Therefore, the cards are a set of stimuli that function as auxiliary means. They have several functions: a mnemonic tool to mediate memory by practicing and performing the role-play, in part to ensure the understanding of the classmates. Thus, Amy and Ira appear to view the performance as a communication act with the audience, an act that the cards facilitate. Another reason for using visual aids is possibly linked to students' emotional attitude towards the performance in front of the class. Both students identified in the interview a high degree of anxiety and personal frustration about public speaking in a foreign language. Findings of recent studies (e.g. Shih, 2002) suggest that the use of mnemonic tools lower the anxiety of students during the presentation. The visual aids possibly also helped Amy and Ira to go through this process.

⁴⁷ This word does not appear in any of the first three chapters of the textbook. I assume that students found this word in a dictionary.

On the basis of the analysis of the data, the structure of the group 2 activity system may be sketched as in Figure 4.4.2.

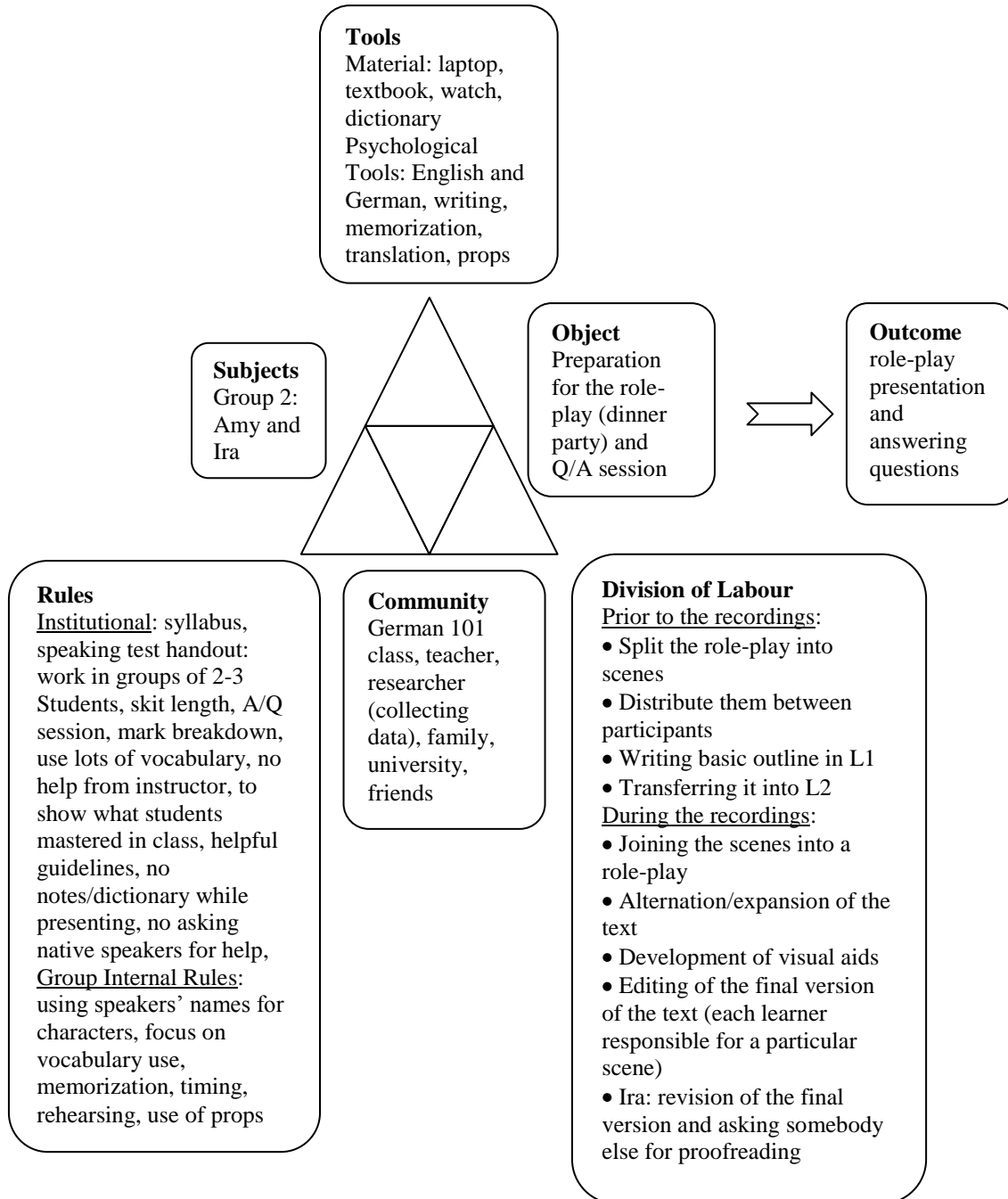


Figure 4.4.2. A Model of the Activity System of Group 2

In this chapter, I examined the process of planning, producing and practicing the presentation for the speaking test in group 2. The analysis of the preparation for the role-play establishes that participants begin with the composition of the script. It involves group work which takes place on two levels: students working at home⁴⁸ and students working together in front of the camera. During the construction of the object on both levels, Amy and Ira draw on their experiences (e.g. learning and employment histories) from activities in educational and non-educational contexts. Episodes 4.4.3 and 4.4.4 support the argument that participants design their speech in German in response to the audience and the rules. Doing so defines the interactions and possibly the linguistic forms and content of L2 Amy and Ira will learn. Their aim is to win amusement and receive social recognition from the audience but also to obtain a high mark for the performance of the role-play during the speaking test. These findings hint at two key points: first, that the object is not reducible to the achieved product (cf. Y. Engeström, 1999) and, second, one needs to go beyond the interaction analysis and look at the events outside of the interaction when examining the object construction processes in an activity system.

It has been found that translation and writing are necessary psychological tools for Amy and Ira to carry out the task. Memorization and visual aids appear to be essential for students to meet the task requirement of free speaking. Learners treat memorization as a part of learning to speak German in public. The use of this tool opens up a possibility for Amy and Ira to look at the public presentation of the role-play as an act of communication with the class community. Since I have observed the use of translation, memorization and writing in most of the groups of beginner learners, it seems to be a necessary tool for public speaking

⁴⁸ Since participants are working on the same task, I consider the home meetings part of the activity.

tasks, and not just for this group.

Thus, participants organize the activity so as to generate conditions and opportunities for learning German. However, the questions need to be answered to provide a deeper understanding of learning German in this context: what interactional opportunities for learning the language do activities provide and what role do voice and non-target languages play in the process? These questions will be addressed in the ensuing chapters.

5. Learning German through Word Searches

Chapter 4 launched the investigation of learning through interactions with peers in activities. The chapter delineated the activity systems of group 1 and group 2. The analysis revealed that both groups organized their activities in different ways (e.g. whereas group 1 accomplished most of the preparation for the role-play together in 4 meetings, participants in group 2 prepared a portion of the script individually).

The analysis in the previous two chapters has yielded insights into the forms of organization that define interactions (cf. Y. Engeström, 1999), which I further analyze in this chapter. The activity systems made it possible to describe the socio-institutional context in which peer interactions are situated. However, they do not provide a detailed explanation of learning German in those interactions.

One way to understand how university students learn German in peer interactions while being engaged in an object-oriented activity is to study difficulties in interactions and the ways speakers deal with them. Word searches, categorized as repair, represent an obstacle in speaking (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977), whose solution may create opportunities for learning (Brouwer, 2003).

This chapter concerns learning when students experience a problem in speaking German and direct their efforts to overcome the obstacle through a word search. Going one step further, the analysis also tracks, throughout the meetings, the words that students found.

Prior to the analysis of troubles in speaking, I discuss the concept of word search from the perspective of the CA tradition, which I initially introduced in the method chapter. Then, using the socio-interactionist approach, I examine the accomplishment of opportunities for learning German through word searches in both groups. The analysis of each group consists

of two sections (5.1 and 5.2) both dealing with word searches in group 1 and group 2 respectively. Each section is broken down into two sub-sections. In particular, the following issues are examined: first, learning opportunities through word searches and, second, learning opportunities from the uses of word search solutions after the completion of the word search. Investigating the ways learners deal with language problems and language use after they resolve a problem may provide insight into locally achieved learning as a situated practice.

A notable number of word search sequences surface in the interactions of both groups, but especially in group 1, perhaps because of the approach it chose to accomplish the task. Unlike group 2, who chose to accomplish a portion of the script alone, Rut, Lea and Sam composed the role-play in German together in front of the camera, a process which involves a high number of word searches.

I have introduced the concept of word search in the method chapter and will now discuss this concept in detail from the CA perspective. The initiation of a word search may be accompanied by explicit word search markers (Brouwer, 2003), for example, a phrase like *what is it* or *how do you say that*, but it can also be displayed in other components of the sequence. The display of difficulty may involve other audible features like *uhm*, *uh* and physical conduct such as a shift of gaze or a change in facial expression, for example, a “thinking face” (Mori & Hasegawa, 2009, p. 71) as well as cut-offs and repetition (Lerner, 1996). These features are commonly understood as the speaker's invitation for the recipient to solve the language problem, and at the same time as an admission of a lack of knowledge and an appeal to the expertise of the other.

Since there is a preference for self-correction in interaction (Schegloff et al., 1977), the other interactants usually hold back on providing information to let the speaker resolve the

word search. When they do provide this information, it is commonly done by offering a candidate (i.e. an item that would fulfill the gap of the searched-for-item). Offering a candidate is at the same time exhibiting linguistic knowledge, if the speaker does so spontaneously.⁴⁹

Word searches have been studied as a topic in SLA, though seldom from an interactionist perspective.⁵⁰ They have mostly been discussed as a communicative strategy speakers use to compensate for their lack of knowledge (Faerch & Kasper, 1983), or to find the accurate expression in the L2 in order to convey a thought (Mori, 2004, p. 538). This conclusion has been reassessed by Brouwer (2003), who argues, following Firth and Wagner's (1997) suggestion, that interactional practices such as word searches do not necessarily indicate a lack in L2 knowledge.

The focus of the analysis in this chapter is on the lexical searches rather than grammatical searches⁵¹ (Kurahila, 2006, p. 97). Lexical searches involve a search for an L2 lexical item, which can be a word or a phrase. This search also includes cases arising from insecurities about choices where several options are vocalized by the speaker (e.g. through the question: *Is it this or that?*). The present examination concerns cases in which the speaker takes up the invitation and tries to involve the interlocutor in the search, which are called "substantial" word searches (Kurahila, 2006, p. 96). According to Brouwer (2003), these kinds

⁴⁹ The analysis shows that, when none of the participants offers a candidate, students relocate the word search to artifacts (e.g. textbook). In such a case, offering a candidate from the textbook would be closer to announcing the candidate than displaying knowledge.

⁵⁰ There are, however, some recent studies examining word search as an interactional phenomenon in second language interactions in non-classroom data (Brouwer, 2003, Kurahila, 2006) as well as in classroom data (Carroll, 2005).

⁵¹ Kurahila (2006) notes, however, that the distinction between lexical and grammatical searches is rather symbolic because it is not always clear what kind of linguistic unit a speaker has in mind. On the other hand, it is operational, since it refers to what speakers orient toward when initiating word searches (ibid). In grammatical searches, speakers usually are searching for a unit within the lexical item. An example for such a grammatical search could be search for a proper article or ending of a word.

of word searches may offer affordances for language acquisition if they share the following characteristics: "(a) the other participant is invited to participate in the search, and (b) the interactants demonstrate an orientation to language expertise, with one participant being a novice and the other being an expert" (p. 542).

Building on Brouwer, this analysis further examines word searches but uses a different kind of data than she did. While she examined interactions between native speakers and non-native speakers, I examine interactions between non-native speakers.

Brouwer's cases are fairly straightforward in that the native speaker expertise is accepted as providing the correct solution for a word search. In terms of learning, then, the expert guides the learning of the novice. In the peer interactions investigated here, this is not necessarily the case. Displays of expertise may have to be justified and negotiated. Two questions arise here: what needs to happen for the word search initiator to accept a candidate and in what ways is the negotiation of expertise conducive to learning? Simply displaying knowledge in providing the solution may not be accepted as expertise. It may entail the need to draw on other kinds of justifications that would include linguistic conduct that may contribute to language learning.

In investigating word searches as opportunities for learning German, it will be important to study whether the two conditions that Brouwer lays out are, indeed, sufficient, or whether other aspects allow word searches to become learning opportunities. More specifically, I am asking what these learning opportunities look like and how participants of my study accomplish them.

My focus is on evidence of learning as an observable feature, when participants are displaying learning through their behaviour (cf. learning behaviour, Markee, 2008). I will take

into account both verbal and non-verbal behaviour. When looking for evidence of L2 learning in word searches, I am not asking whether the item was unavailable or irretrievable but rather focusing on the ways learners deal with the language problems and how these actions contribute to learning. Furthermore, as Markee (2008), points out, although learning is likely to occur, it may not surface in the speech event. Thus, in regard to my study, a participant may not contribute to a word search but still learn.

Next, I look at what students possibly have learned from participating in the search. I wonder, for example, when a solution is found, how students employ this item (i.e. what the use of word search solutions can tell us about learning). I am not asking whether learners can retain the word search solutions or for how long but rather how learners re-produce them in interactions after the word search. My idea of tracking word search solutions is based on Markee's "longitudinal approach"⁵² (2008, p. 404) to the analysis of learning. In particular, given that adapting linguistic resources to new contexts is one of the methods through which learners create opportunities for learning an additional language, as Pirainen-Marsh and Taino argue (2009) I investigate sequences with word searches and then track the word search solutions across speech events throughout the activities of two focal groups.

The analysis shows that word searches as well as the uses of a target item may be located both in on-task as well off-task talks. My understanding of on-task and off-task talk is based on de Guerrero and Villamil's (1994) interpretation. I examine both types of talk and see them as units of discourse that take place within an activity system. On-task excerpts are utterances or segments of conversation semantically related to or directed at the object of the activity. Off-task excerpts are units of discourse in which participants are conversing about

⁵² Markee's technique involves using on the one hand, learning object tracking, and on the other hand, learning process tracking.

issues unrelated to the completion of the activity object.

5.1. Group 1

This section consists of two sub-sections: word searches and tracking word search solutions. Five word search sequences are discussed here in more detail. The first four are from the same interaction, which took place November 16, 2007, while episode 5.1.1, including excerpts a, b, c, d, and e comes from an interaction that took place five days later.

The analysis will reveal the ways in which learners negotiate and reinforce their expertise during the word searches, processes that are part of language learning in interaction. It also discusses tools such as an online dictionary and the textbook as resources accessed to resolve the word search and to back up the speaker's authority. I address how learners reclaim their expertise after the word search and the means that they use to re-establish their language expertise. With episode 5.1.5, I want to show how learners conduct a series of interactional practices using the German word *dick* across different speech events (e.g. when working on-task or chatting off-task) and how such practices relate to language learning.

The analysis of episode 5.1.1 supports the argument that orientation to language expertise in peer interactions does not occur straightforwardly but may involve negotiation of the candidate word. I also argue that the negotiation of the expertise may create opportunities for learning German, whereby disagreement is a technique that plays an important role in learning processes during interaction.

The analysis of the activity of group 1 indicated that Rut, Lea and Sam use the activity histories from class activities as resources to compose the script for the role-play. Episode 5.1.1 shows learners working on a scene which models what happened to them on the first day of the German language class. The scene involves two students (Sam and Lea) meeting

on the first day of classes and chatting during class time. The teacher (Rut) gets upset and wants the students to sit separately. Students are searching for a lexical item to put in words of the teacher's character.

Episode 5.1.1.

1 Sam: I have had enough up to here but say
2 [in gerhman
3 Rut: [okay hm (2.0) how would you say enough actually ((gaze to
4 Sam))
5 Sam: **genug-**
6 Rut: <<**genug-**>imitates Sam's pronunciation> (.) NO::
7 Sam: [**genug** is enough
8 Rut: [enough is **genug?**
9 Sam: **GENUG** is enough
10 Rut: okay **genug**. (.) <acting<du set=setzen sie:: bitte her
11 und (.) sie setzen sie hier> kind of like
12 separate
13 Lea: hm okay

In lines 1-2, Sam offers a prompt for Rut's character in English, probably assuming that she does know the German equivalent for the English words. In responding, Rut immediately hesitates by a two-second pause, which is, from an interactional point of view, quite long. This pause indicates the initiation of a word search and may be an observable feature of her "doing thinking" (Brouwer, 2003, p. 540). Neither Sam nor Lea come to her aid at this point, which is evidence for the preference of self-correction to work in learner interaction as well. Rut then explicitly requests Sam's help through the word search marker *How would you say enough actually* in line 3. Through this question and her glance at Sam, Rut demonstrates her orientation to Sam's expertise with regard to the missing item *enough*.

Sam offers a correct German candidate in line 5 and, with it, confirms his expertise in this case. Rut, rather than accepting this candidate, raises doubt in line 6. She repeats the German word with Sam's intonation, which is followed by a stressed *NO* in the same turn. By imitating Sam's word, Rut shows detailed attention not only to the linguistic form of the word but also to its prosodic qualities. As part of a learning effort, Rut seems to use repetition to

evaluate the ongoing word search. It has been found that other-repetition is a common resource for learning as grounded in the structure of participation in social activities (e.g. Pirainen-Marsh & Taino, 2009). As has been shown by research in conversation analysis (e.g. Schwitalla 2002), verbatim repetitions are also an interactional mechanism to index disagreement. Therefore, the interactional reason for this repetition can be seen in the negotiation of expert roles: Rut disagrees with Sam's suggestion and implicitly denies him the linguistic expert role. Thus, while the interactional function of the repetition is to index disagreement, it may contribute to learning at the same time.

It has been argued that disagreement turns may function as an invitation for the recipient (in our case Sam) to complete the search (Lerner, 1996; Kurhila, 2006). The disagreement also plays a crucial role in learning because it re-initiates the focus on the target word. It has also been proposed that an individual's engagement in problem solving creates conditions for learning (Y. Engeström, 1999) and possibly development (Rogoff, 1990). Thus, Rut's active engagement in this search, through deliberate attention to this word, may increase noticing and lead to learning. Thus, while Rut is questioning Sam's expertise, she also initiates the negotiation about expertise, through which a learning opportunity is created.

Instead of providing an alternative candidate word after being challenged by Rut,⁵³ Sam repeats *genug* in line 7, thus insisting on its correctness and his expertise. Rut challenges Sam's expertise again through her question in line 8, also providing her with another opportunity to repeat the target word. Sam then asserts his authority through increased volume when repeating the target word again in line 9, through which he re-claims his expertise, reacts to Rut's doubt, and expresses his impatience, thus suggesting that they end the word

⁵³ Alternatively, Sam could have repaired his candidate, i.e. provided another solution, as is commonly done after being challenged by a repair initiation like Rut's in line 6 (cf. excerpt II in Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2005, p.10).

search and accept his candidate word. Rut, indeed, resolves the word search in line 10, when she finally accepts Sam's candidate word through the affirmative token *okay* and uptakes it through the repetition of *genug* with falling intonation. When Rut continues her turn in line 10, she demonstrates uptake of the word *genug* by integrating it into a new German sentence, which can be seen as evidence of learning (cf. Nation, 2001; Brouwer, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 2007b).

While Rut and Sam are fully engaged in the word search, the third interactant, Lea, appears inactive. It is not clear whether she attends to the search by listening and how much learning has resulted for her. She only joins the interaction as a speaker in line 13 after the word search sequence is finished and the conversation turns to her character role again. This is the case to which Markee (2000, 2009) refers as the limitation of CA; it is impossible to illuminate language learning behaviour since the interaction provides no evidence.

For Rut perhaps more than for Sam, the active negotiation over expertise through disagreement and re-assertion appears to play an important role in learning German. Through this interactionally accomplished work, Rut pays particular attention to the search item. The resulting increase in noticing is considered a condition for learning (Nation, 2001; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009). Perhaps more importantly, however, the negotiation over expertise serves as a way for Rut to develop her own stance until she is ready to accept and uptake the search item, which seems a condition for learning to occur. Thus, Rut's acceptance of the word is preceded by her involvement, through which she develops her own stance as part of the learning process. Sam, however, plays an important role in this process. Through his participation he stimulates learning processes by Rut, so that it can be said that Rut's learning of *genug* in this episode is other-mediated.

The analysis of episode 5.1.1 has shown that, unlike conversations between native speakers and non-native speakers (cf. Kurhila, p. 96), the students in this study do not automatically treat the speaker who offers a solution for the search as the more knowledgeable participant. It also appears that the word search in episode 5.1.1 is different from teacher-learner interactions in the way participants treat each other as expert and novice. In teacher-learner interactions, the relationship between expert and novice has been described as largely institutionally determined.⁵⁴

In the peer interaction observed here, the negotiation of the candidate word simultaneously represents a struggle for the position of the more knowledgeable participant, a result which would be unlikely to occur either in teacher-learner talk or in interactions between native and non-native speakers. In contrast, the learners here do interactive work related to the struggle over expertise prior to the acceptance of the candidate word. This negotiation of expertise appears to be necessary for them to make knowledge suggested by another student part of their own learning process. In doing so, they create their own conditions for knowledge building in the L2, that is, the “learners actively engage in construing the terms and conditions for their own learning” (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001, p. 145-146). Another conclusion of episode 5.1.1 is that building in the German role-play activity history can allow space for building the knowledge of the L2.

Analysis of the exchange in episode 5.1.2, from the same meeting, further shows how displayed expertise along with a candidate word is not easily accepted and the affect the relationships in the interaction. It also reveals that the use of the tool (online dictionary) is a driving factor behind this word search and learning of German (cf. Mori & Hasegawa, 2009).

⁵⁴ Cf. Hawkins (2007) who describes but criticizes this traditional view.

The search centers on selecting the correct German word for a section title in the role-play outline,⁵⁵ rather than words spoken by the characters.

Episode 5.1.2.

1 Sam: <<while typing, lower voice> story>
 2 Lea: hm
 3 Rut: lets just do like chapters like the outline?
 shifts gaze to Sam and then monitor
 4 Lea: that's a STORY and not (stor:::y)
 shifts gaze from monitor to Sam
 5 Rut: COM o:::::n what are you guys ()=can I write ((to Sam))
 6 Lea: yeah (.) [me too
 7 Sam: [i am already doing it
 while looking at the monitor
 8 Rut: **geschichte**
 9 Sam: **gesichte** OH IS it **gesichte=geschichte?** which one is (.)one
 10 of them is FACE and one of the Story
 coils her eyes up
 11 Rut: hm.
 12 Lea: ha
 coils her eyes up while looking at the monitor
 13 Rut: whatever (1.0) story=s (1.0) <<quietly>oh>
 14 Sam: ((types)) **geschichte** is story
 15 Rut: I told you **geschichte** (.) AH:: but you don't listen
 16 [to me brief look at Rut with a smile face
 17 Sam: [I didn't not BELIEve you i've just CHECKed
 18 Rut: ((rises her eye brows, looks down, and slightly turns away from Sam))
 19 Lea: anyhow
 20 Rut: anyway (1.0) I write the outline (.) how to say class
 21 being ()

While Sam is typing the word *story* on his laptop, Rut and Lea are following his writing on the monitor. In line 4, Lea notices a spelling error in the English word *story* and corrects Sam. In lines 5-6, Rut and Lea express their impatience with the writing process, both

⁵⁵ The data available include a copy of the script that participants used for rehearsals as a written version of the role-play. This availability enhances the interpretation of this word search sequence.

volunteering in different turns to take over the role of the group writer from Sam. Sam, however, asserts his authority, continuing this role in line 7. While Sam seems to launch a search in an online dictionary, Rut offers the German word for English *story* in line 8: *geschichte*. With this, she demonstrates her expertise in German.

In line 9, rather than accepting Rut's candidate, however, Sam seems to ignore her suggestion by providing a similar sounding word of his own: *gesichte*. In this way, he is claiming his expertise in German. However, after sounding out this (wrong) candidate, he questions himself and his thought process through *oh*, which, as a discourse marker (Schiffrin, 1987), reflects a change of state in the speaker. With regard to learning, *oh* can be considered as an observable feature of psychological conditions encouraging learning (cf. Nation, 2001; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009). When applied to the case here, *oh* marks part of Sam's learning process, which results from the arguing over his and Rut's candidate and, with it, her expertise. He seems to have heard the candidate offered by Rut, even though he does not accept it as the end of the word search.

Similar to Rut in episode 5.1.1, Sam seems to require additional interactional work to find his stance before he is ready to close this word search. In line 9, he continues this interactional work by appealing for the help of all interactants, including Rut, through the two explicit word search markers *Is it...* and *Which one is....*. This appeal suggests that the non-acceptance of Rut's candidate may have had less to do with denying Rut's authority than with Sam's developing his own stance towards the candidate word as seen in extending the search. The interactional work (for Sam, it is also negotiation of the candidate) is a necessary step to find the stance, which seems to be a condition for learning to occur.

