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A Micro-analysis of Embodiments and Speech in the Pronunciation Instruction of One ESL Teacher

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During the last two decades conversation analysis (CA) has been used in second language classroom research to understand how instructors and their students achieve teaching and learning (Barraja-Rohan, 2011; Koshik, 1999; Markee, 2004; Wagner, 1996). Recent scholars have taken an approach that combines analysis of both talk and the body (Majlesi, 2014; McCafferty, 2006; Olsher, 2003; Platt and Brooks, 2008). Along with the work of the recent scholars, this study looks at how one teacher effectively uses talk, the body, and material artifacts to teach pronunciation in an ESL class in an intensive ESL program. By looking at the teacher's talk, her embodied movements, and her use of material artifacts, the study sheds light on how the teacher and her students achieve teaching and learning regarding stressed syllables/words and the pronunciation of the phrase 'It would.'

Key words: talk, the body, gesture, second language classroom research, second language pedagogy

Introduction

This study describes how a teacher uses talk, the body, and material artifacts to teach pronunciation in an intensive ESL classroom. I first look at how the teacher uses material artifacts to teach stressed syllables. I then examine how the teacher employs her body using rhythm to teach the stressed words in a sentence. Last, I discuss how the teacher uses embodied movements to demonstrate the articulation of the phrase 'It would' for the students. The study concludes with pedagogical suggestions for teachers on how to teach stressed syllables and words, and the articulation of challenging lexical combinations such as 'It would.'

Literature review

During the last two decades, conversation analysis (CA) has been used in second language classroom research to understand how instructors and students achieve teaching and learning. Typical studies investigate such topics as foreign language acquisition through interaction (Wagner, 1996), teacher elicitation turns that assist student revision in ESL post-secondary one-on-one writing conferences (Koshik, 1999), talk that occurs at the boundaries of different classroom speech exchange systems (e.g., how teachers regain control of the classroom agenda)

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(Markee, 2004), and CA that helps to teach interactional competence (Barraja-Rohan, 2011), to name a few.

However, recent scholars have taken an approach that combines talk and the body. For instance, Olsher (2003) incorporated talk and the body into his research to understand how English learners at a Japanese college manage their talk in a small-group interaction. Olsher found that learners initiate a turn-at-talk with a partial turn-unit that is left incomplete, and then complete it through the use of embodied actions. In other-initiated repair sequences, Olsher found that repair initiations include repeats, gesturally-enhanced repeats, and reformulations of the trouble source turn. Olsher then called for the use of collaborative group work projects in second/foreign language classrooms to enhance interactional skills and opportunities for learners to use language structures without the explicit use of grammatical meta-language. McCafferty (2006) examined the use of beat gestures (the sharp up-and-down movement of the hand) of an English learner and found that these beat gestures helped the learner gain the kinesic sense of the rhythm, stress, and intonation of the target language. McCafferty then suggested further studies on beat gestures, as they may play an important role in enhancing memory of the targeted linguistic structures, which could eventually lead to automaticity and increased fluency. Platt and Brooks (2008) looked at two pairs of early stage Swahili learners who were given problem-solving tasks (doing simple arithmetic problems and locating places on maps). Platt and Brooks found that these four learners employed gestures, gaze, bodily movements, and material artifacts to supplement cognition, promote self-regulation, and facilitate internalization of linguistic means to express the problem solving tasks in Swahili. These uses of varied resources, Platt and Brooks argued, in turn led to the development of accuracy and fluency in the L2. Platt and Brooks then urged teachers and curriculum developers to design classroom materials and activities that enable learners to use embodied processes as a means to achieve second language development and content mastery. Majlesi (2014) investigated how grammar instruction in teaching Swedish as a second language was achieved through mutually embodied accomplishments between a teacher and her students. Majlesi found that grammar instruction does not merely include talk, but it is a combination of material artifacts (worksheets), gestures, and talk. The teaching was organized from one action to the next and provided an interactional space for the students to conjointly interact. Majlesi then claimed that grammar instruction may be seen as an instruction progressively elicited from actions and methodologically achieved by coherent acts of participants upon particular linguistic objects.