As lines 11-12 show, neither Rut nor Lea are eager to continue the search. Through

whatever in line 13, Rut indicates her frustration that Sam did not accept her candidate word. Her response may also serve to camouflage her insecurity about the right answer, since, in contrast to Sam in episode 5.1.1, Rut here does not insist on her authority in regard to the German word that she provided in line 8. Rather, in line 13, she repeats the English word *story*, thus suggesting a solution for their outline and an end to the word search.

Sam reads Rut's and Lea's demonstrated actions as signs that they do not want to collaborate further with him in the word search. As a result, he turns to the online dictionary. Rut's *oh* in line 13 may be a sign of recognition of this new turn of events as different from her own perception of how they would proceed.

In line 14, Sam announces that the correct word he found in the online-dictionary is *geschichte*. He implicitly confirms the accuracy of the candidate that Rut suggested earlier in line 8. Rut takes it as the opportunity to re-claim her expertise in line 15 (*I told you geschichte*). Through *you don't listen to me* she refers to the fact that Sam did not immediately accept her candidate word from line 8. Thus, she calls on the sequential structure of their interaction as evidence that Sam has ignored her expertise. While she formulates this as a matter of not listening rather than non-trust or non-belief, Sam reformulates her statement in terms of belief, thus making this an issue of negotiating a candidate as part of the language learning process. By adding *I've just checked* and smiling at Rut, he provides an account of his on-line search as looking for additional authority rather than questioning her expertise. This account functions as an apology for not having accepted her suggestion.

Through her gesture in line 18, Rut indicates that she accepts the apology and considers their interpersonal working relationship as in balance again. Lea, through *anyhow* (line 19) and Rut, through *anyway* (line 20), demonstrate that they consider the word search

as finished and are ready to move on. Rut now asserts that she wants to take over the role of the writer, which Sam grants her.

To sum up episode 5.1.2, the negotiation over linguistic expertise is part of and leads to the extension of the search. As in episode 5.1.1 the expertise of another student is not easily accepted, and another authority is employed: the online dictionary. The trust in this authority leads to solving the search but also raises an interpersonal conflict around the mistrust in displayed student expertise. Therefore, in addition to solving the word search, the interpersonal relationship affected by the struggle over expertise has to be re-established at the same time. In terms of learning opportunities, two factors play a central role. First, finding his stance through the negotiation of the candidate may be a part of learning for Sam. Second, Sam uses an online dictionary to extend the search and mediate his actions. The search-solving processes cannot be understood apart from the tool that is in Sam's hand. Moreover, it is through the tool (online dictionary) that he develops his effective new understanding of which candidate is correct (i.e. learning). For this reason, when looking at learning through word searches, one must look beyond individual knowledge in German and the ability to collaborate. The tools that learners use, and that shape their learning are just as important.

In the next episode, the search is for the English word *store* or *shop* while students are translating the English phrase *In Bubble-tea shop* into German as *Im Tee Laden*. My argument is that the division of labour in word search organization relates to the competition for the expertise between Sam and Rut. The competition again involves negotiation of the candidate, whereby an online dictionary and the textbook serve as competing tools to back up their authority. Additionally, the analysis also provides insights into how word search and task management are linked.

Episode 5.1.3.

1 Rut: are we (.) in the bubble teashop, (1.0) bubble teashop (.)
should we=

Sam shifts gaze from monitor to Rut and back, Lea plays with chocolate

2 (1.0)
3 Rut: **I S T das** bubble [tee=
4 Sam: [how do you say SHOp ((points at the
monitor))
5 Rut: shopey ((reaches out for the textbook))
6 Lea: (h)shop(h)ey
7 Sam: <<very quietly>store.> ((starts typing in the laptop))
8 Rut: w::: (wait) (1.0) let's see (.) <<quietly<shop> ((starts
searching in the book))
9 Sam: store look for store
10 Rut: <<quietly<store()>>
11 Sam: ((looks closer into monitor)) **SPEICHER** ha
12 Rut: ((rises her eyebrow and continues searching))
13 Lea: ((moves closer to Sam and looks at the monitor))
14 (2.0)
15 Rut: <<quietly<store store store store store>
16 [I look for STOrE
17 Sam: [in ()**spacher** (1.0) **speicher**. we can always CHANGE it=
18 Rut: OH YEAH it is (2.0) **GESCHäft**,
19 Sam: ((looks at Rut)) vielleicht
20 Rut: **LADen**,
21 Sam: ((to Lea, both Lea and Sam look what's going on the
22 monitor)) u:: that's fine right,
23 Rut: shop
24 Sam: we can always change it if we need
25 Rut: what kind of shop is this,
26 Sam: okay uhm::: so what are we talking about now ((looks at
Lea))
27 Lea: ((looks at Sam and shrugs her shoulders))
28 Rut: ((looks in the book)) << quietly>shop (.) shop **laden**;>
29 Sam: are you gonna write for a bit? (2.0) are you gonna write
30 for a bit ((to Rut))
31 Rut: yeah () okay so: first me right

In line 1, Rut's question *are we now in the bubble tea shop* invites Sam and Lea to work on the third scene of the role-play: *in the bubble tea shop*. Sam initiates a search in line 4 which indicates that he understands Rut's German utterance in line 3 as unfinished because of the missing word *shop*. By pointing to their script on the computer, he shows Lea and Rut the location of the German word in the script. Rut follows the word search initiative by starting to search in her textbook. She makes clear that she looks for the German translation

for *shop*⁵⁶ (line 5), while Sam announces in line 7, albeit more quietly, that he is looking for *store*. Thus, they divide the labour using two different artifacts (an online dictionary and the textbook), and both take command of their own search, which has a competitive aspect.

In line 8, through *let's see* with the collective pronoun *us*, Rut indicates that she wants Sam and Lea to continue with her search, not Sam's, and she also repeats her search term. Sam, in line 9, does not object but wants to coordinate her word search by telling her to look for *store* instead of *shop*. In line 10, Rut accepts Sam's coordinating effort, abandons her search for *shop* and looks for *store* instead. But Sam also continues with his online search. In line 11, he announces a candidate for his word search: the German word *Speicher*, which is the wrong translation for store in this context.⁵⁷ In this turn, he marks the end of the word search with a triumphant gesture for having found the solution: *ha*. Rut, however, does not say anything, but raises her eye brows and continues searching in the book. Her action indicates two things: first, she does not trust Sam's candidate and therefore his presumed expertise; second, she insists on the search in the textbook and justifies her search through the rule of this activity. Recall the analysis of the system of rules in chapter 4. The task instructions indicate that students should not use a dictionary during this text-composing activity but rather demonstrate what they have mastered in class. Since Rut uses the textbook to orient to the task instructions, she presents herself toward the group as a task expert.

In line 15, Rut stresses the continuation of her search through repeating the search item *store* several times, using it as a place holder to keep her turn while she is searching. Sam, on the other hand, repeats his candidate word but admits the possibility of being wrong (*we can always change it*), through which he also takes a step back from his search online. In

⁵⁶ I take 'shopey' to be a playful alternative for shop, also marked as playful through Lea's turn in line 6 containing laugh particles while she repeats Rut's word creation.

⁵⁷ *Speicher* refers to a container or place holding material (e.g. a granary) rather than a shop.

line 19, Rut finally offers her solution for this word search: *Geschäft*. She stresses the correctness of her candidate word from the textbook through the recognition marker *oh yeah*. Lea does not respond at all. Sam responds by expressing doubt in line 20: *vielleicht* (*perhaps*). It is intriguing that Sam in line 20 raises his doubt in German rather than English. This use of German is marked in the sense that the first rather than the second language is commonly used for task-management (cf. Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005), thus indicating his orientation toward learning German in this activity. Thus, Sam demonstrates his expertise in German, or shows off his German, by using it to negotiate the interaction itself rather than simply translating the role-play dialog.⁵⁸

Taking Sam's doubt to heart, Rut responds by providing another word search candidate: *Laden*. Sam's turn in line 22 may be heard as accepting Rut's suggestion, though it is more likely part of a side-sequence with Lea. Line 24 shows that Rut may have understood Sam's turn in line 22 as a side-sequence, since she acts on his raising doubt by continuing to search but this time she goes back to her initial search of the English word *shop* (cf. line 8) instead of *store*.

While Rut is still searching, Sam, in line 27, treats the word search as finished by suggesting that they get back to the writing of the role play dialog. He does so by trying to get support from Lea (possibly recognizing her importance for alignment), since he only looks at her and not Rut when asking what they should write now. He introduces his turn in line 27 with a device typical for marking topic shifts: *okay* followed by a prolonged *uhm*. Thus, he exerts his authority as the manager of the activity. By pushing the interaction along, as he so

⁵⁸ Recall the discussion about the division of power and structure between participants from the analysis of activity in group 1. Rut and Lea treat Sam as a more knowledgeable German language speaker. Sam's use of the L2 to negotiate the candidate (here on many other occasions, like in off-task talk) which I will discuss in later in this chapter, shows his orientation toward learning the L2. It is interesting that other participants treat such learning behaviour and orientation to the L2 automatically as his expertise in the L2.

often does, an action which can be considered as a concern with time on his part (time economy in the activity, cf. chapter 4). He also avoids admitting that he may have been wrong demanding to look for *store*.

In asserting his authority as task manager over Rut and in trying to make her stop searching, he asks her to be the note-taker in lines 30-31. In terms of the word search process, this request gives her control over the word search item. In taking the role of the note-taker, Rut selects the German word *Laden* (i.e. the word that she provided as the last candidate, and which she found in the book). Incidentally, this word also seems the easiest to pronounce, a fact which may again be a selection criterion. Since students had a chance to exchange the word *Laden* for any other candidate during rehearsals, but they did not. The fact that this word appears in the final script indicates that the textbook may have a greater authority for students than the online dictionary.

This episode shows how students repeat certain patterns in the use of artefacts and the interactional roles. Whereas in the previous episode, students use a laptop to extend the search and mediate their actions, in episode 5.1.3, Sam uses an online dictionary and Rut uses the textbook to solve the search. Such a division of labour in the word search gives rise to competition between Sam and Rut, therefore increasing the complexity of negotiating the expertise and negotiating the candidate word, and thereby increasing the degree of noticing.

Sam uses the computer and Rut the textbook as tools in mediating the word search as well as the tool to project their expertise: Sam as an authority in using the online dictionary and Rut as a task-instructions follower. In the end, however, students seem to trust the candidate from the textbook more than the one from the online dictionary.

While it is difficult to see individual learning in episode 5.1.3, the word search

certainly provides learning opportunities. They can be seen again in Sam's and Rut's negotiating expertise by providing different candidates and evaluating how these candidates match the context. Further, the negotiation of the candidate makes possible an increased noticing and makes other candidate words in German, in addition to the target word, more memorable for students. Lastly, the task instruction assigning the textbook an authoritative role seems to define which candidate word is more likely to be accepted, and perhaps learned. In this way, the rule about using a particular tool (textbook) shapes learning and influences the resolution of the word search.

As in most other excerpts, Lea is rather passive in the word search, a behaviour which seems to be the common interactional pattern in this triadic interaction. She neither provides any candidates nor confirms the correctness of any. However, she does take on an important role in this interaction and for the outcome of the word search when Sam aligns with her in stepping out of the word search as a side-sequence and continuing with the main interaction. Sam is also able to stop the word search by making himself a task-manager and assigning Rut the job of the note-taker. In that sense, the word search and task management are linked.

In the episode 5.1.4, students are working again on the role-play scene rooted in the activity history of the first day of classes. This time, they are expanding words for teacher's character by the question *Woher kommen Sie?* The word search concerns the question word *woher*. This episode supports the argument that, displaying non-expertise by providing a wrong candidate but then re-claiming the expertise by providing the correct candidate entails the need to mend the status of expert in the word search. For this purpose, participants draw on metalinguistic justifications.

Episode 5.1.4.

1 Sam: wie heißen sie und (.) hm
2 Rut: w=**woher** kommen [sie
3 Sam: **[woher** kommen sie **aus?**
4 (2.0)
5 Rut: **wohin** kommen=
6 Lea: okay () [we have to use vocab from like
7 Sam: [is that **WOHIn** or **woher**,
8 Rut: **wohin** ((to Sam))
9 Lea: now
10 Sam: **wohin?**
11 Lea: because there [are all from like class
12 Sam: [isn't it wo kommen wo wo k=wo kom wo kommst du
13 Rut: <quiete to Sam<**woher** kommst d=>
14 Sam: **WOHER woher** kommen sie
15 Rut: yeah
16 Sam: is=is it **woher?**
17 Rut: yeah **woher**
18 Sam: why?
19 Rut: don't you remember [do you remember=
20 Sam: [from=why is it
21 Rut: I DOn't kno::w
22 (2.0)
23 Sam: ((shifts gaze toward computer and starts typing)) **woher**
24 [kommen sie **aus**
25 Lea: [from where do you come from.
26 Sam: yeah
27 Lea: hm
28 Sam: <<acting>ich heiÙe isolda> (1.0) und (1.0) ich

Rut adds to Sam's *wie heißen sie* a further question *woher kommen sie* line 2, which Sam repeats after Rut in line 3, but adds a separable prefix *aus*. By stressing *aus* with rising intonation in the sentence, Sam initiates the search of to answer the question of whether or not *aus* is required at the end of the question-phrase and, in this way, admits the possibility of being wrong. At the same time he demonstrates his orientation to Rut's language expertise. The 2 seconds-long pause (in line 4) reveals that learners are in the process of thinking (cf. Brouwer, 2003), perhaps searching for the answer because none of the participants come up with a spontaneous response. Finally in line 5, Rut starts her turn with *wohin kommen* but being uncertain about whether or not she needs *aus* at the end of the question, she abandons her suggestion. In this way, Rut displays her non-expertise in L2.

Taking Rut's interchangeable use of the question word *woher* and then *wohin* as a difficulty with speaking, Sam initiates a word search through *is that wohin or woher* in line 7. Sam's initiative indicates two things. Besides admitting his lack of knowledge in German, more importantly, he orients towards Rut's language expertise again, a second time (cf. line 3). Furthermore, Rut's response *wohin* to Sam's question in line 7 is wrong, a mistake which Sam seems to sense because he questions it in line 10. Thus, Rut, whom Sam treats as a language expert, displays her non-expertise a second time.

Because of the doubts about Rut's knowledge, Sam initiates a negotiation of the candidate in line 12, which starts as a question *isn't it...*, but his candidate *wo* is also wrong. Rut offers the correct candidate *woher* in line 13; however, she produces it more quietly.

The reason for Rut's lower voice is not her uncertainty about the candidate. On the contrary, she knew the correct answer already in line 2. Within and through interaction, Rut builds her assumptions and stance towards her own knowledge about *woher* by means of the search for *aus* and then the negotiation of *wohin*. The low volume offer of the correct answer is rather because of her display of non-expertise in the previous turns and the fact that she feels intimidated by Sam's expertise, whom she considers as a highly competent German language learner (cf. chapter 4). Rut possibly interprets his orientation toward her language expertise as worth learning from for somebody like him, who is an established expert in German. This interpretation puts such a pressure on Rut, that she steps back from claiming her expertise in German by lowering the volume of *woher* in line 13, although still providing Sam with a candidate. Her reaction indicates that the relationship between expert and novice is such more complex than the simple dichotomy between knowing and non-knowing. Thus, when a search develops into a tense situation, the learner may provide the solution but step

back from claiming expertise.

It is possible that Sam understands Rut's need to find a stance toward her candidate. Despite Rut's display of non-expertise in previous turns, Sam accepts her candidates, and even more, he takes them for his own learning twice in line 14. First, he repeats her candidate and stresses its correctness through a high volume that indicates at the same time his change of stance. Sam seems to use repetition as a part of learning effort because, through the repetition, he evaluates the candidate in his own speech. When Sam continues his turn in line 14, he uses *woher* a second time. But this time he demonstrates uptake of the word *woher* by accomplishing a more complex work: building *woher* into a German question-sentence *woher kommen sie*, a practice that contributes to learning (cf. Nation, 2001; Brouwer, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 2007b).

To associate expertise with someone who provides a correct solution and to consider as a novice someone who learns from this solution may not be the right way to see things here. Rut steps back from claiming expertise (line 13), but Sam still uses her solution for learning, even though he seems to be fairly uncertain. In the follow up in line 16, Sam requests a confirmation from Rut; however, he is not satisfied with it because he asks her to explain why it is *woher* and not *wohin*, which means that he accepts her solution but that, to find his stance towards her solution, he needs a metalinguistic explanation, as he requests in lines 18.

Rut's attempt to reiterate Sam's memory and back up her authority by reference to the shared learning history in line 19 fails because in line 20, Sam re-launches his question. Unable to provide Sam with a metalinguistic explanation, Rut is annoyed by being peppered by Sam's questions and being pushed to publicly declare her non-expertise again. She

displays this annoyance by saying *I DOn't kno::w* in a high volume and prolonging the verb at the end and, in doing so closes the word search. Eventually, Sam starts typing the question on the laptop (line 23-24). Re-establishing the expertise seems to entail the need to show more knowledge about the candidate, perhaps through metalinguistic elaboration, than simply an announcement of the correct word.

As has been shown, Sam and Rut are actively involved in interactive work of negotiating expertise and the candidate word, practices that generate learning opportunities. These practices seem to have a mediating function because, by negotiating the candidates and evaluating them, they discover that they need to find a stance toward Rut's solution *woher*. This discovery is an essential pre-condition for learning since it makes students aware of something they need to find out about the target language (cf. Swain, 1997⁵⁹).

Lea through taking the role of a bystander in this search shows her involvement by attending to the other two interactants' doing by inviting them to take into account the rule about the vocabulary (lines 6 and 11). The task instructions advise the use of familiar vocabulary. Knowing this rule gives her a possibility to engage in the search as an activity coordinator, whereby she exhibits her expertise about the task instructions. She uses it as an interactional mechanism to maintain her member status in the group work. Also in line 25, she displays her orientation toward the ongoing search by adding *from where do you come from* as an equivalent for Sam's wrong suggestion *woher kommen sie aus* in German, which allows her to engage in the process of finalizing the search. Although Lea's version is incorrect, it provides the interactional reason, namely to be heard and responded to, in this case through Sam's confirmative *yeah* (line 26). In terms of learning, her behaviour does not

⁵⁹ Swain (1997) discusses the aspect of knowledge gap in the context of pushed output. Her argument is that learner's awareness of the knowledge gap in L2 represents a crucial moment for further linguistic development.

provide evidence for learning as directly observable through her talk. Nonetheless, Lea may learn from this word search by simply following Rut and Sam's search and negotiating expertise (cf. Markee, 2000, 2009).

This episode reveals that the negotiation for the correct candidate and the expertise in the word search entail interactional work with opportunities for learning. Thus students' involvement in interactional work dealing with and finding solutions for language problems may configure the interactional conditions for L2 development (cf. Pekarek Doehler, 2002). Through the word searches, learners create spaces in which participants can determine what needs to be tackled for learning (cf. Vygotsky's ZPD, 2008). However, compared to Vygotsky's ZPD, in which learning is guided by a mediator, who is usually a teacher, a native speaker, or more knowledgeable peer, episode 5.1.4 provides a different picture. Namely, it illuminates the ways learners mutually create conditions to develop, whereby the non-knower may mediate the knower's learning.

In the next section, I draw on a longitudinal approach (Markee, 2008) to track participants' uses of the word search solutions from one word search. This episode represents those cases identified in the data, in which participants search for a word and then after the word search, re-use it to accomplish different interactional practices both on-task and off-task. I chose this episode for the analysis because it has the highest number of uses of the target-word and provides the broadest variety of different types of talk in which students produce it.

Episode 5.1.5 consists of five excerpts a, b, c, d, e selected from the lengthy stretch of talk on November 21 in 2007. The excerpts are presented for the analysis in the same sequence as they occur in the transcript. The interaction takes place during the second meeting but on the same day. The search concerns the German adjective *dick* (*thick* in

English). The adjective is a part of Lea's character words in the scene *On the first date in a restaurant*. Here the waitress (Rut) takes an order from the student couple (Sam and Lea).

I begin the analysis with the investigation of a word search, and then track the word search solution across different speech events. The analysis is presented in support of the argument that the word search solution closes the word search, but it does not necessarily bring learning to the end. In fact, I will show first, that learners' orientation to the class community when designing the role-play is linked to learning through the word search. After the completion of the search, the word search solution becomes a resource for further learning to produce this item in different types of interactions, such as comical behaviour, task-management, salvaging of the position of a good language learner, and teasing talk.

With the first excerpt 5.1.5a, the analysis establishes that the initiation of the word search originates in learners' orientation to the class community (classmates and the teacher) which, as found in the analysis of the activity system (chapter 4), represents a core factor behind the object construction. The analysis of excerpt 5.1.5a provides insights into how orientation to the class community and learning German in interaction are linked.

Excerpt 5.1.5a

1 Rut: ((looks on the monitor)) what's **dicke**,
2 Sam: [it's (all)]
3 Lea: [FINE then (it has to be/somebody) else ((to Sam))]
4 Sam: ((looks on the monitor)) eine grosse leckere **dicke** wurst ha
5 Lea: ((punches Sam's arm)) <<very quietly>>don't read it>
6 Sam: ((smiles looking at Lea))
7 Rut: what's **dicke** ((shifts gaze from computer and looks at Sam
8 and Lea)) what's **di**=what's=what is the second word there
9 (1.0) what does it mean
10 Sam: tasty ha
11 Rut: really? (.) **dicke** means (.) tasty
12 Sam: NO **dicke** means thick
13 Lea: uh sí=sí=sí it was some(h)thing ()hahaha
(yes yes yes)
14 Sam: ha

15 Rut: I thought it was something else
 16 Lea: haha

pointing at the monitor

17 Sam: that means thick [that means tasty
 18 Lea: [hm ()
 19 Rut: OH THI:CK
 20 Lea: mhm
 21 Sam: yeah THICK
 22 Rut: I thought you said di(h)= haha
 23 Sam: NO(h) haha
 24 Rut: which () [not good
 25 Sam: [that's=that's THICK (.) and this
 26 Lea: ha
 27 Sam: that's ta[sty and
 28 Rut: [tasty
 29 Sam: and that's big
 30 Rut: yeah I know
 31 Sam: so [big () ha
 32 Lea: [() ((Spanish))

In line 1, Rut initiates the search for the German word *dick* through the marker *what's dicke*. She sees this word in the context of the phrase *eine grosse leckere dicke wurst* which Sam then reads aloud from the monitor in line 4. Since Sam is in control of the computer it is he, who authors and types in the phrase. Rut does not know the meaning of the German word *dick*, but possibly associates it with the vulgar connotation of *dick* in English. Given that the German adjective *dick* (*thick*) has the same form as the English vulgar word *dick* (penis), Rut's interest in this word is driven not solely by her orientation to fill the knowledge gap. She associates *dick* with vulgar language, which would be inappropriate to use in the role-play. Therefore, Rut wants to find out its meaning, as a result of her orientation toward the audience, which involves the group adjusting the characters' words to conform to the publicly acceptable L2, thus meeting its expectations.

Sam's turn in line 4 may be heard as orienting toward Rut's call for help, because he interrupts the side-sequence with Lea (lines 2-3) to read aloud the whole phrase from the monitor. Sam is aware of Rut's associations with this word. His smiling face in response to

Lea's coordinating request suggests this awareness (line 6). Since Lea knows the meaning of the German word *dick*, which is also evident through her confirmation and laugh in line 13, but does not tell it, Rut must have sensed that there is something intriguing about this word. She acts on Sam and Lea's smiling faces by continuing to search but this time she requests the search for *dick* five times in a one turn (lines 7-9). Rut's turns in lines 15, 22, and 24 indicate that she is thinking of the vulgar meaning of *dick* in English and wants to know what it means in German to see if this word would be appropriate in a class presentation. Finally, Sam resolves Rut's struggle by explaining the meaning for the German word *dick* in line 17.

With a stressed *OH*, Rut displays the receipt of the English candidate *thick* (cf. Schiffrin, 1987; Schegloff, 2007). The particle *oh* is also known to mark the speaker's strong emotional state (Schiffrin, 1987), and according to Heritage, it can indicate that the producer has undergone change in her current state of knowledge (quoted in Schegloff, 2007, p. 118). In repair sequences, *oh* is usually followed by the repetition or confirmation of the information sought (Schegloff, 2007). When applied to Rut's case, she is somewhat surprised to find out that the form of the regular German *dick* (thick) coincides exactly with the vulgar English form *dick* (penis). Thus, *oh* followed by a stressed and stretched repetition of *thick*, indicate the change in Rut from non-knowing to now-knowing the meaning of *dick*, which can be seen as evidence for learning. Rut uses the repetition of the word search solution *thick* as an interactional mechanism to index the acknowledgement of Sam's solution. Sam's responses in lines 21 and 25 confirm the correctness of the candidate word and bring the search to an end.

Thus, for Rut, orientating toward the class community when composing the role-play involves an active search for the meaning of German *dick* that she needs for her assessment if

it matches the expectation of the audience. The search provides Rut with possibilities to engage in re-evaluation of its English form and the German meaning; this re-evaluation appears to play an important role in her learning processes. Rut's interest in this word increases as the search proceeds because Lea and Sam organise it in an intriguing way, so this interactive work increases noticing of the form and the meaning, which is considered a condition for learning (Nation, 2001; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009).

For Rut, the learning of *dick* continues as the next excerpt 5.1.5b shows. She is discovering to use it in a new contextual configuration, namely to indicate comical behaviour in an off-task talk. Excerpt 5.1.5b is from the same conversation, but about 80 lines later. Here, Sam involves Rut in the kind of playful conversation that has been frequently observed in this group.⁶⁰ I take this exchange as off-task because the goal of students' actions is to practice their German in the context of comical behaviour, a goal which is not directly linked to the task but becomes part of the object construction in this activity.

Excerpt 5.1.5b

```
112 Sam: hm ((points for Rut at the monitor)) (2.0)
113 Rut: sure
114 Sam: haha
115 Rut: haha ((Sam and Rut establish mutual gaze)) mei=[haha=
116 Sam: [hahaha
117 Rut: meine wei(h)te dick(h)e hos(h)e stupid words.
```

In line 112, Sam, by pointing out something funny that he sees on the monitor invites Rut to reflect on it. He seems to be trying to engage her in a humorous talk, as his laugh in his next turn (line 114) suggests. In continuation of the mutual alignment established through the Rut's laugh in response and the mutual gaze (line 115), Rut attempts to say something funny

⁶⁰ The transcript contains numerous episodes in which Rut, Lea and Sam tease each other, tell jokes, and play with languages including German (e.g. Episode 5.1.5e). I interpret such behavior as a sign of enjoying the group work, getting along well as a group, as well as organizing the activity and perceiving learning in this activity as a social endeavor.

in German, and, in this way, to contribute to the humorous talk. She starts with *mei=* but cuts the utterance off with a laugh in overlap with Sam's laugh in line 116. In line 117, Rut finally manages to come up with her humorous comment with the adjective *dicke*. In her turn (line 117), she demonstrates her way of using *dick*, which she has just mastered in the phrase *meine weite dicke hose*. Comparing to Rut's word search, she now uses the word but still marking it as uncomfortable through the laughter.

Rut uses German in an off-task exchange, in which she could have used English (i.e. the language that she uses in school as specified in the questionnaire) so she orients toward learning German in this activity and uses opportunities for learning in an off-task talk as well.

Rut employs *dick* again about seventy lines later but in a different way. Excerpt 5.1.5c is the continuation from the same conversation. This time, however, *dick* is used for task-management. The analysis establishes that learning to use a new word can be embedded in the practice of task-management.

Excerpt 5.1.5c

184 Rut: und etwas ZU essen,
185 Sam: ich will ein schnitzel mit brot
186 Lea: und(h) ich(h) will ein große=I AM NOT saying that
187 [whatever=whatever=
188 Rut: [eine(h) **dicke** wurst
189 Lea: whatever
190 Rut: GENAU uhm: ja

Rut, Sam and Lea are rehearsing a part of the role-play to see how much time it will take them to speak the dialog. In this scene, the student couple is in a restaurant and the waitress (Rut) is taking the order. When Lea has to say her words in line 186, she starts, but then cuts them off with the German word *dick* and refuses to continue with saying aloud *dick* because she possibly associates it with the vulgar English word. Acting like a prompter, Rut finishes the part of Lea's phrase, but in a laughing fashion (line 188) which may result from

learning the history of this word after initiating the search by being intrigued with the vulgar English word (excerpts 5.1.5a, and b). In line 190, Rut continues rehearsal with her words to describe waitress' character. Thus, Rut uses *dick* in Lea's character words to coordinate the rehearsal and to measure the length of the role-play. By doing so, she involves herself in the task-management.

On the one hand, Rut's use of *dick* in rehearsal is possibly motivated by the learning history of having fun using it (excerpt 5.1.5a, b). On the other hand by prompting Lea's words, she also demonstrates her orientation to practicing this newly acquired word (cf. excerpt 5.1.5b). In this way, using *dick* for task-management involves learning to use it in a new way as compared to the previous excerpt. By involving herself into task-management, Rut demonstrates her agency as she acts upon the need to re-specify the meaning of German *dick* through producing it during rehearsal. In this way, she discovers her own understanding of *dick* through an interactional resource, which is a condition for learning the ways to use this word in different contexts.

Another case of Rut's use of *dick* is in the next excerpt. With this word, she camouflages the display of her language non-expertise into the word search from excerpt 5.1.5a. The analysis of excerpt 5.1.5d provides insights in how Rut's effort to re-establish the position of a good learner and to use *dick* are linked. This exchange takes place shortly after the rehearsal which I discussed in the previous excerpt.

Excerpt 5.1.5d

220 Sam: we learned all those words anyways (1.0)
((Sam looks at Lea))
221 Lea: yeap
222 (1.0)
223 Sam: you know that
224 (2.0)
225 Rut: no
226 Sam: yeah b=

227 Rut: **dicke dicke**
 228 Sam: yeah we [learned
 229 Rut: [we ()
 230 Sam: **dicke**
 231 Rut: NO
 232 Sam: how much I [have=
 233 Lea: [we DI:D we did [we did
 234 Sam: [how much i embed=how much
 235 Lea: we did
 236 Rut: [WHEN?
 237 Sam: [(i/we) embedded in **dicke**
 238 Rut: it probably erased it from my (.) clean mind
 239 Sam: but clean means thick
 240 Rut: okay
 241 Sam: ha

After Sam provides authoritative knowledge about the vocabulary by appealing to their learning history (line 220) and Lea agrees with him with a *yeah* in line 221, Rut contradicts with a *no* in line 225. While Sam and Lea are not specific about vocabulary, Rut takes their responses as a challenge of her expertise, specifically in the word search for *dick*. Her response indicates that she takes her non-expertise in the word search to heart and is perhaps concerned about Sam and Lea viewing her as a bad language learner.

In line 227, Rut's double repetition of *dicke* in response to Sam's disagreement in line 226 indicates her displayed attempt to reiterate the learning history that Sam and Lea refer to, on the one hand. On the other hand, it indicates her disagreement with Sam and Lea. This disagreement can be understood not only as a claim of expertise of the learning history in class activities, but also as an attempt to justify her knowledge gap during the search. Her behaviour can be read as in this way: she did not know the word, not because she did not study vocabulary but rather because she was not taught this word in class. In this way, the goal of Rut's interactional work is to re-establish herself as a good learner. Her act is also an attempt to camouflage her non-knowing and in turn, her non-expertise in the word search through this justification. Either way, by disagreeing, speakers re-initiate the focus on the word (in Rut's case repeating *dick* in disagreement) and thus contribute to language learning.

Sam and Lea assert their authority of knowing and persist in being correct with their appeal to the learning history in subsequent lines. They indicate that Rut should have known this word, which she did not. They challenge the expertise she claims for the learning history as well. As a result, Rut reacts with another disagreement and projects her doubt about the truthfulness of their argument by means of asking *when* in line 236 because she does not remember when the word was learned. Sam takes her question *when* as another disagreement and not as a request for more information because, instead of answering her question, he provides another disagreement in support of his argument in line 220. Eventually, Rut steps back from her claim in line 238. By blaming her memory (and her decency) for her forgetting, she also withdraws her claim for expertise in learning history.

Thus, the effort to re-establish herself as a good language learner involves for Rut interactional work such as negotiation of the learning history with Sam and Lea through the repetition of *dick*. The use of *dick* serves Rut as a conversational mechanism to display her disagreement with their argument about the learning history. It leads to increased noticing but at the same time to developing understanding of this word as an interactional resource, which can be seen as a part of learning.

Furthermore, the analysis shows two key points. First, participants negotiate their expertise in reference to the earlier display of non-expertise in the word search (which therefore belongs to the history of learning in this activity). So negotiation of expertise in learning history and establishing oneself as a good language learner matter for Rut's learning. Second, to build up arguments to negotiate their different types of expertise, learners draw on an external argumentative thread rooted in the learning history from the wider community (i.e. the community of the German class). For this way, their experiences from activities in the

past assert direct influence over the learning experiences in this interaction. Making such connections between learning histories in the past and the present creates specific opportunities for practicing the lexical item *dick*.

The analysis of tracking the uses of *dick* in the activity of group 1 concludes with excerpt 5.1.5e. In this exchange, Rut, Lea and Sam go off-task, right after the discussion about the learning history of *dick*. I consider this exchange as off-task since the learners abandon the talk on or about task in favour of practicing silly behaviour and joking-talk. This excerpt illustrates how students employ *dick* as an interactional resource to engage each other in a humorous situation as in excerpt 5.1.5b. This time, however, the purpose of using *dick* is to tease the partner.

Excerpt 5.1.5e

243 Rut: I would love (.) you gonna use that (.) THICK
244 Sam: yeah du bist **dicke** haha
245 Rut: i am thick? haha ((pinching sam)) ha you are such a(h)
246 Sam: auf der kauf(h) ((pointing at his head)) auf deine kopf
247 haha
248 Rut: you too::
249 Sam: yeah so:,
250 Rut: yeah
251 Sam: i accept it (.) you deny on(h)e
252 Rut: who learn(h)ned this (deny) haha
253 Sam: haha ok(h)ay

In line 243, Rut goes off-task by initiating a teasing talk. Instead of using the German word *dick*, she stresses *thick*, by which she avoids using *dick* which may still have sexual connotations for her. Sam catches on to the tease and takes it as an invitation to go off-task. He contributes to the humorous situation with a German phrase *du bist dicke* accompanied with laughter (line 244), a reaction which shows his orientation to Rut's teasing talk. Thus, both participants seem to be engaged in the reciprocal reinforcement joking talk by means of the exchange of teasing remarks. Sam, however, through the use of German, shows his

orientation not only to having fun, but simultaneously to building up his knowledge of the L2. Hence, Sam uses off-task exchange as an opportunity to practice *dick* in the context of the German teasing talk.

Moreover, Sam's referred response is provocative because it contains the pronoun of address *du*, which points at the addressee. His response can be seen as a longing for Rut's reaction to his tease in German. Rut responds with a surprising *I am thick?*, and then laughing and pinching Sam. Her reaction shows her knowledge of the English equivalent of *dick*, and her understanding of Sam's use of it. She seems to take it as a phrase aimed to make a joke and to laugh at her in order to have fun by embarrassing her, but in a friendly way.

In his turn (line 224-225), Sam continues this talk by building up his teasing phrase with *auf der kauf*, which is incomprehensible. Possibly because of being uncertain about the correctness and comprehensibility of this phrase, Sam prepositions the gesture by pointing to his head his second attempt and replying with the repaired *auf deine kopf*, which is still wrong but comprehensible meaning *in your head*. The gesture, the speech perturbation and the repair can be seen as markers for learning how to say the phrase. His delivery of the more comprehensible second version of his phrase suggest the change in Sam's cognitive state (i.e. learning to integrate *dick* in his own speech for the purpose of teasing Rut). It confirms what Sam makes of this off-task talk, namely an opportunity to practice the adjective in a fun way.

However, learning seems to involve for Sam more than just uttering a teasing remark in German. By giving Rut the visual cue of what he is going to say, he ensures Rut's comprehension of his words and, in this way, tries to solicit Rut's participation in it and her reaction. Her response with a stretched *you too* indicates that she takes it as a humorous exchange and responds by teasing him back. Sam's response *yeah so* signals the closure of the

teasing talk. Through fellow-student's reaction, Sam re-evaluates his own understanding of *dick*, a process that entails learning. Based on these indications, Rut's participation in this talk is crucial for Sam because it mediates his learning of the pragmatic meaning of this word.

After the teasing talk, students continue the joking talk a few lines after (249 – 252) in English. It can be described as repair work to salvage their relationship in a playful way, because teasing talk may have lead to misunderstanding and a conflict situation. Line 253 consists of laughter and the sequence-closing *okay* (Schegloff, 2007, p. 141) with a laughing face, which mark a happy end of the excerpt. Such interactional work indicates the social nature of learning. It is a process in which the interpersonal relationships of participants also matter.

While it is difficult to see Rut's learning in excerpts 5.1.5e, Sam's use of German in this exchange can be seen as learning. Although Rut does not speak any German, she is keeping up and actively contributing with her teasing remarks. Through her participation, Rut demonstrates her understanding of the ongoing joking talk. Thus, it shows that off-task talk becomes an occasion for learning German by teasing in a friendly way. Rut's reaction to Sam's language use is a part of his learning German. Learning involves not only practising saying the word, but also learning from the interlocutor's reaction whereby interpersonal relationships are of a particular importance.

The analysis has shown that when dealing with language problems, learners engage in different types of talk aimed at task-management, negotiation of expertise, salvation of expertise, comical behaviour, and teasing talk. Students' participation in these talks leads to the social accomplishment of interactional opportunities for learning German. The analysis of

episode 5.1.5, using a longitudinal approach, provides evidence that the initial word search can trigger learning processes that continue after the word search ends. Participants demonstrate that they learn to produce a word not only in a particular context of a word search, but the analysis provides insights into the ways how such a word may be produced by the same speaker in different types of talk. In addition, word searches and the uses of the word search solution are determined when participants engaged in both on-task as well as off-task talks.

Throughout the word searches students repeat certain patterns in the use of tools. They extend the search by using laptops and the textbook in order to solve the language problem. This solution involves division of labour in the word search and eventually gives rise to competition between participants which results from the increased complexity in the negotiation of the candidates, on the one hand. However, on the other hand, it possibly mediates learning of the lexical items under negotiation. Students assert different authority over the tools they use for the word search. Such use of tools triggers the social accomplishment of interactional opportunities for the German language development. Students' assertions about the tools are linked to the instructor's rules for use of learning materials in the task instruction. The rule to use a particular tool (e.g. textbook) defines also which word will be chosen to close the search, and, in turn, the knowledge that students are going to accept.

5.2. Group 2

Like the participants in group 1, Amy and Ira engaged in a number of word search practices within their interactions, some of which are not resolved in front of the camera because of the students' desire to continue them at home. I have discussed in the analysis of

the activity system of group 2 the procedure Amy and Ira used to compose the text of the role-play whereby some parts were written outside of recording sessions. When students met for recordings, they already had drafts for the scenes which they had prepared individually. Such division of labour seems to reflect the fact that students solved a number of searches alone.

This chapter examines in detail two word search sequences and then tracks two word search solutions. The first word search took place on November 20 and the second on November 23 in 2007. The tracking analysis concerns two items found in two word searches which took place on November 20 and November 23.

This chapter discusses how the production of props, which is not generally associated with interactive actions, involves interactional work and creates opportunities for learning German through word searches. It also shows the ways in which a word search with an incorrect solution initiates learning processes that continue in interactional events after the search ends; it further reveals how the relationship between a word search and an activity history, between a word search and division of labour impacts the negotiation of expertise, thus helping to build the knowledge and skills of the L2. Tracking analysis shows how the activity history is a resource to resolve the search and also how it becomes a resource for further learning in different contexts.

As the activity analysis (cf. chapter 4.4) has shown, participants invest a considerable amount of time in the preparation of the props by writing out phrases and words for vegetable and drinks on the cards. The exchange in episode 5.2.1 resolves around the production of the nametags for two shop keeper signs. It represents those cases in which students are producing a prop and dealing with a language problem at the same time. The analysis shows how the production of props and language learning are linked.

The exchange took place in the first group meeting. The word search in episode 5.2.1 concerns the production of the German phrase *Mein Name ist...* (my name is...) which students write on the shopkeeper signs. More specifically, students search for the correct grammatical form of the possessive pronoun *mein* and of the verb *ist*.

This word search is different from other word searches in the sense that the incorrect candidate for the possessive pronoun resolves the search. Episode 5.2.1 provides evidence that the word search initiates a learning process which continues outside of this interaction. The analysis serves to support the argument that, even if the solution is not correct at the time of search, these kinds of word searches still contribute to learning. The analysis also shows that the use of the online dictionary as a tool to expand the search and to back up the authority has significant consequences for L2 development, but does not necessarily make the candidate word more acceptable. I will show that the way learners present their expertise impacts the further organization of the word search.

Episode 5.2.1.

1 Amy: ((thinking face)) hm is my name is in german <<quietly, and
shifts gaze to Ira
 2 eyebrow flashes>**mein name**=> (.)
 3 Ira: ((stops writing and also looks at Amy))
 4 Amy: **ist?** (1.0) like <<quietly>**meine** (.) **name ist**>
 5 Ira: ((looks away and makes thinking face)) <<quiet>**m:::**> [**meine**=
 6 Amy: [because
 7 lik(h)e ha [it (will be)
 8 Ira: [hm **meine**
 9 Amy: at the=at the bottom of tha::t ((points))
 10 Ira: [((looks away with a thinking face)) <<quietly>**meine n=nam**=
 11 ((looks back to Amy))
 12 Amy: [here you always have to wear like a nametag
 13 Ira: <<quietly>right> (.) <<looks down>**mein**=> hm let me look it
 14 up <quietly>because I'm not positive I don't wanna mix it up>
 15 Amy: no (.) that would be most (dispirited)
 16 (5.0) ((Ira is taking notes))
 17 Ira: here we go ((passes a piece of paper to Ira)) (6.0)
 18 Amy: okay
 19 Ira: ((Ira starts typing on her laptop)) my name IS ((points
 20 with her hand, inviting Amy to look at the monitor))

21 Amy: ((looks at the monitor)) WAH(h)t i(h)s () m(h)y midd(ha)le
 22 name? ha
 23 Ira: ha (.) there is that like SAYing (.) is
 ((both are looking at the monitor))
 24 Amy: OH **mei::n** ((points at the monitor)) (2.0) I've really=hm
 25 **mein. name**
 26 Ira: where is that?
 27 Amy: uhm its here (.) what (1.0) <<points>here>
 28 Ira: right there?
 29 Amy: yeah. and [then
 30 Ira: [yeah
 31 Amy: okay.(.) <mumbling>**der name**>
 ((booth are looking at the monitor))
 32 Amy: and then it should just be **ist** right?
 33 Ira: yeah

thinking face

34 Amy: (1.0) or **bin**? ((rises her eyes)) <<very quietly>no:>
 35 Ira: how about= ((starts typing)) (.) hm <reads very quietly>**mein.**>

Looking in the monitor, talking to herself

36 <talks quietly>but maybe **meine**>
 37 Amy: I feel like it would be **meine** because we are girls
 ((Ira continues typing, then pushes the laptop towards Amy, both look
 at the monitor))
 38 Ira: like n=name is just **name**
 39 Amy: mhm
 40 Ira: which is (.) that so: **meine name ist** (.) yeah just say **meine**
 41 **name** (.) because.(1.0)
 42 Amy: and **ist**.
 43 (1.0)

Looks down

44 Ira: **meine name**
 45 Amy: or do you wanna look up **ist**. to be sure
 46 Ira: ((Ira types)) ha
 47 Amy: ((looks at the monitor)) <quietly>**name**>
 ((both look at the monitor, then Amy disengages gaze and starts
 taking notes))
 48 Ira: well they have the hm one part is: (.) the climate is rough
 49 **das klima ist rau**
 50 Amy: haha
 51 Ira: so ha they are using **ist** a lot for is something so (.) just
 52 you know he is bold **er hat eine glatze** but then they u=you
 53 know=I don't know (.) **Ist** seems=to b= it sounds right though
 54 (.) ((looks at Amy)) like **meine name ist**

while writing something in her notes nicks with her head

55 Amy: <quietly>hm> (2.0) ((finishes writing and shows to Ira))
 56 Ira: so how many do we have now?
 57 Amy: three
 58 Ira: okay

At the beginning of the episode, Amy and Ira are browsing their notes. When Ira starts making some notes, Amy gets involved in “doing thinking” (Brouwer, 2003, p. 540) in line 1, a reaction which can be read from her verbal and non-verbal behaviour such as a thinking face, followed by the trouble marker *hm* (Davidson, 1984). The eyebrow flashes can be seen as a silent space holder and show her being deeply engaged in this process (cf. Brouwer, 2003; Mori & Hasegawa, 2009). Amy is searching for a word and invites Ira to join her through her question *is my name is in German* and an eye gaze. By producing the phrase *mein name* in a lower volume immediately after the search marker and cutting off the phrase at the end (line 2), Amy demonstrates her uncertainty in her candidate. Amy is appealing for Ira’s help but has to do some extra work by means of an eye gaze in the pause (line 2). The eye gaze is the observable feature of Amy’s orientation toward Ira’s expertise, but the extra work that she has to do hints at Ira being non-enthusiastic about her being pushed into the role of expert.

Ira follows Amy’s initiative by pausing the writing and establishing a mutual gaze. She does not offer her candidate immediately, a fact which Amy may take as a miscomprehension of her question, and announces the rest of the phrase for her attempted self-repair (i.e. *ist*, which is correct). However, she is still uncertain in her correct phrase (*Mein Name ist...*) that she just finished producing in line 4. Her doubt can be read from the one-second-pause, which may be an observable feature of her thinking. Additionally, the hesitation marker *like* (cf. Park, 2007), the switch to the lower volume, and the replacement of *mein* by the incorrect grammatical form of *meine* suggest that this phrase is a “construction site” for the speaker.

Based on these observations, Amy’s attempts to direct Ira’s attention towards her

trouble area might be due to Ira's being hesitant about her expertise. It leads her, however, to look in her own knowledge. This negotiation results in mastering the phrase on her own in an effective way, even though her knowledge of the grammatical categories of the possessive adjective is still ambivalent, as evident from interchangeable use of *mein* and *meine*. As has been found, acts of verbalization can mediate the speaker's own understanding of the new language (cf. languaging in Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi & Suzuki, 2009, p. 5). When applied to Amy's case, her negotiation of her own knowledge, when explaining to Ira the language problem, may be a part of her own learning process. But this is not all. By seeking Ira's approval, Amy demonstrates that Ira's involvement is necessary for her learning. Ira takes an important role in this interaction when Amy aligns with Ira and needs her as a speaking board to find her own stance towards her knowledge. Thus, on the one hand, Ira's holding back of expertise may initiate learning for Amy. However, on the other hand, explaining the language problem to the partner may lead to language learning by the speaker.

Ira recognizes the ongoing word search endeavour and acts upon it by establishing a mutual gaze with Amy (line 3), but she does not offer her candidate immediately. Her non-vocal behaviour (disengagement of the gaze and the thinking face) in line 5 may be interpreted as "looking" into her own linguistic resources, and thus a challenge to her expertise. She starts producing in a low volume the first sound of the morpheme *mein* (*m:::*) in a pro-longed fashion, but cuts it off, and finally comes up with the whole word *meine* (line 5) in overlap with Amy's next turn. This reaction hints at her struggle with the word in form of private speech,⁶¹ which also indicates thinking processes. Thus, both participants engage each other in the dialogic negotiation of the correct candidate word. Through this negotiation

⁶¹ In sociocultural theory, private speech indicates that the individual is engaged in a cognitively challenging task (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

they discover what they need to find out about the grammatical forms of *mein*, thus paving their way towards learning (cf. Swain, 1997). Poehner (2008) calls such negotiation of dialogic cooperation in teacher-learner interaction *negotiation of mediation* (p. 42). Moreover, although Amy and Ira appear to be unable to solve the search as evident in lines 13 to 15, according to Poehner (2009) an extensive negotiation of support through dialogic cooperation can still facilitate development.

When applied to Amy's and Ira's case, students can be seen as negotiating their expertise by inspecting their own resources and assessing their own candidates when verbalizing them. However, this negotiation should be seen as dialogic cooperation, and searching together rather than competing for the knowledge display. Amy clearly orients toward her expertise, although Ira seems to be quite hesitant in claiming it at the beginning of the search. Being pushed into the expert role, Ira proves to be unable to solve the search on her own. The mediation through mutual support based on interactional resources seems to be exhausted.

In line 13, after two other attempts (in lines 8 and 10) to come up with a solution, Ira extends the search to the use of another mediator (i.e. an online dictionary). Her inspection of the online dictionary can be seen as an attempt to locate the search in an artifact. Possibly in an attempt to disguise her non-expertise, Ira presents the use of a dictionary as a backup for her authority for knowledge, but also as a way to construct her image of a scrupulous learner, someone who *don't wanna mix it up* (line 14).

Beginning from line 19, what Ira accomplishes is establishing two channels of search simultaneously (cf. Mori & Hasegawa, 2009). She consults an online translator as the authoritative source of information and involves Amy in the progress of the search by

verbalizing her action, trying to elicit Amy's involvement in the search.

However, what they find online does not seem to match their expectations. Amy is thrown about the new information she discovers on the monitor (line 24 and 25) as her use of the affective marker *oh* (Heritage, 1984; Schiffrin, 1987), produced with a stress, and the repetition of the candidate indicate. Thus her change of state from believing *meine* is correct to seeing *mein* on the screen may challenge her belief. Ira produces *yeah* in line 30 and shows her awareness of the new information as well.

Lines 37 and 38 show Amy and Ira further negotiating the candidate. While Ira seems to be still uncertain about her knowledge, Amy uses this uncertainty as an opportunity to claim her language expertise through a metalinguistic reflection on the candidate (*would be meine because we are girls*), presenting herself as someone who knows the grammar of German. Amy's reasoning for her (erroneous) assumption seems to prevail over the authority of the online dictionary and to convince Ira to accept the incorrect candidate. Although the correct form is *mein*, *meine* resolves the search (line 40, 41). While Amy and Ira seem to assert the online dictionary as an authoritative source for their knowledge at the beginning of the search, at the end students reject it as a candidate and, therefore, do not accept the mediating assistance from the dictionary.