As we have seen, studies on students' use of embodiment in foreign/second language learning and teachers' use of embodiment in foreign language teaching have gained the attention of second language researchers. However, there is still a lack of attention to the importance of teachers' use of embodiment in ESL classrooms. This study intends to fill the gap in the literature by looking at how a teacher effectively uses talk, the body, and material artifacts to teach pronunciation in an ESL classroom. These nonverbal cues and material artifacts (together with

talk) help to shed light on how the teacher and her students achieve teaching and learning regarding stressed syllables/words and the pronunciation of the complicated phrase 'It would.'

Theoretical approach

Erickson (2005) claimed that face-to-face interaction provides a social ecology in which "everybody on the scene is continuously active – and interactive – that is, speakers are continuously doing verbal and nonverbal behaviors and so are listeners, all addressing one another in varying kinds of ways" (p. 573). These varying kinds of ways include the alignment of embodied actions, facial expressions, eye-contact, tone of voice, gestures, etc. In line with Erickson, Jordan and Henderson (1995) proposed that the social interaction among co-present individuals doing a particular task reflects their achievement of collaboration. The resources to maintain such social structures lie in the mutual visual and auditory availability of participants' bodily activities. In social interaction, Jordan and Henderson argued, interactants are constantly in mutual contact to make their engagement visible and audible to each other so that new alignments are created and re-created during the course of interaction. Multiple interactions therefore can be generated, maintained, and disassembled in response to the requirements of the task at hand.

Using Erickson, Jordan and Henderson's notion of the social interaction among co-present individuals, this study examines how a teacher and her students achieve teaching and learning regarding stressed syllables/words and the pronunciation of the complicated word phrase 'It would.'

Methodology

1. Participant observation: My role in this study was both as a participant and an observer. As a participant, I carried out an active membership role in the class activities and responsibilities that advance the group's work. As an observer, I watched and interacted closely with the participants to establish rapport. I combined the participation and observation roles so that I could understand the classroom as an insider while analyzing it as an outsider (Patton, 2002, cited in Merriam 2009).
2. Video recording: To better capture, moment-to-moment, the verbal and non-verbal interactional moments between the teacher and her students, I video-taped the period during my participation and observation role (with the teacher's permission and the students' agreement). I then used Erickson's (2005) discussion of procedures for discovering and analyzing video data with a focus on the interactional process to analyze my data. The procedure involves the following steps:

a) The recorded video was reviewed as a whole in real time without stopping or playing back. During this time, I paid attention to the time lines that mark major transitions from one activity to the next.

b) I reviewed the entire video again. I then chose the segment of tape where the success with instruction or tasks occurs. In this segment, I looked for the

occurrence of major shifts in participants, of sustained postural and interpersonal distance configurations, and of major listening/speaking activities. I also paid attention to the intensity of listening behaviors by listeners, as various speakers were speaking.

c) Within that segment, I then transcribed the talk and described the nonverbal behaviors of the various speakers involved. I also transcribed the verbal and described nonverbal reactions of listeners with whom the speaker was engaged. I then continued the process until the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of all persons participating in that particular scene were transcribed and described in detail.

d) I reviewed the segment again with a special focus on sustained postures, spatial distance, and eye gaze patterns with their beginning and ending points. In each event (marked by its beginning and ending point), I then tried to analyze the functions of certain kinds of utterances as well as the nonverbal behaviors to see how they contribute to the meaning of the relevant event as a whole.

3. Material artifacts: I also asked the teacher's permission to collect material artifacts in the classroom, such as the textbooks, handouts, and tools. These materials are as important as the verbal and non-verbal behaviors for my data analysis. As C. Goodwin (2007) suggested, language, non-verbal language (gestures, facial expressions, postures), and material artifacts in a particular interactional scene "all mutually elaborate each other to create a whole that is different from, and greater than, any of its constituent parts" (p. 55).

Data collection

1. Site: The site where I collected data is an intensive ESL program at a university in Los Angeles. The program provides English language skills for students who come from all over the world. The students' goal in the program is to learn English so that they can mainstream into regular classrooms in U.S. universities.