Based on these observations, Amy and Ira do not blindly trust the information from the online dictionary. This may result from their orientation to the rule advising students not to use dictionary (cf. activity analysis 4.4). Another possible reason may be that because of Amy's grammatical explanation, Ira considers her knowledge as more trustworthy, a belief that has a compelling effect on her. She demonstrates uptake by integrating the wrong candidate in her own speech in lines (40 and 41). Even though students do not accept the

correct solution from the online dictionary, this tool helps them to evaluate and regulate their own associations with *mein* and its grammatical form because, through its use, they come to their own conclusions.

Poehner (2008), who investigates the phenomenon of rejected mediation in L2 instructional context, argues that, despite the outcome (i.e. mistaken rejection of help) the rejected mediation can still indicate development. Regardless of how successful the mediation has been, the researcher sees development in the learners' attempt to perform more autonomously and in the growth of their confidence to the extent that they believe in their ability to regulate their own performance (ibid). Thus, although Amy and Ira's choice is not completely correct, their drive toward greater autonomy indicates their desire to self-regulate their use of German (cf. Poehner, 2008).

From line 4 to line 32, the focus of the search has been on the possessive adjective. In line 32, however, Amy re-launches her invitation to the search for *ist*, which she first initiated at the beginning of the talk (line 4). By seeking Ira's confirmation for *ist*, Amy demonstrates her orientation to her language expertise again. However, Ira's confirmative response *yeah* (line 33) does not satisfy Amy because she negotiates the candidate further in lines 34 and 35. Ira, who continues working on *mein*, does not seem to have oriented toward the search of *ist* yet. After Amy's coordinating advice *do you wanna look up ist* (line 45), through which she seems to claim her expertise in task and information management, Ira finally starts searching in the online dictionary (line 46). In this way, the task-management and word search are linked.

Students negotiate the candidate by means of a collocation search when inspecting the instances of the uses with *ist* online in *das klima ist rau* and *er hat ein glatze* (lines 49, 50 and

53). Students agree on *ist*, which becomes the accepted resolution for their search (line 54, 56, and 57). In contrast to the search for the possessive adjective, this time the learners trust the online source and accept its mediation.

In terms of learning, Ira's repetition in line 53 can be seen as a learning effort. Given that repetitions are a common resource for learning (e.g. Pirainen-Marsh & Taino, 2009), Ira's repetition may also contribute to her learning of the candidate. She seems to use repetition to evaluate her use of the candidate during the negotiation. The same turn contains more evidence for Ira's language learning, this time though uptake. The display of language learning can be seen in her ability to incorporate the candidate *ist* into her own speech by locating this word in the context of the target phrase in line 54, indicating her uptake of this word. Thus, through uptake she seems to develop her own state of knowledge about this word.

However, Ira deploys the lexical item *ist* for the sake of learning only. The reason she deploys *ist* is that she has Amy sitting in front of her and listening to her. She displays her knowledge to achieve interactional success with Amy and to show "interactional affinity" (Firth & Wagner, 2007b, p. 808). The interactional consequence is that Amy does not use *ist* after it has become the solution. We cannot know why she is not using *ist* in her speech and does not demonstrate the upgrading of her knowledge. Nevertheless, using *hm* and nodding with her head in line 55 certainly manifest learning, when viewed in the context of the whole exchange, especially the process of learning initiated by Ira's being hesitant to step into the role of expert at the beginning of the search. Amy has produced the correct answer already in line 4. What she is looking for after line 4 is rather a confirmation of her knowledge, which she finds online. Thus, learning in case of item *ist* occurs through the confirmation of her

knowledge whereby *hm* in line 55 can be seen as an observable feature of her now-knowing-state, i.e. learning.

The video recordings of the role-play presentation show that students use the correct form of *mein* instead of *meine* which is written on the prop-nametag. As it has been found in the analysis of the activity of this group (chapter 4.4) that the division of labour (cf. Figure 4.4.2) includes editing of the final version of the text individually at home, it is possible that *meine* has been corrected between the recordings and performance. Either way, it would have involved deliberate attention and therefore increased noticing of the correct item *mein*. Additionally, knowing that the item has been memorized to be used (correctly) in the presentation of the role-play (cf. analysis of the use of psychological tools in the activity of group 2, chapter 4.4), it can be said that Amy and Ira may have not only memorized this item, but also learned how to use it in the context of a dialog. Thus, the analysis suggests that the word search for the possessive adjective initiates a learning process that continues outside of this interaction and has been carried over in time and space.

Drawing on the analysis of the activity system of this group, the examination of this episode has shown that the production of props, which has been traditionally viewed as being concerned with non-interactional and non-L2-learning related entities, can lead to learning German in interactions. In this group, the production of props is interactionally organized and involves word searches. Next, the negotiation of expertise by Amy and Ira involves the negotiation of mediation and the speakers' own linguistic resources, which possibly result in the participants' development. Although learners treat the online dictionary as an authority, they do not necessarily accept the solution from that source. The way the knowledge is presented (e.g. in a determined way as in Amy's case or in a hesitant

way as in Ira's case) seems to help the resolution of the word search to be accepted. Moreover, the analysis has shown that, even though an incorrect solution resolves the search, such word searches may create opportunities for future learning.

In episode 5.2.2, the participants are working on the first scene, which involves two students coming up with an idea to organize a dinner party. The episode is from the second meeting. As has been found in the analysis of the activity of this group, students expand some rehearsed scenes to match the length of the presentation outlined in the task instructions. This episode represents those cases when the expansion of the rehearsed scene by a phrase leads to word searches. Here, the analysis concerns the search for two lexical items within the phrase *für die Studenten*: the preposition *für* and the definitive article *die*.

The analysis of episode 5.2.2 establishes that the learning history is a core factor not only in object construction (as the analysis of the activity system of group 2 has shown), but also in learning through word searches. The analysis of word searches in group 1 establishes that the use of tools is important along with the learning history of a person. Here, it shows how word search and learning history from activities in the class community are linked, and in which way the use of tools contributes to learning in such searches. Furthermore, the analysis supports the findings from the previous episode and suggests that students repeat certain pattern of organization of the word search.

Episode 5.2.2.

1 Amy: OH and when we say uhm wir sollten: eine deutschparty haben I
2 could be like: hm for **die studenten?** ha
3 Ira: ha okay sure
4 Amy: mhm
5 (3.0)
..... •
29 Ira: because it almost (then) makes sense to=for me to say how
30 about a dinner party for:: for the students.
31 Amy: ((nodding while looking in the textbook)) (.) mhm
32 Ira: I don't know what we are gonna do

33 Amy: sure () uhm (.) [was über eine abendessenparty
 34 Ira: [was über eine abendessenparty
 35 Amy: for **die studenten?**
 36 Ira: yeah
 37 Amy: is that okay with you,
 38 Ira: sure yeah
 39 Amy: okay ((makes notes))

Looking down, thinking face, gaze shift to Amy

40 Ira: uhm::: (2.0) is for not **von?** (.) no its from

Stops writing, looking down, thinking face

41 Amy: hm I don't know I am at page fo(h)ur
 42 ((starts flipping pages of the textbook))
 43 Ira: was über eine abendessenparty::: (2.0) <<very
 44 quietly>**studenten** (.) **von?**
 45 Amy: ((flipping pages of the vocabulary list in the textbook))
 46 OH for is **bevor** ha (4.0) hm::: for **Denn**
 47 Ira: oh (.) okay. (.) was über eine abendessenparty **denn**
 48 **studenten?**
 49 Amy: OH yeah (2.0) **für** it's **FÜR** ha i don't know why they have
 50 **denn** here too ((shows the word in the textbook to Ira))
 51 Ira: oh okay
 52 Amy: yeah
 53 Ira: oh right (.) so **fü:r** ((writes)) okay was über eine
 54 abendessenparty **für** (1.0) uhm (1.0) **der studenten?**
 55 Amy: **die**
 56 Ira: **die studenten?**
 57 Amy: because it's plural there [()
 58 Ira: [right right
 59 Amy: uhm
 60 Ira: <<writes>**stu=den=ten**> is that **studenten** still
 61 <<quietly>**studenten**>

Looking away, thinking face

62 Amy: (1.0) yeah
 63 Ira: okay

While planning a question phrase *for die studenten* (*for the students*) in lines 2, Amy demonstrates her orientation toward Ira's language expertise by raising the intonation at the end of the phrase. Since she marks the preposition through her use of L1, Amy is possibly trying to initiate a search for the equivalent of *for* in German. Line 3 shows that Ira, however, may have understood Amy's turn as a request for her approval regarding the content of the role-play, not a search for a word. As line 3 shows, she does not recognize it as a search

initiation; nor does she in line 36 after Amy's second appeal for her assistance and an attempted initiation of a search in line 35⁶². On the one hand, Amy seems to elicit a response to whether *for die studenten* should be included into the text, as suggested by line 37 (*is that okay with you*). On the other hand, through L1 use she elucidates the problem area (*for*) to the interlocutor. But Ira still does not orient toward Amy's language problem until line 40. In her turn, Ira claims her expertise by asking *is for not von*. Again, however, as observed in episode 5.2.1, she does so in an undetermined and hesitant way. The rising intonation and the denial of her candidate following immediately after the candidate word suggest the possibility of Ira being wrong.

For Ira, this search starts with a negotiation of her linguistic resources. The two pauses as well as her physical conduct of a thinking face and looking down indicate that she is possibly searching her knowledge inventory and trying to retrieve possible candidates. As discussed in the introduction to chapter 5, an explicit word search marker accompanied with the features such as pauses, a shifting gaze and a thinking face are commonly understood as the speaker's invitation for the search, but at the same time as an admission of non-expertise. Here the assumption is not necessarily correct. Through the question, Ira seems to invite Amy to join the negotiation of the lexical items from her linguistic repertoire, while the vocal and non-vocal features suggest that she is inspecting her own resources, demonstrating action which can be seen as the occurrence of learning (cf. Swain, 1997). Similar to episode 5.2.1, where Amy requested Ira's involvement through negotiation and approval of her knowledge, a process which can be important for her own learning, here Ira needs Amy as a sounding board to develop her own stance towards her knowledge. Ira's orientation to learning is evident in

⁶² About 24 lines of a side-sequence in which students discuss some content unrelated to this search are omitted.

line 40, where she locates the preposition *von* into the target phrase in the form of private speech (cf. lower volume, line 43).

However, Amy interprets Ira's behaviour as inability to articulate her language problem (i.e. non-expertise) because she extends the search to the use of a tool, namely the textbook. In this way, she locates the negotiation of the candidate in the artifact, rather than in their own linguistic repertoire. By using the textbook, Amy also coordinates the course of the word search and therefore projects her expertise as task-manager. Amy's announcement of two (wrong) candidates *bevor* and *denn* follows in line 46. As in line 43, Ira is immediately trying to deploy *denn* in the context of the target phrase.

Trying out a candidate seems to be a common interactional pattern in this group because, after Amy's announcement of another (correct) candidate (*für*) in line 49, she repeats it and uses it in the context of the phrase again (lines 53 and 54). In line 53, Ira displays that she has heard Amy's candidate and in line 54 that she knows how to use it as indicated. Thus, in her case, learning may have occurred through uptake, in which language plays an important mediating role. Ira demonstrates the need to try out, to pronounce, and to hear the candidate in order to make a connection with the context, which is a common learning pattern with her. Based on these observations, in Ira's case, language plays a mediating role in the uptake of the lexical items.

Another point of discussion is how both girls perceive the (correct) candidate *für*. In her turn in line 48 (*OH yeah (2.0) für it's FÜR*), Amy's use of the recognition marker *oh yeah* suggests that the preposition *für*, which she has found in the textbook, is not new to her. The marker indexes her recognition of previously learned information and the change of state (Heritage, 1984) from not-knowing to now-remembering. Ira reacts in a similar way through

the usage of recognition marker *oh right* in line 52. For both girls, *für* does not seem to be a new word, but one forgotten and now retrieved with the help of the textbook. It is a resource that may have been initially learned back in one of the class activities. The lexical item is there but just cannot be recalled.

Through the students' use of the textbook, *für* becomes available again: thus, the textbook plays a mediating role in their process of retrieving, a process which contributes to learning. In this way, participants' learning histories from activities in the past shape their learning experiences through this word search, whereby the textbook is a medium which connects the learning history with the learning practices in the current activity. Thus, learning history is a factor behind constructing the knowledge and skills of L2. Moreover, learners' recognition of *für* from the learning history plays a role in this word search because they treat it as trusted knowledge, thus making the candidate more acceptable. In this sense, the learning history and word search are linked.

While the preposition in German seems to be the only language problem for Amy in the phrase *for the students*, Ira is uncertain about the definitive article *der/die* before the noun *studenten* (lines 53 and 55) as well as the form of the noun (lines 59 and 60). Her *still* (line 59) indicates that she wonders whether the form of *studenten* changes as well. The rising intonation followed by a one-second pause marks Ira's initiation of the search and, at the same time, her orientation towards Amy's expertise.

In fact, Ira's turn in line 55 contains the item *die*, which she does not simply repeat but integrates into her problem-phrase, representing a clear uptake (cf. Lyster, 1998, Markee, 2008) from the previous turn of the other speaker. Because such re-contextualization of a lexical item involves extra effort, it is often associated with a higher degree of uptake (cf.

Piirainen-Marsh & Taino, 2009). However, the rising intonation at the end of *die studenten* manifests the speaker's uncertainty about the new knowledge. It manifests her rising doubt about the correctness of Amy's knowledge of *die*, which at the same time challenges her language expertise. Only after Amy's metalinguistic elaboration on the candidate word in line 56, it can be said with some certainty that Ira uptakes *die*, the affirmation for which is embodied in her repletion of the confirmative token *right* (line 58) (cf. Schegloff, 2007).

From a more general view, Ira positions Amy as a more knowledgeable speaker by asking for assistance, but she also doubts Amy's expertise, possibly leading to interpersonal conflict around the mistrust (cf. episode 5.1.2, chapter 5.1.). What we see here instead is communicative success and the display of interactional affinity between learners. Amy's prompt delivery of her metalinguistic explanation indicates that she perceives this type of action as an elicitation of additional information embodied in the question with respect to the first request for assistance (line 53). The practice of demonstrating metalinguistic reflection in the previous turn to confirm her knowledge does not seem new to her (recall line 37 in episode 5.2.1). Hence, in peer interactions, providing the correct word might not be enough for the expertise to become accepted. An extra interactional effort is required to demonstrate metalinguistic expertise.

The doubt about expertise that leads to the negotiation of the candidate can be described as the negotiation of the mediating source by the recipient and seems to be a common practice in this group. It seems to be specific to the learning context, especially during collaborative work on a task. Before the learner accepts a peer's mediation, she requires an extra effort from the learner-mediator (i.e. confirmation of her response through a display of metalinguistic knowledge). From this perspective, the action of questioning the

expertise should be interpreted as an implied request for more information about the lexical item. The display of metalinguistic knowledge may be needed because both participants are non-native speakers of German and do not easily accept a peer's knowledge as a source for their learning.

In sum, the learning history of activities serves as a resource not only for constructing the object but also for dealing with language problems in word searches. It may also assert influence on the students' decision about what candidate to look for in the resumed search, and what knowledge is accepted for learning in interaction. In the peer interactions observed here, the negotiation of the target word simultaneously represents a negotiation of expertise, whereby the request for metalinguistic reflection seems to be a legitimate practice. The analysis has also shown that the need for a metalinguistic elaboration is the pre-condition for one peer's acceptance of another peer's expertise, thus perhaps contributing to building up knowledge in German through learning the target word as well as the grammatical rule about it. This metalinguistic explanation appears to be necessary for learners to reach interactional affinity and to make the knowledge offered by another student part of their own learning process.

Furthermore, the analysis illuminates a common pattern of organization of the word search in this group. If the claim for language expertise has been delivered in a hesitant fashion, the interlocutor may treat it as display of not-knowing (rather than interlocutor's need for negotiation of her own linguistic knowledge) and extend the search to the use of a tool.

Drawing on the longitudinal approach (Markee, 2008), the following section examines two word searches and the participants' re-uses of the word search solutions, as well as the ways they contribute to learning German. Episode 5.2.3 consists of 2 excerpts and episode

5.2.4 consists of 4. They represent instances, in which participants, after the completion of the search for a word, use the word search solution as a linguistic resource but at later point in the interaction. They also use them across different speech events, a practice that facilitates learning of German.

The two exchanges in episode 5.2.3 come from the recordings of learner interactions which occurred in two meetings on two different days (20 November and 23 November 2007). The exchange in excerpt 5.2.3a took place in the first meeting. In this exchange, students discuss the shopping scene which Amy composed alone. In this shopping scene, Amy acts as a sales assistant and Ira as a customer. Amy and Ira negotiate the meaning of the German word *toll*, which is embedded in the utterance *toll das ist eine menge gemüse*.

As has been found in the analysis of the division of labour in the activity system of group 2, students wrote some scenes of the script alone before the meetings, resulting in the negotiations of the meanings during rehearsal. Excerpt 5.2.3a represents those instances, identified in the data, in which students explain the meaning of a word or phrase from the scene that they wrote out alone. I use this excerpt to show the way in which expertise is linked to the organization of the activity. The analysis establishes that in some word searches the division of labour defines the distribution of the expert and novice roles, thus impacting the organization of the search as well.

It has been found that learners, when dealing with language problems, use compensatory communication strategies, such as code-switching, restructuring, and paraphrasing (Park, 2007). Excerpt 5.2.3 exhibits a more detailed picture of how learners use compensatory communication strategies and gain expertise in German, namely through a system of signs other than verbal language. According to research studies on word searches

(e.g. Brouwer, 2003; Kurhilla, 2006; Park, 2007), speakers' non-verbal behaviour is an observable feature that helps others to recognize the ongoing activity and act upon it. Although this is true in this case as well, this excerpt also shows that a particular non-verbal behaviour plays more than an auxiliary role in solving the problem, it is also a main medium for finding a solution that contributes to learning. Lastly, the analysis provides insights into the recent concept of languaging (Swain, 2006), namely that, in addition to verbalization, acting out can mediate the solution of a language problem and may lead to learning in cases like this.

Excerpt 5.2.3a

1 Amy: i got a lot of the stuff like from stuff we have done in class
 2 Ira: yeah
 3 Amy: which is like i am () out this change it was on it uhm
 4 Ira: right
 5 Amy: on our uhm lab quiz or something ((shifts gaze to her notes))
 6 Ira: yeah
 7 Amy: a:::nd (2.0) **toll** i think is like (1.0) <<quietly>holy crap> i

Establishes mutual gaze

8 don't really remember but [that's like
 9 Ira: [hm like an exclamation
 10 Amy: yeah <<acting>TO::[LL> ((rises her hands))
 11 Ira: [<<acting>HO:::> ((rises her hands and makes
 12 big eyes)) like yeah
 13 Amy: haha
 14 Ira: ha yeah <<acting>take a look>
 15 Amy: haha haha
 16 Ira: ((acting: makes big eyes, rises her hands, and holds her
 17 breath))
 18 Amy: it () awkward acting it and it will be like
 19 that's a LOT of vegetables (.) and then::: uhm:
 20 (2.0) you are like oh my god are you serious?
 21 Ira: yeah

In lines 1 to 6, Amy explains to Ira that she composed the scene by drawing on resources from her and Ira's learning from activities rooted in the class community. In line 7, she displays her expertise by initiating her explanation about the meaning of the German word *toll*. Since Amy authored the text alone, she takes on the role of expert upfront without being

requested to do so. This seems to be a legitimate practice for Amy and Ira, which has been frequently observed in word searches from scenes which students authored alone.

Here, Amy enters into the explanation of *toll* with a delayed projection through the sound stretch in *and*, which is followed by the 2-second pause. The sound stretch and the pause before she begins her explanation can be seen as a sign of possible difficulty (cf. Carroll, 2005), but they can also be attention getters (i.e. a kind of pretend word search to focus Ira's attention). Amy uses a second pause in the same line as an interactional device to solicit Ira's attention to what comes next, namely her solution for the word search *holy crap* in a lower volume. The change in pitch contours through lower volume displays the speaker's uncertainty about the meaning of *toll*, possibly because she does not remember the exact equivalent in English, as line 8 indicates where she verbalizes her cognitive processes. Amy remembers something but not the exact translation. She remembers the act and the pragmatic context of *toll*. We cannot know whether Amy is seeking assistance from Ira or drawing attention to her explanation. It may be that for her, it is enough to understand a meaning of *toll* without knowing its equivalent, and her hesitation is not an attempt to involve Ira in the search of German equivalent, but simply her search for a way to explain the meaning of *toll*.

As line 9 shows, Ira seems to take it as an inducement to participate in the search. She enters the negotiation of the candidate in overlap with Amy's words (line 9). Ira's *hm like an exclamation* (line 9) is a candidate with reference to a speech act rather than a translation, which indicates that the English equivalent is not available. The German word *toll* in English would be *amazing* or *cool*. *Toll* stands for a lexical item to express the speaker's emotional state of finding something great and, indeed, is often expressed through an exclamation, e.g. *Das ist toll!* (*That's cool!*). Both participants seem to align with each other in regard to the

candidate. They do not search for an English equivalent, but the goal of their actions is rather to figure out what this word means without knowing the exact equivalent.

In her turn (line 10), Amy acts out the word *toll*. This time, in addition to stressing and stretching *toll*, she also employs the gesture of raising her hands. This gesture possibly elaborates on the meaning of *toll*, namely what kind of exclamation it is and how it can be acted out in a talk. Without the use of the English equivalent, Amy manages to explain to Ira the meaning of *toll*. Ira displays her understanding of it in subsequent lines when she acts out the exclamation in lines 11 and 12, and elaborates further through acting out *take a look* in lines 14 and 16. Here, she is drawing on non-verbal resources only. Amy joins Ira's acting out exclamation, but embeds it into the role-play text (line 19), which then closes the search. Thus, acting out the exclamation of *toll* through the use of non-verbal resources helps students to develop deeper understanding of the pragmatic meaning of *toll*, and seems to be more effective for them than finding the exact equivalent of it in English.

Learners' mimicry and the body language plus the talk suggest that they have correctly interpreted *toll* and therefore understand its meaning. This suggests that the candidate does not involve search for a particular word, but acting out its meaning through the non-verbal behaviour. Students compensate for the missing word in English with non-verbal behaviour and build a link to the conceptual level of the sought-for word. The non-verbal behaviour is the medium through which Ira learns to understand and to use *toll* in this search.

Thus, talking aloud and acting out *toll* (cf. *linguaging*⁶³ in Swain et al., 2009) as well as behaving non-verbally enable students to grasp the meaning of the word. Non-verbal interaction is then a part of learning that occurs through interaction with the partner and

⁶³“Linguaging is a form of verbalisation used to mediate the solution(s) to complex problems and tasks” (Swain et al., 2009, p. 5).

represents socially distributed cognition. This excerpt provides a new insight into the concept of languaging; that is, it may involve both verbalization and acting out.

Although the data generate only a few instances (and the above extract exemplifies one of them) of effective mediation through non-vocal resources, they do contribute to one of the most important but controversial issues in research on bilingualism. It is the question of whether or not L2 learning by beginners is primarily mediated by the lexical representations of the first language (e.g. Comesaña, Perea, Piñeiro, & Fraga, 2009). In the example of the word search of *toll*, we have observed that learners do first try to activate their L1, yet the non-verbal resources stand in the foreground in this search. These observations contradict the claim (cf. Sunderman & Kroll, 2006) that mediation of L2 through translation in L1 characterizes the initial stages of L2 learning. The finding in excerpt 5.2.3a provides evidence that initial learning of L2 may involve access to the conceptual system through the non-verbal representations of the L2 lexical item.

Excerpt 5.2.3b provides compelling evidence of longitudinal learning when Ira employs *toll* which she learned in the previous exchange in an interaction that takes place at the second meeting three days later. In this exchange, Amy and Ira are planning the closing lines of the scene in a grocery store (Ira a customer and Amy as a sales representative).

Excerpt 5.2.3b

1107 Ira: okay I'll find a form of goodbye
1108 Amy: okay
1109 (2.0) ((Ira makes notes))
1110 Ira: or something [like that
1111 Amy: [ha
1112 Ira: because I am gonna hm **Toll**=I=y you SHOCK me everyti(h)me
1113 Amy: ha
1114 Ira: and I am like what I am supposed to SAY ha

In line 1112, Ira reiterates *toll* from Amy's turn in line 10 (cf. excerpt 5.2.3a)) and

incorporates it in her speech but she does so in order to act out Amy's turn in the role-play. *Toll* seems to get stuck with Ira. The hesitation marker *hm* before *toll* can be interpreted here as a discourse marker to signal a change of footing: from speaking for herself to acting out a speech. This change helps her to point out exact words of Amy's speech. Ira's use of *toll* demonstrates her ability to deploy this new word as a linguistic resource and to adopt it as the unfolding context requires, namely to plan the characters' words, which displays her learning through uptake (cf. Firth & Wagner, 2007b; Markee, 2008).

To conclude this episode, the division of labour defines Amy's role as expert, which she holds by drawing on both verbal but also non-verbal resources, creating opportunities for Ira to learn *toll*. Such a role distribution merits for negotiating the candidate, allowing students, in turn, to engage in negotiating the pragmatic meaning of the candidate and to develop their own stance toward this word. The negotiation of the candidate seems to be important as it allows Ira to learn *toll* through non-verbal resources, as is evident from both excerpts. Lastly, both verbalizing and acting out upon Amy's explanation mediate Ira's learning, and therefore are part of learning through the language process.

Episode 5.2.4, the second episode which I use to analyze the ways in which learning from word searches carries over in time and space, consists of four excerpts: a, b, c and d. Excerpts a, b and c come from the second meeting, and excerpt d is from the question-answer session in the speaking exam that took place 3 days later after the second meeting.

Following a rehearsal of the final scene of the role-play, the participants agree that the end of the role-play is too abrupt and decide to compose a closing sequence for the text. In episode 5.2.4, the word search concerns a part of this closing sequence (i.e. the phrase for Ira's character *I had a great time*).

One finding of the analysis of the object construction in group 2 (cf. chapter 4.4) is that Amy and Ira use activity history from classroom as a resource for the story in the role-play about a *Dinner Party*. The analysis of episode 5.2.4 will show how this activity history becomes a resource also for learning German in interaction. By tracking the word search solution by the same speaker (Ira), the analysis shows how the word search solution may be produced and serve as a resource for Ira's further learning by negotiating different types of expertise whereby learning occurs through her changing participation (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991) in different contexts. This episode tracks Ira's change in participation from the beginning of the word search up to the end of the speaking test.

Excerpt 5.2.4a

1 Ira: [and we had a good time something=hm like just to
2 conclude it
3 Amy: hmhm
4 Ira: okay so AFTER the party
((both are making notes))
5 Ira: i can make (that) (one/fine) too
6 Amy: hm (.) hm
7 Ira: after the party (.) uhm: (1.0) do you want me to start here
8 (or so)
9 Amy: uhm: you can start
10 Ira: okay
11 Amy: [uhm }
12 Ira: [uhm } Both establish mutual gaze, followed by thinking faces
13 (1.0)
14 Amy: **ich** (2.0) ha (2.0) uh::m
15 Ira: i had a: (.) [great time or something like that
16 Amy: [I (wanted/wanna) to say HAd but
17 it is hm like (.) i can only say like i HAVe
18 (3.0) ((thinking face by both speakers))
19 Ira: [<<very quietly>>**hat** (1.0) i don't know (.) no> thats to have
20 something right
21 Amy: hm
22 Ira: its not like (1.0) I: (2.0)
23 Amy: hm (1.0) ha **ich liebe abendessenparti(h)es**
24 Ira: ha oka(h)y like we ()=
25 Amy: haha (.) haha
26 ((both take notes))

Prior to the word search, participants decide that the final scene of the role-play is missing a conclusion that would mark the near-termination of the conversation in the role-

play. The phrase *we had a good time* in line 1 becomes the phrase that learners take as orientation toward what they formulate in German. Amy and Ira's utterance of the hesitation marker *uhm*, accompanied by embodied actions of language learning behaviour (cf. Markee, 2008) through establishing of mutual gaze and thinking gestures (lines 11 and 12), display their orientation toward learning. Their reaction projects a repair sequence, and can be interpreted as a search for how to say the words in German.

In line 14, Amy claims her language expertise by beginning to formulate the phrase in German with *ich* (line 30). However, the two pauses and the hesitation marker *uhm* indicate her appeal for Ira's help, an invitation which Ira does not accept yet. She seems to take it as a request for the reformulation of the initial phrase in English from *we had a great time* to *i had a great time* pointing at the change of the pronoun from *we* to *I*, as line 15 shows. When Amy provides more information about her language problem (line 17), namely that she does not know how to say *have* in the past tense, she solicits Ira's help again. In lines 19 and 20, Ira finally takes Amy's revelation about the missing item as an invitation for help in coming up with a candidate, but, shortly afterwards, she declares her not-knowing.

In her turn in line 39, Amy re-claims her language expertise when providing a spontaneous solution for their word search. The phrase *ich liebe abendessenparties*, punctuated by laughter, resolves the word search although it is not the exact equivalent of what they were searching for. In addition to her language expertise, Amy seems to claim her expertise in managing trouble in talk. According to Jefferson (1984), laughter is a recurrent phenomenon in "troubles-talk" (p. 350), in which speakers may present themselves as someone who is managing and can take trouble lightly (cf. troubles-resistance, Jefferson, 1984). Through the laughter Amy exhibits her authority in dealing with the problem (i.e.

trouble manager). In this view, Amy presents her knowledge of German as an authoritative source in a determined fashion, while not raising any doubts from Ira.

Ira displays her orientation toward Amy's authoritative knowledge through her acceptance in this case using the marker *okay* (line 24). This word fulfills the gap of the searched-for-item by both participants. Amy's offer of this candidate spontaneously is at the same time exhibiting her linguistic knowledge. Since the verb *lieben* occurs for the first time, we cannot know when she learned this word, but the word *abendessenparty* occurs multiple times and is a part of her learning experience in the classroom activities as well as from the present activity (through numerous use because of the topic of the role-play). Thus, when dealing with this language problem, Amy draws on the activity history as a resource not only to resolve the word search, but also to present herself as a language expert in a determined way. In this view, the word search and the activity history are linked. Furthermore, they are linked in a sense that this word search initiates processes for Ira's further learning, an idea which I discuss in the analysis of subsequent excerpts.

Although it is difficult to see learning on Ira's part through the word search in excerpt 5.2.4a, examining of this excerpt provides clear evidence for learning the word search solution, the phrase *ich liebe abendessenparties*, through uptake by Ira. Approximately 30 lines of the conversation were omitted. The exchange took place after another word search, in which learners compose the second closing component for the words of Amy's character. In excerpt 5.2.4b, Amy and Ira discuss whether or not *ich auch* should be added to the last line of the role-play. The analysis shows that using the word search solution Ira claims her language expertise in structuring the closing lines of the role-play (i.e. becoming the text-manager).

Excerpt 5.2.4b

56 Amy: haha **ich auch** ((writes))
57 Ira: should it be at the end?
58 Amy: uh:::m: (4.0) I [don't know
59 Ira: [hm hm
60 Amy: i feel like we should take=
61 Ira: yeah just have=
62 Amy: something else u:::hm
63 Ira: **ich liebe abendessenparties** hm **ich auch(h)**
64 Amy: u:hm me too
65 (3.0)

After Amy repeats the candidate *ich auch* from the previous search (line 56), Ira at first orients toward her regarding the structure of the closing lines by asking *should it be at the end* (line 57). While Amy steps back with *I don't know* in line 58 and then exhibits her uncertainty in line 62, which can be read through the stretch in *uhm*, Ira acts out words from two characters *ich liebe abendessenparties* and *ich auch*, separated by an *hm*-marker. By doing so, she asserts her authority in knowing the words in German as well as in knowing how to structure the closing of the role-play (i.e. management of the role-play text).

Ira creates a new form of participation for herself in which she not only reproduces the phrase *ich liebe abendessenparties* but also locates it in a new contextual configuration of the text-management. While Ira claims her expertise in language and text-management, she also exhibits signs of learning. Through verbalizing the word search solution in the context of the character's words and therefore modifying in her own speech through *hm*, she displays her learning of *ich liebe abendessenparties* through uptake from Amy (cf. word search). Her use of the word search solution involves observable appropriation of Amy's words and shows her expertise gained from previous occasion of participation in the word search. She also demonstrates her familiarity with the phrase and her ability to produce it in a new context. In hindsight, then, Ira has learned from Amy in the previous word search. However, her learning surfaces in the interaction 30 lines after the word search is closed.

Excerpt 5.2.4c displays again Ira's learning by producing the word search solution in an exchange which takes place later, but in the same meeting. This time, she produces it to manage the task. About 70 lines were omitted in the transcript.

Excerpt 5.2.4c

```
135 Ira: hm <quietly<klassenzimmer>> ((writes))
136 Amy: and then:: (1.0)
137 Ira: then. so you say sehen sie im klassenzimmer* and i say ICH
138 liebe abendessenparties; and you say [ich auch,
139 Amy: ich auch((nodding))
140 (2.0)
```

Students are still working on the closing lines for the role-play. Once they finish constructing the phrase for the next turn, *sehen sie im klassenzimmer** (see you in the classroom,)⁶⁴ Amy again seems to be uncertain as to what comes next, as can be determined from the stretch in *then* and the one-second pause in line 136. While Amy hesitates, Ira uses this space in interaction. Being proactive in projecting her expertise and display of knowledge of German, she coordinates the text by telling Amy the order of lines in the role-play in lines 137 and 138. In this way, she takes the initiative of the task-management and includes Amy's practice of the closing sequence in German (line 139).

In terms of learning, Ira uses *ich liebe abendessenparties* in the framework of two new utterances. Besides demonstrating her ability to adjust the word search solution to its use in a new framework, the word search solution also serves her as a resource to claim her expertise in task-management. Thus, claiming her expertise involves producing the word search solution in a new contexts: practicing the ways to use the phrase.

I use excerpt 5.2.4d as evidence of learning presented in my argument in the previous discussions (cf. excerpts 5.2.4a, b, and c). This exchange occurs during the speaking exam, which took place 3 days after the second meeting. Examiners, one of whom is the course

⁶⁴ The correct formulation would be something close to *wir sehen uns im Klassenzimmer/Unterricht*.

instructor, ask both students a number of questions. Since students do not know the exact questions they will be asked, answering the teachers' questions is an instance of spontaneous L2 use that occur on speakers' own initiative (cf. independently deploying, Markee, 2008).

Excerpt 5.2.4d

24 Tea2: mhm und ((name)) hm was machen sie gern am wochenende

25 Ira: ich uhm ich liebe wochenenden lesen gern

The above instance identifies an occasion when Ira uses the part of the phrase *ich liebe* in the classroom. She demonstrates her ability to fit *ich liebe* in a new social and lexical context as well as to produce it with a new interlocutor (teacher). Although her answer contains grammatical and stylistic errors, she produces the phrase fluently and in a prosodically unmarked way, a fact which leads to two concluding points: first, the main focus here is on conveying the message in L2 rather than being caught up with the linguistic details, second, Ira demonstrates her familiarity with this phrase, which involves knowing whom to use this item with.

Thus, the activity history rooted in the class community serves Amy and Ira not only as a resource to master the script, but also as a resource for word search and language learning. By drawing on her learning history in class community, Amy projects her language expertise through the display of knowledge of what she can say in German. By doing so, she also allows Ira to build up knowledge and skills in German. Through the word search, Amy initiates learning processes for Ira that extend in the future interactions beyond the concrete local context of the word search. The analysis of the occurrences of the word search solution across different speech events has shown that the display of learning can be seen in Ira's change in participation across different talks throughout the activity, wherein she negotiates different types of expertise. The word search solution serves as a resource to project and

negotiate different types of expertise (e.g. text and task management).

It has been found that the production of props, which is generally not associated with interactive actions, involves interactional work. It also involves word searches that create opportunities for learning German in interaction. The examination reveals that students routinely orient toward learning and activity histories as additional resources to resume the word searches, leading to learning through uptake of the lexical items. The practice of uptake of German lexical items involves observable appropriation of other learners' words. It shows the speaker's linguistic expertise gained from participation in the word search. In their study, Firth and Wagner (2007b)⁶⁵ make a similar observation about learning through uptake in interactions by learners engaged in purposive activities but in a non-educational context. Along with researchers' observations, and the findings in this analysis, it can be said that the display of learning through uptake manifests a knowledge of how to use the word and is applicable to both educational and non-educational context.

When the students of group 2 are unable to solve the search by drawing on their own interactive resources, they expand the search into artifacts (online dictionary and the textbook) using them as authoritative sources to back up their knowledge and language expertise. The use of artifacts allows them to claim different types of expertise, facilitating the use of German in different talks and leading to learning how to use the lexical item

⁶⁵ Using a socio-interactionist approach to learning, Firth and Wagner (2007b) show language learning as a social accomplishment. Unlike proponents of activity theory (e.g. Y. Engeström, 1999), who advice to study learning through interaction as embedded in object-oriented activity (in cases when individuals come together to work on the object and not for the sake of conversation), Firth and Wagner, when examining work situations, have a different view. Their perspective is quite opposite because they see learning in working situations as an activity on its own: "we are concerned to uncover learning as ubiquitous social activity, as an interactional phenomenon that transcends context while being context dependant". Although Firth and Wagner's application of uptake as a conceptual construct is valuable, their article it does not clarify how work activity relates to learning activity if viewed separately, as they seem to suggest.

appropriately in the actions directed at the task and text management. Although students treat artifacts as authoritative source, they do not blindly trust the information from them, but rather use them to develop their own stance on knowledge about German, possibly resulting in a rejection of the candidate.

The analysis also shows that a word search with an incorrect solution can initiate learning processes that continue after the search has been resumed. Tracking analysis shows that activity history is a resource on which students draw to resolve the search. It becomes a resource for the negotiation of different types of expertise and for participation in various talks, both of which can be understood as learning through changing participation. It has been shown that learning was carried over time within the same meeting and over the period of three days within the activity.

The division of labour and the distribution of expert/novice roles in a word search are linked in the sense that the way the work is distributed among the group members also determines their expertise. Thus, the language expertise projected in the word search may be rooted in the organization of the activity. During the searches, the actions of raising doubt in language expertise are of particular importance because they seem to facilitate further negotiations of the candidate. Participants orient toward such actions as legitimate practices of requesting metalinguistic explanation of the candidate, an explanation necessary for the candidate to become accepted and for the learning to occur.

Next, it has been found that explaining to the partner a language problem facilitates speaker's skills in L2, whereby languaging plays an important role. According to previous research, languaging is traditionally seen as explaining to oneself (see Swain, 2006), but not to others. The results suggest that explaining a language problem to others can mediate

speaker' understanding of concepts in L2. The findings also suggest that acting out can be a part of languaging. In other words, languaging does not necessarily involve verbalization only, for non-verbal resources can also mediate learning.

6. Speaking Voices in German

In chapter 6, I explore the ways in which participants use voice and how it relates to L2 learning. More specifically, I discuss learning in interactions as the process of appropriating various voices and the ways in which participants orchestrate voices through their deployment of linguistic resources.

As discussed in the theory chapter, Bakhtin remarks that people learn language from people and the language they learn this way always retains elements of personalities and values of those people. Speakers' internalise many different voices in relation to specified interlocutors and as appropriate to social situations. When using languages, people speak voices (Bakhtin, 1972), which involves infusing in their own identities, values and emotions, as well as infusing the utterances of other people in their own words. Language is the medium that makes possible the formation of personal identities and worldviews (Bakhtin, 1972, 1986a, b). Utterances always retain elements of the personalities and values of their speakers (Bakhtin, 1972).

In the last several years, the debate has been developed around the value of focusing on voice in L2 acquisition in educational context. Ever since, researches tend to agree on the point of view that learning a new language involves adjusting one's sense of self and "investing oneself in one's words" (van Lier, 2008, p. 178). Moreover, researchers argue that, to achieve various social goals, learners speak voices, which may facilitate L2 acquisition by enabling the learner to internalise many different voices appropriate to different situations (Broner & Tarone, 2001; Knoeller, 2004; Tarone, 2007; Bushnell, 2008).

A few studies that examine voice in writing (e.g. Maguire & Graves, 2001; Knoeller, 2004) as well as in interviews (e.g. Vitanova, 2005) use a narrative approach; however, Brone

and Tarone's (2001) study is one of few that examine voice in an educational context by applying a micro-analysis of peer interactions. The researchers discuss voice in the context of language play through the analysis of classroom interactions among children. They have observed learners appropriating the speech of others to shift between different voices and to mark the use of language for both self-amusement and for exercise, or rehearsal, of target forms. While understanding language play as affectively charged, Broner and Tarone argue that the emotional excitement, which comes with language play may make the L2 discourse more noticeable and more memorable, therefore facilitating L2 acquisition.

To understand how writing intersects with identity construction, Maguire and Graves (2001) examine voice in the texts produced by school children for journal writing. Drawing on Ivanić's (1998) view that writing conveys both information as well as something about the author, the researchers understand the way children reveal themselves as authors as an act of identity construction, which comprises the writer's voice as evidence of a stance on opinions and beliefs. They demonstrate that learners construct their own activity as they define through journal entries who they are and what they can do in L2. When creating the textual representations about themselves and their interlocutors, learners appropriate and re-accent for their own intentions the words and discourse of others. In examining mediational means and language units that learners chose to produce, the authors reveal that children demonstrate the ability to express their opinions, give reasons, explain, joke, and adopt fictitious personae in writing. Maguire and Graves conclude that all that practice provides evidence of competences far beyond what is normally evaluated in the classroom.

Drawing on the scholarly research, my claim here is that the learning and using L2 in peer-peer interactions also involves learning to perceive linguistic utterances in context as

they relate to speakers and creating their discursive identities. By perceiving of voicing as dialogic, I ask a question central to this analysis: Which role does voice play in L2 learning?

6.1. Speaking Voices in Group 1

For the analysis of the concept of voice in group 1, I have chosen two instances (episode 6.1.1 and episode 6.1.2), in which voice occurs most prominently. Each of the episodes comes from meetings that took place on different days: November 16 and 21.

Episode 6.1.1 entails learning German when participants are conversing off-task. Here, Sam and Ira go off-task, involve each other in a comical dialog, and begin to speak voices of imaginary persons. They are having fun speaking voices in German, rephrasing and learning L2, all in the same episode. Although one might expect that in off-task conversation, L1, here English, would be the language of preference (cf. 2009), students are using German in this exchange. I focus my attention in this transcript on the relationship between voicing and learning L2, arguing that this episode provides students with a unique opportunity for L2 practice.

Episode 6.1.1.

6 Sam: i believe german l=german=I find german to be a funny
7 language I LIKE it but it's such a funny language to listen
8 to haha when a german guy would try to hit on you how funny
9 would that be haha
10 Rut: **wie geht es?** haha
11 ((all laugh))
12 Sam: **ganz gut**
13 Rut: **GANZ gut** haha [geht es gu:t
14 Sam: **willst du nach [meinen hausen gehen** haha
15 Rut: **JA:::: ich möchte da** (2.0)ha
16 Lea: haha
17 Rut: **das** haha
18 Sam: haha
19 Lea: what are you trying to say
20 Rut: haha [**ich möchte in deine** NO [in deine hause
21 Sam: [she is ()**nach deine hause [in dein bett gehen**
22 Rut: **NEIN**

23 Sam: hm
 24 Rut: **nicht in deine bett** (2.0) [deine:
 25 Sam: [nicht so schnell hahaha
 26 Rut: hahaha **nicht so schnell** (.) **das ist tolle**
 27 Sam: **langsam**
 28 Rut: **langsame langsame** OKAy we should make it funny like that
 29 you guys should do that
 30 Sam: yeah but we should sex=keep the sexual content DOWN she
 31 said hey

Speaking the voice of an imaginary person in German in line 8, Rut repeats Sam's use of *ganz* but stresses it and adds laughter. She extends Sam's utterance from line 7 by adding a new layer of meaning through a new intention to display participatory listenership (as described in Tannen, 1987, voices) to the voice that she speaks. Her repetition and reformulation of Sam's words help her keep up the German conversation with Sam and animate her own voice. In Rut's mouth, this utterance sounds like an appropriation of Sam's words.

In lines 15, 19, 21 and 23, we can see how utterances "travel" from one speaker to another. Also, here Rut appropriates Sam's words, and uses them for her voice to participate in the interaction. Drawing on Sam's language resources appears to represent a common strategy for her to keep up with the interaction. This conclusion is in keeping with Park (2005) who found, that learners resort to compensatory communication strategies, such as restructuring and paraphrasing while engaging in learning-related conversations. When applied to Rut's case, this practice of reformulating Sam's utterances and using them for her own speech represents a "building site" for Rut, which is typical for a learning situation. Such rephrasing of other speakers' speech for one's own voice can be seen as testing out meanings in interactions and may lead to L2 learning (cf. Brone & Tarone, 2001). In this ways, the need to speak the voice is linked to the process of appropriating L2, in this case by incorporating the interlocutor's words into the learner's own speech.

What we also see here is that Sam and Rut are explicitly asserting their right to use L2

in this dialog for self-amusement without adhering to anyone's topic-related norms, as is often the case in instructed learning settings. The laughter that occurs frequently in this exchange indicates that students are having fun conversing in German. Broner and Tarone (2001) as well as Bunshell (2008) assign a special value to amusement episodes by suggesting that they increase memorability of the L2 discourse and therefore provide affordances for encoding L2 in a more noticeable fashion. In case of group 1, this activity gives students a unique opportunity to practice and learn German through amusing talk in interaction.

Next, the exchange starts clearly in off-task and almost emerges into the on-task modus at the end; however, through Sam's comment (line 25), it is clear why this kind of exchange is unlikely to occur in class and did not become a part of the role-play. The comment indicates that learners' orientation toward the task rules when choosing what can be included into the script. Since the rule advises against sexual talks in the role-play, it determines what type of talk will not be practiced in the activity. The activity rule defines the interaction in this activity in regard to the topics that students can work on and what can be learned in German in this activity.

Through this dialog, students are not only constructing meanings in interactions but also flagging their stance toward the content by orchestrating voices in interaction. What is interesting here is the use of the same language, L2, for two voices in line 21: that of the imaginary character (*haha nicht so schnell*) and the speaker's own voice (*das ist tolle**). The utterance *haha nicht so schnell* belongs to the talk with sexual content, whereas, *das ist tolle* is an evaluative exclamation in which Rut steps out of the imaginary voice and speaks for herself in metalinguistic commentary. Rut voices her stance toward the fact of being able to converse with Sam in German spontaneously.

Furthermore, Rut is attaching evaluative emotions in *das ist tolle*. This evaluative comment populates Rut's voice with a positive emotional-volitional tone. For, Bakhtin (1993), an emotional-volitional tone generates feelings, desires and moral evaluations. Bakhtin views it as a key aspect of the authoring voice of *self* because speakers use this tone to individualize their responses to social realities (Vitanova, 2005). Then, according to Pomerantz (1984), the act of assessment requires an assessment in return. However, Rut's comment remains interactively unacknowledged. A possible explanation is that, through the use of L2, Rut is re-accenting her voice, simultaneously creating a new meaning for the interlocutor. Sam may associate L2 with language practice and not with the part of Rut's voice that is linked to her personal identity rather than the performance character. Sam may have to learn to handle Rut's voice in L2. This episode also evidences the learners' orientation toward the goal of the ongoing activity (i.e. learning to speak German). Sam and Rut appear to treat this off-task talk as a language learning situation, whereby they individualize German to their voice. Both acts echo Vygotsky's (2008) argument that speaker's emotions, personality, and language development represent terms directly related to each other.

Besides the evaluation of the unfolding practice, Rut's *das ist tolle* has another effect, which is to close the awkward talk. In lines 23-24, Rut re-launches her attempt to end the episode, which is realized through another evaluative response in English. The use of *okay* with increased volume hints at the speaker's desire to discontinue this talk touching upon intimacy. Perhaps due to the overlap of two voices: the imaginary person and herself. The overlap of two voices can be explained through their dialogic relationship, according to Bakhtin's theory. For him, double-voicing means that two voices live in one speaker and are in a dialogic relationship. I argue here that even when speaking the voice of an imaginary

person, learners empathize with the other voice and affiliate themselves with it. In such a case, when learners appropriate words from the others to speak a voice of the character, they appropriate them also for themselves, a practice that contributes to learning.

The second episode reveals the two voices an episode of teasing talk, which is realized through some insulting linguistic items in L2. The role-play sequence is about a student couple on their first date who are deciding what to choose from the menu at a restaurant. I use episode 6.1.2 to show the multi-layered and complex process of voicing and how it relates to L2 learning. In particular, the analysis establishes that, when double-voicing occurs, some aspects of voices from the individuals participating in the interaction can be appropriated to serve the other learner's interactive and expressive intentions. The analysis also shows that Rut is constructing her discursive identity (cf. section 2.2.3) by drawing on the linguistic resources from Lea's voice. The exchange starts clearly in on-task modus and emerges in the course of the interaction in the off-task modus.

Episode 6.1.2.