2. The students: The students in this study are international students who came to the U.S. to pursue their undergraduate and graduate degrees. The students' language proficiency is beginning level. There are three levels of language proficiency in the program: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. The students who are at the beginning level have limited ability to express themselves in daily conversations. Their reading and writing skills are also limited. For instance, they can read a short and simple text on daily life topics such as getting acquainted, student life, beautiful places, etc. Their writing skill is at the sentential level or at most a paragraph of five to ten sentences in length. The students' ages range from early to late 20s.

3. The teacher: The teacher is experienced. She earned a Distinguished Teaching Award and received very high evaluations from her students and her peers. She has been teaching English for second language learners for more than 20 years and is known for her understanding of the students' academic needs.

4. Participation/observation and video recording: The data collected for this study are two hours of classroom participation/observation and one hour of video recording. To make the students and the teacher comfortable with my presence, I spent my first hour (first day) getting to know the teacher, the students, and the class materials. I then proposed to the teacher the plan to video tape the class on the second hour (second day). After the video recording, I continued to visit the class on the third hour (third day) to see if there was any difference in the students' performance on the day they were video-taped and on the day they were not. My conclusion was that the students did not display any difference in their classroom performance. In particular, they participated in class activities in the same way that I had observed during the hour of video-recording.

Data analysis

1. Using rubber bands to teach stressed syllables

This section discusses how the teacher uses a rubber band to teach stressed syllables. The transcription[1] below illustrates the teacher's use of the rubber band and the students' subsequent practice with it.

Note that the following abbreviations are used for names.

Tea: teacher Stu: student(s)

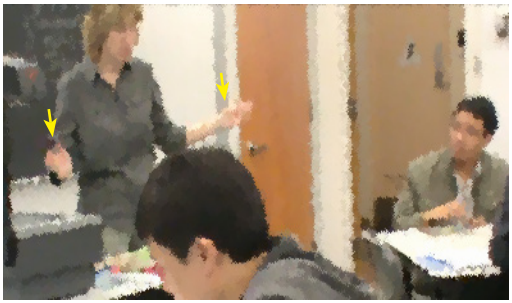
```
Tea:  So get your rubber band out. Let's just let's just loosen up
      ((hands making multiple waving to express loosen-up)) a little
      by::: ah repeating these words.
      ((walking to the door)) (shut) the door. ((close it))
Stu:  ((get the rubber bands out))
Tea:  Ok. So we just have the list here. We just want to go. Ah and I
      point out that American English in the first column you see
      where it said "educated and related stated and negotiated" that
      we do:: stress ah:: normally do not stress the -ate (sound)[2]
      as the primary stress but ah two syllables before.
Stu:  ((still get the rubber band out, look at the teacher, look at
      the book))
Tea:  So. Ed ucated. ((hands stretching the rubber band on ed-))
      ((knocking on the door))
Stu:  Ed ucated ((hands stretching the rubber bands on ed-))
Tea:  Hi. Come on in. (just started). Please sit down. Ok. Ed ucated.
      ((hands stretching the rubber band on ed-))
Stu:  Ed ucated ((hands stretching the rubber bands on ed-))
Tea:  Re la ted. ((hands stretching the rubber band on -la-))
Stu:  Re la ted. ((hands stretching the rubber bands on -la-))
Tea:  Sta ted. ((hands stretching the rubber bands on sta-))
Stu:  Sta ted. ((hands stretching the rubber bands on sta-))
      (the practice continues with negotiated, excited, invited,
      ignited, united)
Tea:  Con tri buted ((hands stretching the rubber band on -tri-))
```