1 Lea: and then I wanna some **SCHWEINEfleisch**
 2 Rut: hm
 3 Sam: **schweinefleisch**
 4 Lea: haha I love that word
 5 Rut: which word
 6 Lea: pork
 7 Rut: pork hm what is it
 8 Lea: anyway
 9 Rut: oh what
 10 Lea: **schweinefleisch**
 11 Rut: <**schwein schwein schwein**>quiet>
 12 Lea: **schwein**

Looking at Sam

13 Rut: **du bist ein schwein** ((to Sam))
 14 Lea: ()haha

Looking at Sam

15 Rut: <<**du bist ein schwein (.) du bist ein schwein**>quiet>
 16 Sam: **danke schön [du auch haha**
 17 Rut: [ha **danke schön ich auch?**

18 Sam: **was**
19 Rut: **ich auch?**
20 Sam: hm. (2.0)
21 Rut: HOW ARE you
22 Sam: i am ok. ()

This episode supports the claim from the above example that voicing in L2 and learning L2 go hand in hand. Students step out of the task modus in line 4. Then, in line 11, we see that Rut takes a part of the utterance from her groupmate (line 10) and repeats it several times. Because of the repetition, we can assume that she is rehearsing *Schwein* from Lea's voice in her speech. The rehearsing functions here as space holder, whereby Rut is in the process of gaining ownership of the voice that seems new and strange to her. She also speaks it in lower volume (line 11) and, in doing so, does some thinking, as she loads it with new intentions, namely operationalizing that word for herself. Rut is not just blindly repeating the word from Lea's mouth but adding her own sense and, therefore, familiarizing herself with that new word, i.e. takes this as learning.

Line 13 is of a particular interest because it shows how Rut interactively constructs her voice as a part of discursive identity using a newly appropriated resource from Lea. It also shows Rut testing her own sense of the word *Schwein* on her partner Sam. By adding to the word *Schwein* in line 11, which she appropriated from Lea's voice, thereby adding layer of new intention, Rut now speaks with the villain's voice. Clearly, Rut's is creatively using L2 for self-amusement, trying it out in an interaction that involves her alignment with this voice (cf. Menard-Warwick, 2005). It leads her to speak the newly learned word *Schwein* in a new contextual configuration of the sentence *Du bist ein Schwein*. She speak it as a voice (line 13), perhaps trying to create a comical situation, but also to do interpersonal work with the word she has just appropriated. Her intention is perhaps to test the interlocutor's reaction to how she can use this word, a test which is necessary to develop her own understanding of this

word. Thus, she needs Sam's involvement in her talk, some kind of reaction. To solicit Sam's involvement, Rut makes sure through repetitions and the body posture (line 15) that the interlocutor perceives it as a part of an adjacency pair awaiting a response, rather than as a language rehearsal.

Another moment of L2 appropriation through other speaker's voice is in line 17. Rut does not simply repeat Sam; she incorporates utterances from Sam's voice in her own speech by adjusting them grammatically and populating these words with the new intention (i.e. a clarification request). Such a meaningful use of L2 reveals that the learner is aware of this language appropriation which refers to language appropriateness and is linked to language practice and therefore contributes to language learning. In line 20, the teasing episode ends most likely because no response follows the request to clarify the villain's voice. It tells us two things. First, a voice in L2 is about more than the simple fact of being spoken, since for a voice in L2 to exist, being heard and answered are equally important. Second, language learning is linked to the use of voices, that is, learners not only practice German, but also seem to empathize with the word they speak especially if they speak it in voices. In other words, when speaking voices, learners affiliate with the words that come out of their mouth. In lines 21 and 22, interpersonal work can be observed, which shows Rut that it is possible to insult someone with this word and thereby cause the termination of the conversation. Thus, voice seems to function as a mediator that helps learners to develop a deeper understanding of the pragmatic meaning of the vocabulary.

We have observed that voicing is a multilayered and complex process in which learners effectively engage each other in an interaction and the use of German. Learners experiment with voices and by doing so they produce German for different purposes. When

experimenting with voices, learners try out new discursive identities as, through the mediation of L2, they internalize in relation to interlocutors and social settings. It can be argued that voices function as mediators of L2 learning: however, in the learning context, they ought to be understood as a mediating tool that has to be appropriated. I would argue here that educational context gives a specific interpretation for L2 use and therefore, learners need to learn to make their voices heard in L2 as well as to hear the voices of others learners when interacting in L2.

Another important role of voices is to help to create imaginary situations, wherein they do not have to orient to the task rules and can practice L2 in ways that could not have been done in class. Although students seem to be oriented to amusement, they also practice L2 and learn. Lastly, by examining the transcripts of the presentation of the role-play of the group, I found that none of the above episodes (Episode 6.1.1 and 6.1.2) became part of the role-play text presented in the classroom. My findings coincide with findings in Meguire and Graves's study (2001), namely, that examining what learners chose to produce off-task can provide evidence of practices in L2 that go beyond those assessed in the classroom.

6.2. Speaking Voices in Group 2

When Bakhtin was writing about voices, he assumed that the person can speak the language fluently. But what if the linguistic resources of speakers' are minimal, as in this group of beginning language learners? What is their way of bringing voices into interaction and how does it relate to L2 learning?

This chapter examines the ways Amy and Ira operationalize other people's voices and utterances when working on the task. I examine how learners construct new voices in L2,

including animated characters' voices, through interaction by remodeling others' speech for their own purposes, and how remodelling contributes to learning German.

A blend of two different voices by Amy and Ira can be found in episode 6.2.1. The phrase *was gibt es* serves to circuit these voices. The episode stems from the second meeting. Amy and Ira are planning the beginning of the first scene, in which two friends meet by chance and come up with the idea to organize a potluck-party. In constructing the character-voice from the voice from some narrated world, both the speaker and the interlocutor utilize the utterance from the story world to speak voices of self in German. I argue that the action of reiterating utterances in L2 from voices anchored in the past speech events and imitating them in the present contributes to learning L2.

Episode 6.2.1.

6 Amy: so I was thinking (.) uhm we could start with
7 li:ke (.) **was gibt es?**
8 Ira: ((nodding))
9 Amy: so I could like walking and would be like **was**
10 **gibt es** Ira and you like nothing (lets) have a
11 party:
12 Ira: okay (.) sure (.) hm
13 Amy: all right (.) are you ready?=OH we should
14 organize all our props: (1.0) okay
15 Ira: yeah [that's a good (idea)
16 Amy: [so::
17 Ira: I am just gonna write that in
18 (2.0)
19 Amy: haha that's my ko(h)rona (.) **das BIer**
20 Ira: haha if you wanna color it afterwards then
21 Amy: sure
22 Ira: so what do you think. **was gibt es?**
23 Amy: **was gibt es Ira?**
24 (3.0)

In line 1, Amy suggests that they use the utterance *was gibt es* in her character's turn. Students act for themselves but in a virtual story of the role-play, as they identified in the interviews. Here, Amy speaks also a voice of herself, i.e. self-voice. After Ira's agreement through nodding in line 3, Amy models her words *was gibt es* again in lines 4-5.

In both cases (lines 2 and 4), the English discourse marker *like* precedes the German utterance. It appears to flag the forthcoming voice in the L2. In episode 6.2.1, numerous instances of this use of the discourse maker *like* can be identified in the transcripts. While in non-learner data the marker *like* signals speaker's need to rephrase his or her own words (Maschler, 2002), it has most notably been found to flag reported speech (Golato, 2000; Dailey-O'Cain, 2000). In my data, learners often use *like* to flag the voice of a character speaking in L2.

After a short discussion of how to organize props (lines 7-16), the utterance *was gibt es* occurs again in students' interaction in line 17, but this time in a different frame of the talk (cf. Footing,⁶⁶ Goffman, 1981). Ira repeats Amy's utterance from the previous exchange. However, a detailed examination of how she uses it and to whom she addresses it, as well as its perception by the interlocutor, reveals that this is not a blind repetition of another speaker's words but should rather be viewed as achieving communicative success with the interlocutor. Ira playfully addresses Amy in line 17, in the frame of an actual conversation between both girls. Line 17 shows Ira's uptake of Amy's utterance to speak German in her voice but not in the virtual world of the role-play. Given that speakers can make sense⁶⁷ of the utterance in uptake (Prior, 2001), Ira's use of Amy's words for her voice involves mastering this utterance for herself in this concrete social encounter.

Following Prior's statement (2001) that such acts index traces of personalization, it can be argued that Ira's use of *was gibt es* involves learning a new skill in L2, namely creating multivocality in discourse (cf. Maschler, 2002). In addressing the interlocutor by her

⁶⁶ For Goffman (1981), speakers shift frame over the course of the interaction. He describes this action as a change in footing. Maschler argues that such change in footing occurs when a speaker moves to speak from one voice to another creating *multivocality* in discourse (2002, p. 19).

⁶⁷ Prior sees personalization of an utterance in the sense of person's sense-making of an utterance rather than "in the sense of coming from some transcendent self walled off from the world" (2001, p. 71).

name (*was gibt es Ira*⁶⁸) in response to Ira's self-voice, Amy's turn also contains her response in a self-voice instead of her character's voice from the virtual world of the story. Thus, we have observed students restaging the past utterance to create different streams of voices over the course of speaking and working on the role-play. This episode shows indexical traces of learner's sense-making of *was gibt es* in a trajectory of its use through a concrete chain of interaction. Learners import a voice from another narrated world, restage it in the story-world of the role-play and then introduce it in actual narrative of the chitchat.

Findings from informal German conversations reveal that, in speaking other people's words, speakers reproduce voices from past dialogs to ensure that their voices are recounting actual talk (Günthner, 1999). The findings from my data coincide with those from Günthner's, but also add some information. I use the next episode to show the way in which learners not only utilize utterances from a voice from another person in some narrated world but also recycle them in the actual interaction in order to project the voice recounting future interactions. The episode also shows how the actions directed at the construction of the object, such as preparing for the answer-question session, create opportunities for German language learning. Episode 6.2.2 consists of two excerpts, *a* and *b*. Excerpt 6.2.2a is taken from a conversation in the first meeting and excerpt 6.2.2b is taken from the conversation in the second meeting.

In excerpt 6.2.2a, participants are guessing which questions their group mates and the teacher may ask them after the performance of the role-play in class or which questions they could ask others. The analysis of this excerpt suggests that the humorous talk provides opportunities for Ira's learning which surface a few days later in the interaction during the

⁶⁸ The recording contains the original name of addressee.

second meeting, which I discuss next. I will discuss how merging of different voices in L2 initiates learning L2, learning that continues outside of the episode.

Excerpt 6.2.2a

- 1 Ira: <quiet<why chose the dinner party:>(1.0) uhm. I(h) don't know(h)
- 2 Amy: all i can do is like **Wann haben sie geburtstag(h)** haha
- 3 Ira: haha
- 4 Amy: ha that ha would be my que(h)stion ha
- 5 Ira: uhm
- 6 Amy: all right uhm

In her turn in line 2, Amy declares her ability to produce a question easily, which she delivers in a laughing voice. Amy's delivery of the question in a giggling tone, followed by laughter at the end of line 2, is a notable feature of this brief exchange. The giggling interspersed with this announcement of what she can say in German accounts for Amy's attempt to "celebrate" her knowledge in German, but at the same time they contextualize the change to a playful modality (cf. Günthner, 1999) (i.e. Amy's attempt to display a certain stance to her words). Ira's laughter in response suggests her alignment with Amy's intentions expressed in the preceding lines. Both are on the same level in a humorous situation.

At the end of the second meeting on November 23, students are chatting while coloring the props that they will be using during performance of the role-play in class. Excerpt 6.2.2b shows Ira animating her voice by staging the utterance *wann haben sie geburtstag* in the actual talk. However, this self-voice is recounting the speaker's conversational actions in a speech event that will take place both, in the future, and outside of the educational context.

Excerpt 6.2.3b

- 1 Ira: always (3.0) you know I have stuck in my head=I get (a
- 2 scene/same) stuck in my head.
- 3 Amy: mhm
- 4 Ira: **wann haben sie geburtstag?** (.) I have that [stuck

5 Amy: [haha
 6 Ira: in my hea:d
 7 Amy: that's really funny
 8 Ira: that IS kind of funny (.) you always have FRENch stuck in
 9 your head and [for once i have a german
 10 Amy: [yea(ha)h
 11 Ira: saying stuck in my head (.) like a (.) question
 12 Amy: haha
 13 Ira: pretty bizarre
 14 Amy: you'll be ready if someone asks you
 15 Ira: hm(h)
 16 Amy: OR you will be ready to [ask someo(ha)ne
 17 Ira: [to ask someone hm (when I) wa(h)lk
 18 do(h)wn the street
 19 Amy: ha
 20 Ira: **wann HABen SIE(h) geburts(h)tag**
 21 Amy: ha uh:m
 (3.0)

In reporting the question *wann haben sie geburtstag* in line 4, Ira constructs the speaker's voice recounting Amy's voice from the previous interaction. Moreover, Ira repeatedly verbalizes her cognitive state concerning this question in lines 1, 4, 6 and 11, namely its memorization. Following dialogic interpretation, Ira's reproduction of Amy's utterance (cf. active repetition, Prior, 2001, p. 71) involves importing a peer's words (*wann haben sie geburtstag*), charging them with new intentions, such as informing the interlocutor about own mental processes, and externalizing them in a new stream of conversation. All these conversational actions lead to uptake of language and its acquisition (Prior, 2001). In addition, having argued that humour makes the discourse more noticeable and memorable for learners (cf. chapter 6.1 on voice in group 1), I suggest that the exchange, which took place in the first meeting, and Amy's amused tone initiated learning processes that played a role in the uptake of the utterance.

Next, the use of the same question in line 20 is a noteworthy example of the speaker's voice indexing the future trajectories of the conversation, whereby Ira again uses this question, as she indicates in lines 17 and 18. The action of constructing voices in L2 for the future conversations involves testing them in the actual speech event. There seems to be a

need for students to develop their own understanding of the utterance before using it in the future conversations. By building the bridges between the actual talk and the future discourse from the virtual situation, the students are also testing their own voices in German, a process which involves using the L2 in a meaningful way. This testing may be important not only for defining themselves through voices and constructing their identities in a new language (cf. Prior, 2001) but also for using German to speak voices. In this view, speaking a voice in German has the mediating function of using L2 in a meaningful way, thus contributing to learning.

Lines 17 and 18 yield more interesting information about the use of the question *wann haben sie geburtstag*. For students, the future conversation would occur outside of the educational institution, a fact which tells us that they treat the educational activity as a resource for building knowledge (e.g. in a small-talk when walking on the street). To conclude this episode, the construction of voices in German mediates learners' situated understanding of L2 use in the present, which they plan to produce in future talks. It provides them with opportunities to redefine the discursive self (cf. discursive identity, Ivanic, 1998) in the new language.

Episode 6.2.4 examines how Amy and Ira quote an utterance from other people's words and utilize it in the role-play according to the new situative communicative intention, namely to remodel the closing lines of the scene, in which Ira and Amy are chatting on the phone. When this episode was initially analysed (in chapter 4.2, activity group 2), the focus of attention was on the ways students use activity histories to construct the object of this activity. But I can also use this episode to exemplify the construction of both characters' voices in progress and to show in what ways it contributes to the learning of German in interaction.

Excerpt 6.2.4.

17 Ira: okay now the PHONE the phone like honestly we have to
18 have like you know. something
19 Amy: hm
20 Ira: okay usually you just say **tschüß** [at least that's what I know
21 this
22 Amy: [okay
23 Ira: every time my ((name)) comes over to our house like when she
24 is talking to (her) parents
25 Amy: mhm
26 Ira: **tschüß** and then hang up EVERY time
27 Amy: okay
28 Ira: hm so [should we b=
29 Amy: [ha
30 Ira: should (.) should we both say **tschüß**?
31 Amy: sure
32 Ira: okay we'll just say **tschüß** ((takes notes))

In line 4, Ira introduces *tschüß* as a reported utterance that she takes from her relative, whose phone conversation she witnessed on a different day in her home. Ira uses her relative's voice (*tschüß* in line 10) to restage one of the past dialogs in this episode. After providing Amy with the relevant background information about the phrase, Ira uses *tschüß* as a reported speech again in line 10, but this time to explain the pragmatic meaning of *tschüß*, namely that it terminates the conversation on the phone. After the introduction of other's reported speech, Ira moves to remodeling *tschüß* for her and Amy's character-voices in the dialog. Amy's *sure* in line 15 displays her agreement with Ira's plan.

This transcript reveals that students draw on linguistic resources from other people's voices to compose the closing of the German phone conversation in the role-play. This involves establishing their understanding to the closing phrase and adjusting it to the dialog in a virtual world of the role-play, a process that requires interactional work with linguistic resources that allow for learning to occur. Both participants used *tschüß* in the performance and, by doing so, they not only introduce a different voice of their own, but also demonstrate uptake of the utterance. Their character voices represent therefore the interplay of at least two

voices in the reported dialog (cf. Günthner, 1999): Ira's voice, which is anchored in the reporting event; and the animated characters' voices of Amy and Ira in the dialog, which are anchored in the role-play. Thus, this episode shows that the activity history from the phone conversation turned into learning for Amy and Ira and helped them to construct their voices in the German role-play. Given that the process of remodelling voices involves personalization of the utterances, we have witnessed an instance of sharing knowledge and social cognition embedded in the interaction. Learning here is a pursuit and an outcome of cooperation in interaction (cf. Mondada & Pekerek Doehler, 2004).

The analysis of peer interactions in group 2 reveals that learners speak in character-voices that are not one's own (constructed in the story) as well as speak in voices that are their own. Both types of voices are not necessarily mutually exclusive and may exist in one interaction.

Learners are speaking different voices when they use reported speech and show that they are skillful constructors of a dialog. The way they do this, as we have observed, involves reformulating and repeating their own speech, as well as the speech of the interlocutor. These interactional actions involve appropriation of the utterances in L2 for their own communicative intentions and recycling them in the conversation with the other interactant, resulting in learning. Learning takes place through the need to remodel a voice, which involves the speaker's switch from the interpersonal to the personal plane, it also involves personalization of and affiliation to others' utterances to make the voice suitable to new contextual configuration, which leads to uptake. Thus, learning is achieved through social cognition and should be seen as artifact of joint interactional work on the role-play text through the social encounter of group work (cf. Firth & Wagner, 2007b).

In constructing characters' voices, learners draw on utterances from voices from activity histories which they witnessed (e.g. phone conversation) in the past. By restaging past utterances, they speak voices in L2, recounting conversational actions in the actual speech event but also in conversations that may take place outside of the school context in the future. In this way activity history serves as a linguistic resource for this text composing activity. Following Ivanic's argument (1998) that constructing voice is linked with the negotiation of speaker's discursive identities as constructed by means of linguistic resources (cf. Prior, 2001), this activity gives learners an opportunity to negotiate their discursive identities by speaking voices in the new language.

7. The Use of Non-Target Languages as a Resource for Learning

The analysis in this chapter contributes to the current discussion on the use of first (or non-target) and target languages in learners' interactions. SLA research has been involved in an ongoing discussion and controversy about the role of the use of two or more languages within the same conversation in educational settings. The role played by languages other than L2 in language learning has been discussed in a number of studies (e.g. Ohta, 2001; Simon, 2001; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005).

Up until relatively recently the use of L1 has often been associated with insufficient knowledge in L2, for example, with limited vocabulary (Chanseawrassamee & Shin, 2009). Most recent research in SLA offers another perspective on L1 practices in classroom. Researchers who subscribe to a social perspective on language acquisition have observed that learners adjust the ways of speaking to a particular situation and to the specific interlocutor. Given the recent research findings that L1 use can serve a number of functions in L2 settings (e.g. Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), examining use of L1 and language alternation between two or more languages in the context of its use will help to explain the ways learners deploy plurilingual resources and orient toward social settings as well as specific interlocutors in pedagogy-related contexts.

In the last few years, a number of studies, informed by conversation analysis, describe L1 use as an important interactional device with cognitive and social functions that helps learners to manage the task, interpret the situation, organize and structure the discourse (e.g. Chavez, 2003; Halmari, 2004; Unamuno, 2008). Other studies have more strongly suggested that the use of L1 can be beneficial for L2 learning (Anton & DiCamilla, 1999), especially at the beginner level (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Most recently, Storch and Wigglesworth (2003)

have argued that L1 use provides learners with cognitive support that allows them to process L2 at a higher level than they would be able to perform cognitively demanding tasks in L2. Other scholars also suggest that L1 is a tool which students and educators use to establish a good climate of collaboration (e.g. De La Colina & Mayo, 2009).

In studies on L2 acquisition, matters like self expression and identity construction through the medium of language in pedagogy-related contexts during learning processes have not received enough attention. Furthermore, much of the existing research is based on data gathered from teacher-managed classroom activities which are organised around the official timetable and curriculum. Most published research on language alternation does not provide sufficient accounts of its functions in learner interactions in situations when the teacher is not present.

Taking into account the insights gained from the recent scholarly work, I will focus on the following question for the analysis in this chapter: Which functions does the use of non-target languages in L2 learning serve from a socio-interactionist point of view?

7.1. Group 1

One way to look at the functions of non-target languages is to link the conversational function of L1 use with the wider context and to examine the language choice by participants in group interaction. For this purpose, I will adopt the concepts of “we-code” and “they-code” introduced by Gumperz (1982) and elaborated further by Sebba and Wootton (1998). For them, the opposition of “we-code” and “they-code” “presupposes a particular relationship between monolingual and bilingual communities, as well as particular types of social relationship within the minority group” (1998, p. 262).

In his model, the “we-code” stands for in-group informal language associated with familiarity, solidarity etc., while “they-code” stands for out-group formal language associated with more distanced out-group relations. The aspects which inform notions of “we” and “they” can be found both inside and outside the conversation itself, as Sebba and Wootton claim. “We” and “they” codes cannot be taken as given in any particular conversation. Therefore, I will consider both notions based on an analysis of conversation-internal criteria and see how the “we-they-code” within the sequential structure interacts with episode-external facts.

Two instances of non-target language (episode 7.1.1 and 7.1.2) use in group 1 are discussed here in closer detail. They are from the same interaction which took place on November 16 in 2007 and appear in the analysis in the same order as in the actual conversation, making it possible to relate the previous episode to the current one. The first episode occurs at the beginning of the transcript, and the second at the end.

Episode 7.1.1 consist of two excerpts a and b, in which students are composing the lines for the teacher-character (Rut). It shows Rut, Lea and Sam working on the scene telling the story about two students who meet on their first day of classes. As found in the analysis of the activity system of group 1, the story is based on the history of an activity in class. This examination provides a closer look at the tools that mediate students’ actions of constructing the object of the activity (role-play) in German and the role that they play in the interaction.

Students use English and German to mark boundaries between various discursive and practical activities that merge in the course of collaborative learning. Such strategic code-switching was observed in most groups of the beginner level courses. However, unlike other groups, the transcript of this group contains numerous occurrences of the use of Spanish,

speaks the same L1 (i.e., possibly linking to the Spanish-Canadian background of Rut and Lea). Both women mentioned in the interviews that they used their mother tongue as a “secret language” while working on the task together with Sam, who does not speak any Spanish. This could also be confirmed through the analysis of the transcripts of the entire conversation where Spanish recurrently allows for Rut and Lea to discuss private matters.

Thus, Spanish can be seen to function as a “we-code” or in-group minority language for both women and is used for informal functions. At the same time, through their language choice of Spanish, Rut and Lea create “otherness” for their friend Sam, who does not speak any Spanish. Thus, Rut uses code-switching from English to the “we-code” to release the possible tension among group participants due to the face-threatening situation. It can be said that the switch to Spanish to reinforce the argument functions as a “buffer” to mitigate the given face-threatening situation.

Rut’s switch back to English *at the beginning of the class* (line 2) helps to maintain the collaborative work with Sam, while the move back to Spanish in line 4 confirms that the “we-code” has become important during problem solving in this conversational episode, especially for the organisation of the group work. Such strategic use of Spanish results in Lea’s positive response in the next turn (line 4) which indicates her agreement to introduce her name in the role-play. In this way, through their choice of languages participants construct additional meanings which perform several functions for them, such as coordinating the re-contextualisation of the activity history into the role-play, regulating collaborative work on task, as well as maintaining interpersonal work.

The use of Spanish in line 5 can hardly be attributed to Rut’s linguistic incompetence in German because in line 6 (which is the opening line from the next episode) she

reformulates the same utterance (*cómo se llama?*) using German. Here, Spanish functions again to index the “we”-group. The question in Spanish is not simply directed to the interlocutor as it is immediately followed by a prompt in English (same line). From an interactional perspective, the switch from Spanish to English rather relates to the organisation of discourse and is an attempt to regulate Sam’s participation in the collaborative work. Rut orients to building an argument by providing more information, rather than treating the question (*cómo se llama?*) as a request for a response.

The pause in line 5 signals that the participants, are ready to move on to the next stage of their work, namely formulating sentences in German (see line 6). The analysis has shown that, for them, an agreement on mutual understanding of the content of the role-play is of a special importance. It needs to be reached first before they can proceed to the next step (i.e., to practice the role-play in L2). Thus, the use of non-target languages appears to be necessary for them to establish this mutual agreement and allow practice of German to occur.

Episode 7.1.1b provides insights into which role the uses of English and German play in the local organisation of the conversation. Here, students are composing the subsequent lines of the dialog in German.