1 The transcription symbols are provided in an Appendix at the end of the paper.

2 The –ate sound in "educ*ate*d, rel*ate*d, st*ate*d, and negoti*ate*d"

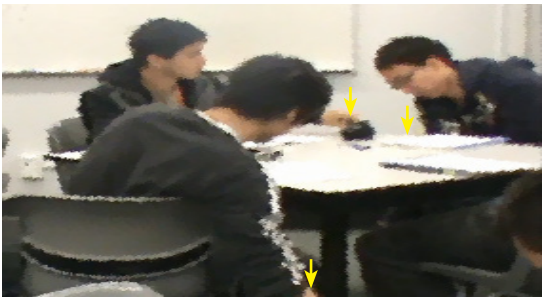
```
26  Stu:   Con***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber band on -tri-*))
27  Tea:   Dis***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber band on -tri-*))
28  Stu:   Dis***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber band on -tri-*))
29  Tea:   Yeah. And this is one that a lot of you probably would look at
30         it and say ***con***tributed or ***dis***tributed. But it's ((*raises one*
31         *finger up to indicate it*)) actually stressed on the second
32         syllable ((*raises two fingers up to indicate second syllable*)).
33         Try that one again. Con***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber*
34         *band on -tri-*))
35  Stu:   Con***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber bands on -tri-*))
36  Tea:   Dis***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber band on -tri-*))
37  Stu:   Dis***tri***buted ((*hands stretching the rubber bands on -tri-*))
38         (the practice continues with noted, voted, completed, defeated,
39         greater, smarter, shorter, getting, putting, water, later,
40         waiter)
41  Tea:   So. These have been ((*hands move up and down the list in the*
42         *book, eyes look at the book*)) again ((*eyes look at the*
43         *students*)) words that end in t ((*hands indicate ending*)) that
44         uh::: have an ending going on whether ed or er or est or ing
45         ((*hand listing, eyes look at the book*)) or any of those ((*hand*
46         *moves around the page where the list is*)) Ah we see how that
47         produces ((*hands in a cup-like shape*)) this ah flap or
48         tap ((*outward hand movements*)) with voiced t.
```

In line 1 of the above segment, the teacher used the boundary marker 'So' and then the directive 'get your rubber band out' to indicate the ending of the previous topic and her intention to move to a new topic. Since the upcoming activity with the rubber band would change the quiet atmosphere and energize the students, the teacher encouraged them to get ready for the activity: 'Let's just let's just loosen up' while her hands were making multiple waving in the air to ease the body (lines 1 and 2). To ensure that the students follow her request, the teacher issued the directive and employed multiple hand waving movements to urge the students to change their current posture. The teacher's hand waving, on the one hand, reflects her mental image of helping the body to loosen up, while on the other, it encourages the students to do the loosening up action. The picture below illustrates the teacher's hand waving movement to urge the students to loosen up.



The teacher's hand waving to urge the students to loosen up

After urging the students to change their current posture, the teacher continued to finish her turn: 'a little by::: ah repeating these words' (lines 2 and 3). The teacher's lengthening on the word 'by' indicated that she was finding ways to announce the upcoming task which was repeating the words (in the book). The teacher then walked to the door while murmuring 'shut the door.' She then closed it and walked back to the classroom (line 4) to get ready for the task at hand. In line 5 the students showed compliance with the teacher's directive by getting the rubber bands out, as seen in the picture below.



The students getting the rubber bands out

Before launching into the task, the teacher explained what the task was about: It was how to put stress on a set of words that end with '–ate' in the students' workbook. She uttered,

> "Ok. So we just have the list here. We just want to go. Ah and I point out that American English in the first column you see where it said "educated and related stated and negotiated" that we do::: stress ah::: normally do not stress the –ate (sound)[3] as the primary stress but ah two syllables before" (lines 6 to 10).

As the teacher explained the task, the students did multiple activities to prepare for it – (still) getting the rubber bands out, looking at the teacher, looking at the workbook (lines 11 and 12). In this way, both the teacher and her students were continuously active and interactive – that is, the speaker was doing verbal and nonverbal behaviors, and so were the listeners, all addressing one another in various ways (Erickson, 2005).