Excerpt 7.1.1b

		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">to Lea</div>
7	Rut:	wie heisst [du
8	Sam:	[ADOlfa ALFA adelheit
9	Rut:	wie heissen sie:::
10	Lea:	whats=okay seriously
11	Rut:	ich heisse::
12	Lea:	you suggesting name hm is horrible

In line 7, Rut is trying the phrase which she planned in Spanish in line 5 (see previous episode) but this time she does so in L2. It is a question, a part of the adjacency pair, which should be followed by an answer. The use of German functions here as a contextualisation

cue. It seems to help participants to interpret the situation Rut attempts to involve them in (i.e. to practice the question-answer sequence in German). As the transcript shows, the practice in L2 is set off from discussion about the content of the dialog by means of language alternation. Rut takes the role of teacher that she is going to act out in the presentation. The change from *wie heißt du* (line 7) to *wie heißen sie* (line 9) is a repair which confirms that Rut is playing a role now. A teacher would use the formal form of *Sie* instead of informal *du* to address a student.

When uttering the planned Spanish question in German Rut involves Sam, who does not understand Spanish. Rut's use of German then aims at prompting Sam's involvement in cooperative work and the practice of German, which are important for learning to occur.

Next, Sam shows his participation in offering Lea some candidate names in a rather comical tone in line 8. He is trying to assist her in decision with a name for the character she is going to role-play in class, but also to tease her. Lea's response in English (line 10... *seriously*) illustrates that she takes his action as teasing. Her response in English signals to all participants that she is not ready yet to practice German. Rut, however, has possibly interpreted Lea's switch to English as Lea's incompetence in German because she offers Lea a prompt in *ich heisse* (line 11). Both Sam and Rut are sensitive to the partner who seems to have a problem with the name for the character that Sam suggests. Both offer help to solve the problem in order to move on with the practice of L2.

However, Sam and Rut do not appear to understand Lea's hesitation. The culmination of the ongoing problem comes in her turn (line 12). She is not ready to practice German, not because of the language incompetence, since she could have just repeated Rut's prompt in English. Her rejection is based on the unhappiness with the name for her role in the dialog.

One possible explanation is that she is looking for a name with which she could link up her character. The link seems to be a serious issue for her because she dedicates considerable attention to the search for her character's name, which is also evident from the interaction before this episode. Her need to solve this problem first seems to hold back the practice of German in the dialog.

Thus, Lea, Rut and Sam use the languages in their repertoire as devices for interpretation of a particular situation and for reiteration of emphasis and clarification. The analysis shows that, for Rut, the replication of the introduction lines from the activity history into the role-play is important, which she accomplishes by her strategic use of English, German, and Spanish. The choice of the character's name seems to be an essential factor behind the situated understanding of the specific language uses among participants. But it is also a necessary step, which may impact the course of practice German in this text composing activity.

German is usually reserved for acting out the role-play as in the two episodes above. In episode 7.1.2, a new function for German can be seen in an exchange in which participants step out from the task modus to talk about Rut's date. In such situations, one would expect learners to interact in English, which is familiar to them, instead of German.

Episode 7.1.2.

1 Lea: where do you have to go
2 Rut: i have a date
3 Lea: con tu novio?
with your boyfriend
4 Sam: **mit?**
5 Rut: **mit meiner freunden**
6 Sam: ooH:: **w=was=**
7 Rut: **mit romantische freunde**
8 Sam: **was machen sie**
9 Rut: oh:: **wir sehen ein film** haha
10 Sam: ha **welcher film**
11 Rut: **mit=who**
12 Sam: **welcher film**

13 Rut: uhm **ich=**
14 Lea: ()
15 Rut: **es ist un film du (2.0)** no **eine mexikanische** actor
16 how do you say actor

From lines 1 to 4 learners search for a language to discuss the private issue of Rut's date. Spanish (line 3), which is the "we-code" for Lea and Rut, serves again as a "secret language" to elicit personal information. In line 4, Sam's request in German suggests that L2 functions as "camouflage" for his curiosity about his Rut's friend. This language negotiation sequence reveals that both the use of Spanish as well as the use of German (line 3 and 4) function as indirect strategies to inquire about something which may be followed by a decline of the request.

The initial request from Lea *con tu novio?* in line 3 is still awaiting a response, (i.e., the Spanish adjacency pair is still open), and the second request from Sam *mit?* has been just uttered. Rut is now under sequential pressure to come up with a response, which she does. She replies in German *mit meiner Freunden* (line 5), and with it chooses L2 to continue the conversation. The rest of the talk in this episode displays students' language of preference initiated by Sam.

Although English is a language in which Rut, Lea and Sam could converse more easily, German (not English) becomes the common symbolic ground for this talk. Learners adopt L2 as the medium for the ensuing conversation about private affairs and plans. Even if German is not a language in which students have higher proficiency, it becomes a language in which participants feel secure enough to express affection, thoughts and personality, possibly because German is a new language for them, and is, therefore, more distanced and less personal, but more suitable to discuss "sensitive" issues of date. The use of German in episode 7.1.2 contradicts studies reporting that learners most frequently fall back into their

native language to speak about intimate and sensitive issues (e.g., Simon, 2001).

During data analysis, I found several episodes where learners use German in non-task related talks. I would like to argue that in such off-task conversations, German also functions to create some kind of linguistic solidarity among participants in order to try out speaking in L2 about their lives (e.g. romantic affairs as we can see in episode 7.1.2). Such cases of L2 use are remarkable because learners show willingness to participate in an interaction and use L2 in situations outside of the class where restrictive code rules are suspended and the teacher is not present.

Overall, learners of group 1 treat code-switching as a meaning-making strategy at the early stages of L2 development. The data provide examples of learners' strategic use of languages to serve functions such as interpretation of the situation, discourse organisation, interpersonal work and expression of public self-image.

The individual's learning processes (e.g. for Lea) in choosing a name are important for the continuation of the learning activity and learning for all group members. But it momentarily seems to hinder the practice of L2 in the interaction. Such a mismatch of intentions among participants demonstrates the need to consider that individual processes which exhaust the scope of the task can be relevant for language learning in groups. It has also been discussed that group work on task merits space for spontaneous use of an L2 off-task. The detailed analysis of the use of German in off-task talk provides insights into the social accomplishment of these specific opportunities for learning (e.g. to converse about private affairs and dating plans) that might not have occurred in class.

Previous studies, including those of Donato (1994), Di Camila and Anton (1997), and

Ohta (2001), among others, have shown that learners can provide each other with mutual peer support in collaborative work. The current data contribute to this research but exhibit an even more complex picture. Learners can intertwine the linguistic resources available to them in order to carry out specific activities and therefore participate in multilingual interactive practices. By code-switching, learners orient to specified participants and social situations, and construct additional meanings. Therefore, alternation between languages has social functions, specifically in group work activities, and cannot be simply associated with a deficit in L2 language proficiency by learners. Additionally, non-target languages represent mediating tool such that students need to draw on activity histories when constructing the object of the activity (role-play) in German.

Furthermore, the use of Spanish as L1 for Rut and Lea, which also counts as a minority language in Canada, appears to have a specific function as “we-code” for both women in the context of this activity. Such use of Spanish has also been observed in similar data (cf. Halmari, 2004). Halmari (2004) reports that code-switching to L1 among immigrant learners can function as a means of heritage language maintenance. This issue is often forgotten when the emphasis is on L2 learning.

7.2. Group 2

Within the analysis of the activity system of group 2, in the section on tools and artifacts, I have briefly addressed L1 use by participants as a part of seeing language as mediator. The analysis in this chapter provides a more detailed examination of the use of non-target languages in group 2.

The analysis presented is to go beyond the view of L1 use as an indicator of deficient

proficiency in L2 and views it as a cognitive tool to mediate solutions to complex problems. Additionally, L1 use can provide learners with an opportunity to negotiate their discursive identities⁶⁹ (cf. Ribeiro, 2005; Wardekker, 2008, section 2.2.3) and managing interpersonal work relationships which seem to play an essential role in the processes of building up knowledge of L2.

In the analysis of the use of non-target languages in group 1, I linked the conversational function of code-switching (i.e. alternating use of languages, Gafaranga, 2007) with the wider context by looking at the question of language choice as a social phenomenon through the lens of the “we/they” concept (Gumperz, 1982; Sebba & Wootton, 1998).

Another way to examine the role of the non-target languages within an activity is to tie the social functions of its use to voice and emotional stance. For this purpose, I adopt Bakhtin’s perspective of social language which includes the notion of voice.⁷⁰ According to Vitanova’s (2005) interpretation of Bakhtin’s conceptualisation of language, language is constantly renewed through social activity and constitutes a central reality of life where it is used to represent our cultural worlds and to act as a “central means by which we bring our worlds into existence, maintain them, and shape them for our own purposes” (p. 2).

Leontiev was one of the first who discussed the role of emotions in activities in his theoretical work on personality (see chapter *Motives, Emotions, and Personality*, 1978). For him, emotions are necessary preconditions that guide people’s actions and fulfill the functions of internal signals. Also Vygotsky (2008) dedicated some of his research to emotions in activities. Linking emotions to the L1 acquisition, he suggested that both language learning and the emotional stance of the speaker are interrelated processes.

⁶⁹ See a detailed definition in chapter 2.

⁷⁰ It is constructed through utterance as a dialogic unit that contains voices of both speaker and hearer (Ribeiro, 2006, also cf. Theory Chapter).

Very little attention has been dedicated to the role of emotions in the new generation of research on activities. Miettinen (2005), one of a few researchers who address this issue, suggests that people develop an emotional relationship to the objects of activities when engaged in group work. He, however, explains the development of emotional stance as being rooted in people's orientation towards the recognition of the outcome of their activity by the larger community. While this idea may be relevant here as well, the contribution of the analysis in this chapter is that it explores how voice and the ability to express emotional stance are linked to learning German in this activity.

I use episode 7.2.1, which consists of several excerpts, to demonstrate how learners exploit their linguistic resources and, by doing so, develop an emotional stance towards the object of the activity. I also discuss the importance of the ability to express an emotional stance in L2.

After Amy and Ira created a first draft of the role-play, they started rehearsing the role-play over and over again. In episode 7.2.1, Amy and Ira are working on a scene in which two characters (students) plan the dishes that guests bring for the pot-luck party. Episode 7.2.1 consists of 5 excerpts *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, and *e*, which were selected from a lengthy stretch of talk over the course of two meetings. I chose to build up my discussion on the 5 excerpts because they represent a series of interconnected speech events and yield interesting results about the use of L1 and how such use of L1 possibly contributes to L2 learning.

The focus in excerpt 7.2.1a is on the use of the English word *yummy* whose occurrence I track across the interactions in two meetings. Excerpt 7.2.1a illustrates the first occurrence of English *yummy*. Having rehearsed the planning scene in the first meeting, Amy and Ira clarify for each other the meaning of the text in English.

Excerpt 7.2.1a

22 Ira: we'll just kind of have a conv=a little bit of
23 conversation like I heard about this and
24 Amy: yeah
25 Ira: and it would be like **yummy** good stuff
26 Amy: and it could be like lets get started
27 Ira: okay

In line 4, Ira incorporates the word *yummy*, with which she shows Amy her character's position towards the food items that visitors are going to bring. Clearly, participants use English to understand pieces of information in the story of the role-play (cf. Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Regarding L1 use, English functions here as a working language. Amy and Ira show the need for clarifications in L1 when composing a dialog in L2. Such clarifications have been consistently observed in the interactions of the first semester learners in my data. They appear to be a necessary step before learners move to practice German. English is for them a practical and effective tool to achieve to accomplish the task, and its use is a part of the learning processes.

Excerpt 7.2.1b comes from the second meeting three days later. While rehearsing the scene in German, which involves planning dishes for the pot-luck, Ira uses English in her turn. Although the use of L1 is often associated with limited lexical resources in L2 (Lüdi, 2003, Halmari, 2004), the analysis of this episode suggests that other relevant aspects of L1 use need to be addressed as well. Going beyond Bakhtin's interpretative framework that individuals' utterances always bear traits of the speaker and express his or her stance (Bakhtin, 1972), excerpt 7.2.1b illustrates how L2 learners construct voice through L1, helping them to bring their stance into the role-play and to make the story more relevant to themselves.

My argument is that expressing the self in the role-play helps to find the connection to

the script and make the use of the German language more meaningful for them.

Excerpt 7.2.1b

1 Ira: **WAS**
2 Amy: **jennifer backt einen kuchen**
3 Ira: yummy
4 Amy: **robert bringt steak will bringt hanchen und vern bringt**
5 **nachtisch**

In line 3, Ira inserts the English word *yummy* into otherwise German dialog. Ira's use of this word instead of the German *lecker* may be proficiency related because the lexical item seems to be missing in her German repertoire. Such code-switching is also known as "competence-related code-switching" (Chaseawrassamee & Shin, 2009, p. 60). On the one hand, Ira's use of English is linked to her language abilities. On the other hand, the use of English allows her the option of being able to express herself. Thus, she also uses English *yummy* to express her positive stance towards *kuchen* (cake). In addition, she wants to be understood by the interlocutor. Bilingual speakers monitor their co-participants' speech and fit their own language choice to the assessed bilingual skills of the other (cf. Auer, 1984; Chaseawrassamee & Shin, 2009).

It is noteworthy that the occurrence of *yummy* is not flagged. Excerpt 7.2.1b illustrates the way the other speaker reacts to Ira's switch by not orienting toward it. Amy takes her turn and delivers her in-character words in German (line 4). There are no hesitations, pauses, giggles or any other signs pointing at speakers' reservations toward the use of English. As has been found in classroom communities (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005) such non-flagged use of L1 in L2 interactions can be read as indicating code-switching as a legitimate practice, which seems to be true for this case in group 2 as well.

When applied to Ira and Amy's case, the excerpt shows that both participants orient to the learning activity and use the rehearsals to practice German, but perceive the setting as a

bilingual space. Auer (1995), observing similar cases of bilingual behaviour but in a non-educational context, interpreted them as a sign of the speaker's bilingual competence. Using more than one language in learner interactions stands for a higher developed level of interlanguage (Lüdi, 2003) and characterizes people with competences in several languages. When applied to Amy and Ira's case, the rehearsals provide participants with opportunities to practice their bilingual behaviour, perhaps contributing to the development of their German. For them, learning L2 seems to involve learning to operate two languages, German and English, in an interaction, whereby English functions rather as an auxiliary tool but not only.

What is noteworthy about this switch to L1 is that it occurs while learners are speaking in-character, despite the teacher's instruction to compose a German role-play. However, this group does not seem to dissociate itself from their characters in the role-play. Unlike other participants of my study, who invented names for the characters in the role-play, these learners kept their original names throughout the dialogue, as has been shown in the analysis of the activity system. Although learners are speaking through characters, Ira's response *yummy* possibly reflects her stance toward Amy's words from the preceding turn.

Bakhtin's concept of voice then offers an alternative methodological tool for the interpretation of this code-switch. The use of the adjective *yummy* not only conveys information but also tells us something about the speaker and the meaning she is constructing through its use. It represents an evaluative response, in which the learner is re-accenting the character's voice with a positive emotional-volitional tone to show her desires for sweets. By doing so, Ira is the authoring voice of self (Bakhtin, 1993) and is individualizing her response to the reality (cf. Vitanova, 2005) of the role-play. Meaning for Bakhtin is related to the forces involved in the speakers' evaluations and the way they express themselves through

these evaluations. When applied to Ira's case, she personalizes the role-play by adding an evaluation and creates a new meaning for her character when attaching her emotion, with the help of *yummy*, to the German dialogue. This personalization can be read as an act of constructing her discursive identity (cf. chapter 2, also Ribeiro, 2005) in which the dialog in the role-play plays the role of a socially mediated carrier of personal values.

In terms of learning, given the link between personality, emotions and language development (Vygotsky, 2008), Ira's act of personalization of the character's speech indicates her developing connection to the object of the role-play which makes the role-play and the language use more meaningful for her, and this way contributes to learning. Thus, English, besides being a lexical gap filler, also functions as a tool for authoring the self in the role-play.

Excerpt 7.2.1c is from the same interaction after a few lines have been omitted. The students are practicing the same dialogue at a different time but within the same second meeting. In this excerpt, Ira uses German *ja* instead of English *yummy*.

Excerpt 7.2.1c

163 Ira: WAS
164 Amy: jennifer backt einen kuchen
165 Ira: ja hm
166 Amy: rob bringt steaks will bringt hanchen und vern bringt
167 nachtisch

Ira's utterance *ja hm* in line 165 indicates her orientation towards the rule of the activity: to produce a German role-play. She produces her turn in L2 to keep the conversation monolingual. Her attempt is successful. However, to be able to do so, she has to use the confirmative particle *ja*, which does not convey the message of her emotional stance toward *yummy*. By doing so, she resists her desire to bring into conversation the evaluation inherent in *yummy*.

Since Ira uses a confirmative (line 165) instead of an evaluative response as observed in the previous rehearsal, this part of the scene may be a “building site” for her, in which she is still looking for an appropriate response. In this excerpt, through the use of German, both girls also display their interpretation of the task instructions, i.e. monolingual use of L2 in the role-play, which shows that this time they characterize the learning situation as a German-only space. To follow the rule, Ira resists L1 and gives up the opportunity to evaluate, an action which corresponds to a greater way of expressing herself. In other words, she decides to have a voice of a monolingual speaker, which she is not.

Excerpt 7.2.1d is from a later point in the same interaction. A few lines between this and the previous rehearsal have been omitted. Here is an instance where Ira uses the English instead of German again. The analysis supports my interpretations about *yummy* from a Bakhtinian perspective in excerpt 7.2.1b and illustrates the importance of bringing speakers’ traits into the role-play by expressing themselves through evaluation, which can be read as a part of learner’s negotiation of discursive identity.

Excerpt 7.2.1d

504 Ira: **WAS**
505 Amy: **jennifer backt einen kucken**
506 Ira: yumm
507 Amy: **rob bringt steak will bringt hänchen und wern bringt**
508 **nachtisch**

By using *yumm* in another rehearsal of the role-play in line 506, Ira engages in a practice of a bilingual text and contradicts the task instructions to compose a monolingual text. From here on, in subsequent rehearsals as well as during the performance in front of the class, Ira uses the English form *yumm(y)* which suggests that expressing self is important for her in this context. It also shows Ira constructing a bilingual voice in L2 dialog, which provides space for learner’s emotional experiences and affiliation with the conversation in L2.

Personalizing the role-play can be viewed as ongoing social events achieved through the negotiation of the use of L1 and L2 serving different functions. The data contain a number of illustrations of playfully constructing various voices in both L1 and L2 to express self and of not orienting toward the conventions of the task instruction (i.e. construction of the role-play in L2 only). Expressing self (i.e. make voices heard) seems to be as important for the learner as keeping the role-play in one language.

Drawing on Maguire and Graves's argument (2001) that the ways speakers present themselves to their interlocutors are embedded in their choices of utterances that emerge from previous discourses and communities of practice, one can argue with regard to this excerpt, that the evaluative orientation embedded in the bilingual verbal exchange and the socio-cultural practice of composing a role-play allow the learner to construct her discursive identity. Moreover, unlike monolingual speakers, Ira demonstrates that she has at her disposal two languages, two tools, to present herself. One can conclude that this activity provides space not only for language learning but also for drawing on their linguistic resources to negotiate their discursive identities and understand who they are when speaking German.

Excerpt 7.2.1e comes from the rehearsal which took place at the end of the second meeting.

Excerpt 7.2.1e

996 Ira: *yumm was noch*
997 Amy: **rob bringt steaks will bringt hanchen und wern bringt**
998 **nachtisch**

The final practice episode illustrates that Ira uses English *yumm* in line 996 again. This excerpt concludes the analysis tracking the evolution of the use of *yummy* in this activity and confirms the powerful role of L1 as a necessary instrument for constructing the dialogue

despite the missing lexical item. It is possible to observe that through the use of L1, learners are engaging each other in a more meaningful practice of the role-play.

Overall, the sequential analysis showed that L1 allows Amy and Ira to personalize the dialogue within the framework of the role-play. This suggests the need to go beyond the interpretation of L1 use as speaker's competence deficit when examining learner data (cf. Chaseawrassamee & Shin, 2009).

The analysis has shown that despite the presence of the tape recorder and the task instructions, learners make extensive use of L1. English represents a practical tool not only to achieve the task goals but also to practice the German scene in a meaningful way, which is important for learning to occur. Using L1 and L2 for different functions across rehearsals allows the speaker (and possibly the listener) to find her stance and connection to the role-play, as evident in her need to express herself through evaluation inherent in *yummy*.

Although Bakhtin's analytical efforts were not directed toward analysis of L2 learning, the concepts of voice have proved useful for the situated-understanding of L1 use and for revealing ways in which L1 has been used. Adding her voice into the German role-play allowed the participant to engage in a more meaningful practice of L2 (as opposed to monolingual language use during rehearsal). Ira's use of L1 to express her emotional stance through evaluation appears to be necessary to negotiate her discursive identity. Here, L1 use plays a supporting role in interpersonal relationships and emotional experiences which in turn are fundamentally linked to learning in interaction.

8. Conclusion

This concluding chapter summarizes the empirical findings of previous chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7. It will revisit the research questions and highlight the contributions to understanding language use and learning GFL in an object-oriented activity in non-classroom context. Implications of the study are subsequently discussed in terms of their relevance for the method and pedagogy. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research in the fields of SLA and learning organisation in small groups.

The goal of this study has been to examine language use and learning in informal non-classroom learning settings. Using activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach as a practical research apparatus, I examined opportunities for learning L2 that arose from activities in which students were preparing for a speaking test. Two focal groups of three and two students from among 31 students participating in the study were selected for the detailed examination.

The data analysis consisted of two stages: activity analysis and microanalysis of peer interactions. In the first stage of analysis, the focus was on structure and organization of two groups' activities. This analysis informs the analysis of the peer interactions, where I took a close look at the learners' use of languages and aspects behind the L2 learning available for observation in learner interactions.

Four research questions constituted the focus of this project:

1. What does the activity system of each specific group look like?
2. What kinds of learning opportunities are afforded by actions directed towards word searches and re-use of word search solutions?

3. Which role does voice play in L2 learning?
4. Which functions does the use of non-target languages in L2 learning serve from a socio-interactionist point of view?

I addressed question 1 throughout chapter 4, question 2 in chapter 5, question 3 in chapter 6, and question 4 in chapter 7. The analytic focus and the empirical findings are summarized as follows.

8.1. Summary and Implications of the Study

In this section, I address the four research questions related to the findings in the analysis of the two focal groups together. To answer the first research question, I examined the preparation process for the speaking test from the perspective of activity theory.

The analysis has shown that given the same task, each group organized the work around a unique outcome as its object in its own ways which resulted in different activities (also in a sense of number of meetings, duration and actions involved). This further gave rise to different interactions leading to various affordances for learning, which I will address in more detail below.

Despite the learners' engagement in different activities, the analysis revealed similar organizational and procedural patterns in group work. The object should be viewed as a series of events of the object construction moving from the level of the story outline to the composition of the German role-play including writing down the script. The formation of the object is based on shared understanding at all phases from the outline of the storyline in English to the composition of German role-play. The finding foregrounds a particular importance of students' collaborative work on the objects from the onset of the activity.

The analysis in both groups identified the formation of objects as a collaborative achievement. However, the object cannot be reduced to the achieved product. It is above all an analytical achievement that involves re-contextualization of earlier activities and learning histories rooted in different educational and non-educational contexts. Students draw on past individual and group experiences to compose the role-play in German. Their ability to draw on these resources involved re-shaping these experiences into something novel. Thus, the past experiences are the social resources that participants developed in their participation in previous activities. They are constitutive parts of an analysis of activities and interactions. They are conditions under which students engage into activity and knowledge construction in the present activity.

The fine-grained accounts from the analysis of interactions provide evidence that past learning experiences are both the argumentative threads for the language use, and they are resources for learning in a sense of understanding the language use of a similar kind in the present. Student's reaction to the speaker's language use informs about his or her situative understanding of individual responses. But the evidence of student's understanding of meanings and "how to use" language is the result of past experiences with the use of a particular item in the culture of the classroom and in the norms for social actions. For example, the use of learning history as a social resource to create learning opportunity in the activity for self and the interlocutor was observed through Amy's use of *tshüß* for the role-play which she witnessed in a phone conversation at home.

In general terms, the object is a multi-layered collective product that was born out of real experiences of its creators. The analysis has shown that the object is based on the participants' socio-cultural knowledge and their heritage backgrounds. From these

observations, what stimulates the local activities and is involved in learning of German is something larger and more durable (than momentary actions) that roots in learners' participation in the past, and is carried out into present activities. The analysis also points towards the importance of looking at the object construction beyond small fragments of interactions and of examining reasons for learners' actions in the broader social and historical context.

The collaboration, however, did not happen in harmonious agreement. Participants often were presenting different perspectives, disagreed and entered into debate, which were at times anchored in learners' orientation to the class community. One could argue that participants were seeking social recognition by the class community, as both groups designed their speech in German dialogs with their classmates in mind. Not only the interlocutors who were present in the interaction but also other class members, who were not present at the moment of interaction, defined what participants did in the activity and what they learned from it.

Learners' orientation to the class community is linked to the groups' internal rules that can be both constraining and enabling for the German language learning. The internal rules of the L2 use related closely to the teacher's view of what students can and cannot talk about in their skits. This played a role in the selection of the themes and topics that are relevant to students and defined for them what can be practiced in L2 in the activity. Thus, what students take as a legitimate practice in non-classroom educational activities, including language use, is largely predetermined by the learning objectives set in class.