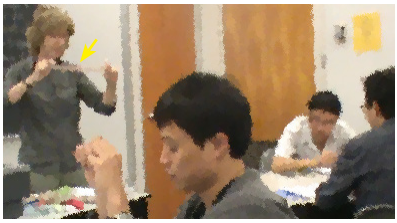
In line 13 the teacher marked the ending of her explanation with the boundary marker 'So.' She then read out loud the word 'educated' with the stress falling two syllables before –ate, and in the meantime her hands were stretching the rubber band on the stress to help the students notice it. The teacher's talk together with the rubber band demonstration helped to provide a language game which the students used to understand how the sound is produced. In line 14, a student, who came late, was knocking on the door. Despite the interruption, the students loudly repeated after the teacher '**ed**ucated' while their hands were stretching the rubber bands on the stressed syllable 'ed-' (line 15). Since it was a repeating task,

3 The –ate sound in "educ*ate*d, rel*ate*d, st*ate*d, and negoti*ate*d"

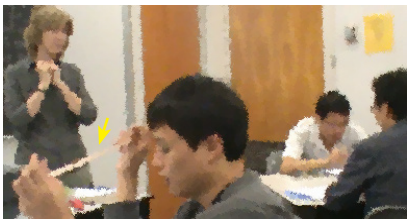
the students recognized the role that they were asked to perform – repeat after the teacher despite the interruption. By repeating and stretching the rubber bands after the teacher, the students showed that they were able to internalize the mechanism for pronouncing words that end in '–ate' and produced them on their own. The teacher's innovation of the rubber band to teach stressed syllables created a radical change in the nature of students' participation in the classroom. They quickly learned how to use the tool and explored it in their own environment. The students' adaptation to tool uses provided strong evidence that tools play a part both at a micro and macro level of social interaction (Keating, 2007). The tool was first used by individuals, and then through practice, it became handy and widely used by members of the classroom community.

In line 16 the teacher walked to the door and opened it for the student who came late with a friendly greeting and invitation 'Hi. Come on in.' To make sure the student knew that he did not miss much of the class material, the teacher informed him 'Just started' and then directed him to quickly join the class: 'Please sit down.' The teacher then hurried back to the current task and directed the students to repeat after her again: 'Ok. **Ed**ucated,' and in the meantime her hands were stretching the rubber band on the syllable 'ed-' (line 17). To the teacher, the first demonstration of 'educated' was not counted because of the interruption. She, therefore, directed the students to perform the word again. Without any questions or hesitation, the students repeated after the teacher '**ed**ucated' while their hands were stretching the rubber bands on the syllable 'ed-' (line 18). The teacher's demonstration and the students' response are referred to as *conditional relevance* – a term introduced by Schegloff (1968) to characterize participants' expectations of turn-taking in conversations.

In line 19 the teacher read out loud the word 're**la**ted' while stretching her rubber band on the stressed syllable '-la.' In line 20 the students repeated 're**la**ted' after the teacher, and in the meantime their hands were stretching their rubber bands on the same syllable. The teacher repeated the procedure with a demonstration of the word '**sta**ted' and the students followed her (lines 21 and 22). The teacher's demonstration and students' practice continued with the words 'negotiated,' 'excited,' 'invited,' 'ignited,' and 'united' (lines 23 and 24). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's demonstration of the word 'ig**ni**ted' and students' practice.



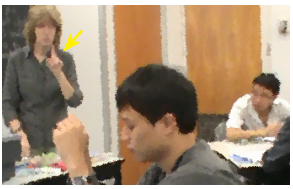
*Teacher's demonstration of 'ig**ni**ted'*



and student's practice

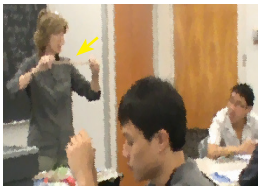
In line 25 the teacher continued to go through the word list 'con**tri**buted' while stretching her rubber band on the stressed syllable '-tri.' In line 26 the students repeated 'con**tri**buted' after the teacher with their rubber bands stressing on the

second syllable. The same pattern was repeated again for the word 'dis**tri**buted' in lines 27 and 28. Suddenly, the teacher stopped in the middle of the practice and commented on how the students often produce the two words: 'Yeah. And this is one that a lot of you would look at it and say **con**tributed and **dis**tributed' (lines 29-30). She then continued, 'But it's actually stressed on the second syllable. Try that one again. Con**tri**buted' (lines 30-34). While commenting on the students' pronunciation error, the teacher raised one finger while saying 'it's,' two fingers while saying 'actually stressed on the second syllable,' and then stretched her rubber band to indicate the stress on the syllable '-tri' of the word 'con**tri**buted.' The teacher's comment on the students' error was a form of explicit correction – the teacher explicitly pointed out the error and then provided a correct form for it (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). The teacher's finger raising on the word 'it' was to refer to the pronunciation of the word 'contributed' or 'distributed.' The metaphoric gesture 'it' and its homology with the abstract concept of pronunciation was the teacher's own creation. According to McNeill (1992), abstract pointing "is a gesture which the speaker appears to be pointing at an empty space but the space is, in fact, not empty; it is full of conceptual significance. Such an abstract deictic term implies a metaphoric use of space in which concepts are given spatial form, and this space can be indexed by pointing." (p. 173). In this way, the teacher's concept of pronunciation was given a spatial form, and this form was indexed by her pointing. Also, according to McNeill, abstract pointing is used to introduce a potential conversational topic, and the rest of the conversation should confirm this pattern. This is seen when the teacher, after the abstract pointing, subsequently raised two fingers to indicate the second syllable. The pointing, hence, served as an opening for a new topic on stress. Finally, she employed her hand movements on the rubber band to indicate the stress on 'con**tri**buted.' The teacher's talk together with her gestures and hand movement on the rubber band helped to show the students where the error was (the second syllable, not the first) and how to correct it (stretching the rubber band on the second syllable of 'con**tri**buted'). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's gestures and hand movement while explaining and correcting the students' error.



Raising one finger while saying 'it'

Two fingers while saying the second syllable

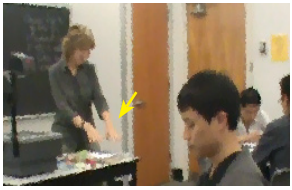


*Stretching the rubber band to indicate the stress on 'con**tri**buted'*

The teacher's directive 'Try that one again' successfully elicited a response from the students. This is seen in line 35 when they repeated after the teacher while their hands were stretching the rubber bands on the second syllable of 'con**tri**buted.' In discussing how directives are given and how children respond to them in families, M. Goodwin (2006) argued that directive/response sequences between parents and

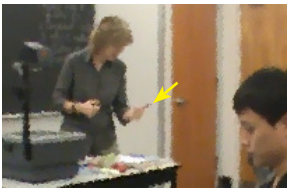
their children should be considered together with forms of facing formation (e.g., face-to-face) as well as different types of affective stance, mood, attitude, feeling, and disposition. To elicit full compliance with a directive, a parent must establish full attention to the task at hand (e.g., verbal announcement which provides a warrant for a next activity to take place and attunement to different types of facing formation to obtain joint attention). In this way, the teacher's success in eliciting compliance from the students was based on two factors. First, her imperative directive 'Try that one again' was not simply a request but rather a command which was directed with specific authority – that is, saying 'con**tri**buted' with the stress on the second syllable. Second, her position at the teacher's table while issuing the directive allowed her to establish a face-to-face position with her students and thus ensured their compliance. The same procedure was observed again in lines 36 and 37 with the teacher's demonstration and students' response for the word 'dis**tri**buted.' The practice then continued to the end of the word list (lines 38, 39, and 40).

In line 41 the teacher marked the ending of the practice with the boundary marker 'So.' She then summarized what the students had just practiced: 'These have been again words that end in t that uh::: have an ending going on whether ed or er or est or ing or any of those. Ah we see how that produces this ah flap or tap with voiced t.' While summarizing, the teacher moved her hands up and down the word list while looking at it. She then directed her gaze to the students and made a cutting gesture into her hand to illustrate the words that end in *-t*. Next, she listed the endings *-ed*, *-er*, *-est*, and *-ing* while her eyes were looking at the book. She then moved her hand around the page where the list is to indicate the words that the students had just practiced. After that, she made a cup-like shape gesture to indicate 'produce.' Finally, she moved her hand outward while uttering 'flap or tap' (lines 41 to 48). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's talk concurrently with her gestures.