Stipulations such as the presentation length influenced the activity organization in both groups. The factor of time also influenced the interaction. Learners were under pressure to

come to a solution in word searches fast. They were also measuring the length of their speech and each scene several times. Furthermore, time was an important factor in this context, not only for the two focus groups, but for most of the groups examined. A possible critique of students' following the rule to prepare the role-play in the length of 5-7 minutes, is that learners created an object that would allow each character to speak an equal amount of L2. Conversing in such a way can be considered as an unnatural behaviour of speakers. This is so because people are unlikely to produce equal amounts of speech when communicating with others.

In the activities of both groups, memorization was the psychological tool that enabled learners to carry out the task. It helped them to deliver the written text of the dialogs and follow the task rules instructing them to perform the role-play in free speech. Both groups saw memorization as imperative to their German language improvements in this activity.

It could be observed with both groups that the material tools such as the textbook and dictionaries (online and in the textbook) play an important role in the organization of the group work. Students assign tools different status for the organization of group work. The common effect of the textbook was that it acted as a controller of knowledge construction, e.g. the textbook "told" the students what topics can be discussed, which vocabulary and grammatical aspects are to be included into the role-play. The online dictionary, however, served for the purpose of confirming the known, confirming the found in the textbook, or enriching the vocabulary repertoire by finding additional meanings of a word.

Addressing the second research question, chapter 5 examined opportunities for learning GFL. By utilising a longitudinal approach of tracking lexical items, I also investigated how students produce the items found in the word searches and how such uses

contributed to their improved language skills.

The analysis built on Brouwer's (2003) argument that searching for a word to solve a language problem may lead to learning, but shows more specifically in which ways learners create opportunities for learning German in interactions and which factors are behind them. The analysis has shown that learners seeking a solution to their language problem through a word search are also learning German. When doing so, they engage in negotiations of different kinds of expertise which is linked to the display of knowledge. The display and acceptance of expertise is strongly situated in the interaction. It is linked to task instructions, the circumstances of the context, speakers' biographies, and learning histories.

As shown in the analysis, through the word searches, learners create spaces which are similar to Vygotsky's ZPD. Compared to Vygotsky's ZPD, in which learning is guided by a mediator - usually a teacher, a native speaker, or more knowledgeable peer - the peer interactions show a different picture that leads to two interconnected key points. First, learners collaboratively search for an acceptable candidate word and engage in ongoing construction of the learning situations, thereby mutually creating conditions to develop. Second, learning can be bidirectional. It was observed that learners were building knowledge from the difference in language competence from linguistic expert to novice, but experts also learned from novice's actions and re-actions to his or her language use. Not only the knower (expert) provides social mediation for the non-knower's (novice's) learning but also the novice's involvement is necessary for learning to occur by the expert, which supports previous research findings (e.g. Ohta, 2001; Watanabe, 2008). This foregrounds the role of participation as an analytic concept to focus on the interactive work as a resource for learning in interaction.

These findings allow for the conclusion that the expert-novice model in its traditional view represents an unrealistic model for students working cooperatively. In peer interactions, experts and novices represent a relationship that can occur in many forms and can trigger each other's involvement which is necessary for learning to occur in interaction. These observations defy the research position that defines experts as those who provide learning and novices as those who ask for help and learn from experts. The findings in this study suggest that the relationship between expert and novice in word searches is much more complex and not linear.

The negotiation of peer expertise could be seen on several occasions in relation to the negotiation of the mediating source and request for more information about the sought-for word. It was not enough to provide the candidate words, but peers were requested to provide the source of information, not merely their metalinguistic knowledge.

My analysis showed that authoritative knowledge played an important role when students were creating interactional opportunities for learning German. The learning aids such as textbooks and online dictionaries were used for the judgment of the own and other's knowledge and for the support of the authoritative knowledge. I found that learners assign tools different authoritative "weight". For example, the analysis of both groups showed that the textbook had greater authority compared to an online dictionary. This influenced the learners' decision about the candidate to be accepted. Even though learners on several occasions rejected the mediation from the online dictionary, this tool fulfilled an important function for the learning processes in situations when students were negotiating the candidates. It gave them an option to orient their own evaluations and self-regulate the use of German, which indexes a drive toward greater autonomy in learning (cf. Poehner, 2008).

Along with these results of examining the tools in activity, this finding suggests that students use tools based on the assessment of the tool's social value which seems to root in the organization of activity (task instructions) and in the activity histories (use of tools in class).

Although tools mediated processes of negotiation for the acceptable solution, and with it the construction of knowledge in L2, the mediation was not inherent in the tools only. As the CA analysis has shown, the construction of knowledge took place in interactions with peers when students were engaged into processes of searching for an acceptable solution. The opportunities for learning German arose not only from students using the tools, but rather from students negotiating word search solutions in interactions while using the tools.

As the analysis of group 2 has shown, the expertise and non-expertise can be determined through the division of labour in a particular activity and are therefore linked to the organization of activity. Such distribution defines the organization and the outcome of word searches, namely that some of them were not resolved in collaboration with a partner.

I found that both groups developed routines about dealing with the candidate words (cf. "routinized patterns", Y. Engeström, 2008, p. 197). These patterns are at the same time learning patterns for students. Trying out the candidate in the context of the role-play or in an off-task talk was a common interactional strategy in both groups that involved learning the pragmatic meaning of the lexical item.

The production of props that also served participants as mnemonic tools (e.g. cards with food items), which traditionally has not been associated with L2 learning, facilitated participants' L2 learning in group 2. It was interactionally organized and entailed situations in which learners searched for words and, therefore, shaped their context for learning. In this sense, learning to speak a foreign language can go hand in hand with the production of socio-

cultural tools.

As previous research has shown, acts of verbalization when explaining something to oneself (i.e. languaging, Swain, 2009) can mediate the speaker's own understanding of the new language (cf. languaging in Swain, Lapkin, Knouzi, Suzuki & Brooks, 2009, p. 5). In the analysis here, I found that explaining a language problem to a partner facilitated the speaker's development in L2. The results suggest that languaging can involve explaining to others, which mediates speaker's understanding of concepts in L2. Another finding related to languaging is that learners' understanding of the new language was mediated by non-verbal acts, which provides new insight into the concept of languaging. The findings from this project broaden the perspective on languaging to two interrelated points. Firstly, individuals may rely entirely on non-verbal resources to achieve languaging, and secondly, explaining through acting out can be a part of languaging and mediate learning of L2.

Using a longitudinal approach, my study documented the participants' L2 development when talking to peers. I have shown that both groups deploy interactional skills using verbal and non-verbal resources to negotiate the pragmatic meanings of the word search solutions by employing them in different types of talk. I discussed instances of L2 use that were aimed at task-management, negotiation of expertise, salvation of expertise, comical behaviour, and teasing talk. Learning could be observed through cases of deploying the same item in different types of talk, which also provided a different framework for participation. The participants are remarkably persistent in testing out the word solutions, in this way creating new meanings and significations for their language use. This provided a robust demonstration of the ways learners appropriate language items in their repertoires over the course of several speech events. Such testing of words with peers impacts their understanding

of the pragmatic meaning of the word. Moreover, it shows how group work generates various opportunities for students to express their own meanings (e.g. those that are related to private affairs). Using word solutions in the role-play and to engage into multiple speech events across different meetings promoted not only familiarization with newly found words, but also reviewing them and often the creative application of the word solutions for constructing new meanings. The findings from the longitudinal approach substantiates the significance of viewing learning of a particular item in connection with subsequent re-uses of it, and to see these re-uses as continuation of the learning of an item.

In chapter 6, indexical traces of various voices could be identified through the chain of interactions. Learners imported voices from other activities, and employed them as resources to stage scenes in the story-world of the role-play, e.g. the scene about the first day of classes in group 1 and the closing of the phone conversation in group 2. Based on these findings, voice can be seen as a resource for collective achievement of the object and therefore can be located in the category of tools in the system of activities. Moreover, drawing on voices as resources enabled participants to individualize their German role-plays.

In my analysis, I showed how the social facets of learning L2 could be analyzed by examining voices. Applying the concept of voice on my data pointed at an alternative conceptualization of L2 use and learning in interactions. Different voices could be identified and observed as emerging from person's history from activities outside of the present activity, but also from the history of the group activity. Learners spoke voices in reported speech, they reformulated, repeated their own and other's speech for various communicative intentions creating new meanings and significations in L2. Thus, speaking voices in German provided opportunities for participants to practice German in a meaningful way for real purposes (e.g.

finding out about Rut's date).

It was possible to show that by appropriating other people's speech and integrating it into perspectives of their own, learners created specific socially driven opportunities for learning the L2. This way, the findings contradict the view of voice as an individual appropriation of discourses (Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006). It is rather a socio-interactionally configured phenomenon that serves important functions in the learning processes.

My analysis also showed that speaking different voices in German gave learners the opportunity to negotiate their discursive identities in the new language, which they internalized in relation to particular interlocutors and social settings. This finding also substantiates the significance of viewing L2 learning as social and interactional achievement that goes hand in hand with the construction of identity through the new medium of language.

By speaking voices students locate learning not only in on-task talk. My data showed several episodes where learners use German in non-task related talk. I argue that in such off-task conversations, German also creates solidarity among participants and helps them to try out speaking in L2 about their lives (e.g. relationships and dating). Such cases of L2 practice are remarkable because learners show the willingness to participate in an interaction and speak L2 in the situations outside of the class where restrictive code rules are suspended, and the teacher is not present.

I was able to observe the learning process when students interacted off-task. It became an occasion to practice German in casual varieties of vernacular style in exchanges that occurred spontaneously. Also, since students orient to L2 use off-task as learning situation, the status of off-task talk needs to be reconsidered. My data show a picture that deviates from current views of off-task talk. Researches tend to treat off-task

talk as an endeavour that has little to do with learning, in favour of the on-task talk (e.g. De Guerrero & Villamil, 1994, Seedhouse, 2004). A possible explanation for this is that some studies report increased L1 use in off-task talk as compared to increased L2 use in on-task talk (e.g. Broner, 2009), this way linking off-task with more L1 and therefore less L2 use. While this may be true in some cases, my analysis has shown that off-task talk in the context of learning of a particular word can also become a resource for task-management, in this case then, on-task talk. I could also observe that participants use off-task talk to negotiate further meanings of the words found in the word searches by creating new meanings through its use with the partner. These observations suggest that learners may be able to take advantage of this pragmatic strategy in language use as they are learning German, which helps them to develop a larger repertoire of meanings for using a particular item in German over time. Therefore, off-task talk cannot strictly be thought of as non-learning talk, but should rather be considered as a part of learning within an activity.

As far as research question 4 is concerned, the analysis of the use of non-target language(s) in both groups has shown that learners make extensive use of the languages available in their repertoires whereby English is prevalent. I believe that the setting of an activity had an effect on the increased use of non-target languages. The organization of activity required participants to clarify steps necessary to carry out the task, plan and organize the group work, draw on activity and learning histories as resources for the object construction, manage the time of the whole activity and rehearsals in particular as well as create psychological tools (cf. mnemonic tools, group 2). English proved to be an essential tool in establishing effective interaction and collaboration, enabling participants

to work together in the pursuit of the object of the activity as a collective achievement.

Moreover, the use of non-target languages had an effect on the participants' progress and possibly motivation in the use of the target language. It provided cognitive support in understanding meaning and negotiating the correct candidates to resume word searches, i.e. to solve difficulties in L2 speech. Through the use of non-target languages participants could self-regulate their actions more quickly.

The use of the L1 also enabled them to transfer their social skills to L2. The data provide examples of learners' strategic use of languages to serve social functions such as interpersonal work and expression of public self-image. Non-target languages also assisted students in the processes of negotiation their discursive identities as expressed through evaluative orientations and embedded in bilingual exchanges. Therefore, negotiation of discursive identities can be seen as part of the social mediators playing an important role in the processes of building up proficiency in L2. Thus, such an activity is not only a terrain of interactional opportunities for learning German, but it also gives participants a possibility to redefine themselves socially and interactively in L2.

This dissertation contributes to the field of SLA research and teaching. I will first address the research contributions and then proceed to the pedagogical implications of the findings.

The CA-oriented research in this dissertation is helping to enhance our knowledge about the organization of learning. This study's focus on the units of talk when learners are experiencing difficulties and the findings that provide insights into ways in which participants react to difficulties and manage them (e.g. negotiating, using authority, accepting responsibility and mediating other's learning) allow SLA research to consider word searches

as object of focus for studies examining interactional opportunities for L2 learning. However, as this study has indicated, in order to establish interactionally reliable insights into the organization of learning, it is necessary to go beyond the units of talk and look for the argumentative threads of the language use in the organization of object-oriented activities. Without doing so, it might be difficult to explain why learners use a specific utterance, what they are doing at a particular moment of interaction, and why they encounter difficulties in speech, but do not collaborate when solving them.

Another contribution of this study to the language learning research is its methodological approach. By using a combination of activity theory and the socio-interactionist approach to L2 learning, it represents an alternative way of looking at the aspects and conditions behind language performance in activities. Applying activity theory as a descriptive tool helped in the understanding of the local organization of learning in groups. It proved to be useful in detecting the organizations and resources for discourse. It also helped understand the complex configuration of group activities in an educational context, as well as the array of social practices including aspects such as rules, distribution of roles and responsibilities, positive and negative assessments and speech events.

Investigating peer interactions along with the systems of organizations of its activities can particularly benefit SLA research in educational settings. This study has indicated the connection between language performance and histories of activities, voices, learning experiences as well as inter- and intrasubjective (e.g. community and subject) involvement. To capture this connection enriched our understanding of L2 development by learners at a local but also at its collective socio-historical context.

The following pedagogical implications impart from this project. As this study has

indicated, group work can provide interaction between students which is important for insuring L2 use and learning. Teachers should create a learning environment that encourages students to talk to each other and to the teacher about topics that are of interest to students. It is also important to promote social use of the L2 among beginner learners.

Also, given the usefulness of peer-mediated activities, it is worthwhile to encourage learners to verbalize their language problems to others and to look into how activities that involve explaining-to-peers can be implemented in classrooms. This can be achieved, for example, by incorporating problem solving tasks as group work into content lessons.

Comparing the organisation of the activities of two groups, it can be said that group 2, unlike group 1, devoted a considerable portion of activity time to clarification of the scenes that they wrote out alone. To get on common ground in the group work, it was then necessary to continue the construction of the object in collaboration with the partner. The analysis established that activities do not simply emerge from carefully-planned and written out pedagogic guidance of the task instruction, but rather emerge as a result of intersubjectivity (cf. Rogoff, 1990), as well as shared focus and purpose of the meetings among participants. This allows for the indisputable conclusion that it is crucial to teach students how to organise their project work. It is important to provide students with clear instructions for the task, and that it is necessary to examine the ways learners accomplish the task. Since group 1 had a large amount of learning opportunities while participants of group 2 struggled with scenes which they wrote alone and the parts that they seemingly translated using a translation site online, group 2 would have possibly needed some help in the form of explanation about benefits of the task. The first group treated the task as an opportunity to learn speaking German in interactions, while group 2 seemed to orient more towards the outcome of the task

and was less interested in using the task as a space to practice speaking German. Thus, it would be useful to raise the learners' awareness of the benefits of such a task, and of the consequences of using online translators.

The continuous use of dictionaries, despite the task instructions not to use them, suggests the construction of the knowledge of German to be an ongoing process in which the dictionary plays an important role. Treating knowledge as something that students construct by doing and using and not as something static that can be transferred and become intake to be kept would help course instructors understand learning from students' perspectives and would allow them to tailor task instructions to the students' needs. By incorporating the use of dictionaries into the lessons (e.g. through discovery-oriented tasks), the language teachers can increase language awareness and foster L2 development by the learners.

My analysis also revealed that students need to express their emotional stances and evaluations when interacting in German. To give the development of speaking skills an appropriate direction, learners need to be made aware of the fact that German speakers express their emotional stance differently than English speakers do. Therefore, it is necessary to teach learners early on how to express emotions in L2 because doing so is essential for their development of speaking skills.

The most blatant mistake made by some student, but especially those in group 1 and 2 was, that they memorized a large number of stylistically and grammatically incorrect chunks of the German language, which seem to result from the task instruction of "no-teachers assistance" for the preparation. Research findings suggest that beginner learners heavily rely on the translation approach during text composing activities (cf. Sunderman & Kroll, 2006) and memorize the role-play to present it as a free speech in class as shown in this study. A

way to avoid memorization of incorrect chunks of the German language is to design activities where students are not denied the teacher's assistance. Students of group 2 would have certainly benefited more from the activity and even from memorizing L2 if the teacher would have occasionally monitored their L2 output. Using not only group mates but also teacher as resource persons can prevent loss of motivation, lowered esteem because of little knowledge in L2, and learners' negative attitude toward their L2 ability.

Knowing the purpose of the task, namely to advance and to test the speaking skills by learners, it may be better for students to practice spontaneous speaking of German instead of memorization of the speech. Instructors should practice spontaneous speaking in class and make the purpose of such tasks explicit to students. This may prevent students from interpreting the presentation of the role-play in free speech as a delivery of memorized text, saving them learning difficulties and the confusion about the free speaking.

The findings from learning off-task are indicative of students' interest in vernacular German. Moreover, the use of vernacular German can mediate the learning of the pragmatic meanings of word solutions. Learners are eager to say "cool stuff" in German, and are testing out how to do so. We cannot neglect and ignore this issue by pushing an academic variety of L2. It is important to make students aware of language variety, whereby vernacular language is a part of social language (see also Bakhtin on social language, 1982). Teachers can introduce students to colloquial expressions and slang, for example, through an "expression of the week" and encourage them to share information about everyday topics using this expression.

Voice can be a useful tool to foster meaningful and creative use of L2 in educational context. I found that to speak voices in L2, beginners need to learn to use L2 with each other

for various topics that are of interest to them and not only for the purpose of the task accomplishment. One way to do so can be to teach non-academic vocabulary related to everyday topics (e.g. feelings, likes/dislikes and emotions). The L2 can be a medium of communication between teachers and students and among students outside of the classroom, e.g. in the pauses between the classes, in the hallways or cafeterias.

Besides implications for learning in peer interaction, this study also contributes to the discussion of dynamic assessment. Since the focus of this discussion are the processes through which abilities are formed (Poehner, 2009), the formation of these abilities may have little to do with the transfer of L2 knowledge from a more knowledgeable to a less knowledgeable student. Rather, this formation may be influenced by different kinds of knowledge displays and their acceptance as part of the learning process and in the creation of a group as socially coherent unit, as observed in this study.

The data contain several word searches which showed that students practiced and learned a word, and included it into the script, but then at some stage decided to substitute it with another lexical item or simply exclude it. Cases like this did not reach the teacher's attention, which means that what the teacher heard in the presentation of the role-play does not provide a full picture of what has been learned in the activity. Therefore, looking behind the scene while students work on-task and socialize off-task provides a more complete picture into the ways they construct the knowledge of L2. All those observations provide evidence of competences far beyond what is normally evaluated in the classroom.

8.2. Limitations and Directions for the Future Research

The observations of participants' interactions and organizational issues of activities

were limited to the data available for analysis. Yet, students spoke German in their German classes that were not part of the data and also outside their classes (e.g. in the German club). They also discussed issues related to the construction of the object and organization of activity outside of the research setting. Not all group work could be captured and analyzed because some of the actions like composing some parts of the role-play (especially in group 2), or editing dialog text and rehearsing immediately before the performance was accomplished outside of video recording sessions.

The findings provide insights into interaction and learning processes of five focal students based on the detailed analysis. It would be worthwhile to examine language use and learning by a larger number of participants, which was, however, not possible within the scope of my dissertation.

Yrjö Engeström's model for the educational activity worked particularly well for activities in this project because of its well-defined object and the outcome, easy identifying group of subjects, a good sense of what might count as a tool and observable division of labour. However, one methodological limitation concerning the use of activity theory is that the model of the activity systems, although based on actual practices and linguistic behaviours observed through actions and operations by students, does not reflect the dynamic and constantly changing nature of their activities. Researchers, who use activity theory and especially Y. Engeström's model, may find themselves in the position of trying to solve a difficult task, i.e. to represent diagrammatically the multilayered complexity of activity.

The different procedures such as the change from storyline to the production of the German script resulted in the reorganization of the activity system. The model as it is designed by Y. Engeström does not provide a tool to depict these reorganizations

schematically because it only offers a static frame.

Furthermore, the dynamics of the object construction as well as the organizations of the activity system include a measure of the role-play. The model does not consider the time factor, which, however, seems to play an important role in the organization of the activity, for the construction of the object and learning outcomes. Since the components of the activity system interrelate, it is possible that time influences the formation of group internal rules or the way the participants distribute the roles and responsibilities in the activity. A potential next step for further research is to evaluate the rationale behind the time factor.

Future research with more fine-grained empirical accounts is needed to look at how tools are used in educational activities, what meanings their use carries for students, their impact on the organization of activity, and their role for learning.

Further research might also investigate the role of emotions for learning GFL. Since an individual's decision to learn is directly linked to their assessment of the significance of the task (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001), whereby emotions fulfill the function of an internal signal (Leontiev, 1975), it would be worthwhile to examine the evolution of emotions as encoded in language as learners go through different speech events.

The analysis of the use of non-target languages has shown cases of language alternation which could not be solely explained through a sequential approach, because they index some details of the wider context in which the given interaction is situated. Emphasising the social forces that shape speakers' motivation for and actual use of two or more languages within one conversation, scholars studying interactional data of learners have yet to agree on the value of language alternation for L2 proficiency and development. Research findings on written communication suggest that the use of two or more languages

successfully and simultaneously in one interaction increases one's prospects in developing L2 writing skills (Gentil, 2005); further research is needed on the impact of fair L1 use in speaking activities and on whether practices of alternation would decelerate the development of L2.

Since Firth and Wagner (1997) invited SLA researchers to follow their argumentation to view L2 acquisition as the nexus between cognitive and social, a progress has been made in developing alternative ways to research L2 learning that capture the interconnectedness between learning and context. In this study, I have presented empirical evidence that documents the relationship between language use and learning in the context of object-oriented activity. The findings support the view that L2 use is not just about understanding and learning at a local (e.g. in units of talk), rather it is also linked to its collective and historical context.

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Appendix

Questions for Students (Questionnaire)

6. What is your gender? [] female [] male
7. What is your age?
8. Where were you born (country)? _____(if different as Canada, please answer the question 4)
9. When did you move to Canada?
10. What is your first language?
11. Which language do you use most at home?
12. Which language do you use most at school?

Current Academic Data:

Year and Program:

-
13. How would you describe your current status as a student at the university?
 14. What is your approximate average grade at the university?
 15. Which German courses have you taken at UW or elsewhere, and which grade did you get?
 16. What are your reasons for choosing this course?
 17. How difficult do you find this German course to be?
 18. What grade do you expect to receive in this German course?
 19. Could you please describe the task of the skit (speaking test at the end of the term)?
 20. How would you describe the use of any language(s) other than German in class?
 21. How would you expect the use of other language(s) than German in the preparation of the role-play (skit) for the speaking test? For example, what is the purpose of a switch to a different language in the preparation meeting for the skit with your partner(s)?

Experience in German, English or other languages:

22. How do you come in contact with German?
family friends newspapers/magazines from Germany
local newspapers/magazines TV radio internet
clubs work school / university church shops
travel to German-speaking countries (how often and for how long?)
23. Did you speak or hear German frequently as a child?
24. (If English is not your native language,) how old were you when you started learning English?
25. How old were you when you started learning German?
26. How would you self-assess your proficiency in German?
27. How long have you lived consecutively in a country (other than Canada) where German was spoken? For what purpose?
28. Have you ever studied another language other than German and your native language?
29. Where did you learn it/them?

Questions for Teachers (Questionnaire)

1. What is your gender? [] female [] male
2. What is your age?
3. Where were you born (country)? _____(if different as Canada, please answer the question 4)
4. When did you move to Canada?
5. What is your first language?
6. What is your home language?

Current Academic Data:

7. What degree are you currently seeking in what field?
8. What degree do you currently hold?
9. What is your status as a German instructor?

Teaching experience:

10. How many years have you been teaching German at the university level in North America?
11. How much formal training have you had in foreign language (FL) teaching?
12. How would you self-assess your proficiency in teaching?
13. Have you taught German using only German at all times (as opposed to the mixture of German and another language)?
14. How would you characterize the FL approach used in *Vorsprung*?
15. Could you please describe the task of the skit (speaking test)?
16. How would you describe the use of other language than German in class?
17. How would you describe students' use of languages in the preparation of the role-play (skit) for the speaking test?
18. How would you describe students' overall experience with foreign language learning in small groups?
19. Do you incorporate small group activities in your classes?
20. How do you think students approach the preparation for the speaking test (e.g., who contacted whom? when?)
21. How would you describe the use of other language than German in class?
22. How would you describe the use of other language than German in small group work?
23. How would you describe your overall experience with foreign language teaching in small groups?
24. What are the short-term and long-term goals for the students when they work on and present skits?