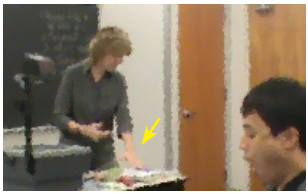


Hand movements to indicate 'these'

Cutting gesture to indicate words that end in –t



Hand listing



Hand movement to indicate 'those' in the word list

Cup-like shape gesture to indicate 'produce'

Outward hand-movement to indicate 'flap' or 'tap'

The teacher's hand movements up and down the word list while her eyes were on the book together with the deictic term 'these' presupposed that the students were attending to a specific place in the local environment with her. To use C. Goodwin's (2007) term, the teacher's hand movements which were linked to a meaningful artifact (the book) are referred to as an *environmentally coupled gesture*. The cutting gesture, designed with her right palm open while her left hand was making a cut into it, indicated those words that end in *-t*. The cut was performed precisely in association with the verb 'end.' Her precise timing of the arm-swing for the cut together with the pronunciation of 'end' served to make the meaning of 'words that end in t' clearer. Her verbal utterance 'words that end in t' did not help elicit a visual image of the relevant words, but by combining it with the cutting gesture, the teacher was able to create a more specific expression. The teacher's talk and cutting gesture, hence, can be regarded as two aspects of a single process (Kendon, 1997). The teacher then listed the endings that occur after *-t* such as *-ed*, or *-er*, or *-est*, or *-ing*. At the end of her listing, the teacher once again brought her students' attention back to the word list by moving her hand around it together with the deictic term 'those.' Here, the teacher presupposed that the students knew what 'those' referred to. Her hand movement which was linked to a meaningful artifact (the book) is another example of an environmentally coupled gesture. The teacher's hands in a cup-like shape and its association with the word 'produce' indicated the idea of sound production. According to McNeill (1985), "a conduit gesture exhibits a container or substance (e.g., forming a cup shape), whereas simultaneously the linguistic channel refers to an abstract concept (an appearance, content, comprehension, knowledge, language, meaning, art, etc.). The speech and context of speaking need not contain anything about containers or substances. To describe accurately a speaker's cognitive representation of an abstract concept, it is necessary to include the concrete images implied by conduit gestures" (pages 357-358). In this way, the teacher's hands in a cup-like shape were a conduit gesture. It exhibited a container while simultaneously the teacher's linguistic channel referred to the abstract concept of 'sound production.' The teacher's speech and context of speaking did not express anything about containers. To accurately describe her cognitive representation of the abstract concept 'sound production,' the teacher employed a conduit gesture (hands forming a cup-like shape) to illustrate its concrete image.

2. Using the body and rhythm to teach the stressed words in a sentence

This section discusses how the teacher uses the body and rhythm to teach the stressed words in a sentence. The transcription below illustrates the teacher's demonstration moment.

Note that the following abbreviations are used for names.

Tea: teacher Stu: student(s)

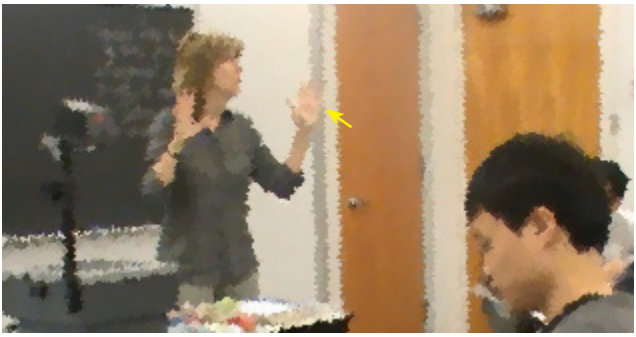
```
01   Tea:   What have you done?
02   Stu:   What have you done? ((looking at the teacher, hands
03          stretching the rubber bands))
04          Tea: Ok. We are already getting into the idea of rhythm in English,
```

```
05          and we we understand that words are not all equal in length or
06          equal in stress, and ah::: English has ah::: ((position the
07          body to prepare for the demonstration)) stress words ((hands
08          raising to indicate stress)) and (in) this case what and done
09          ((right hand directing to the right for 'what' then left hand
10          directing to the left for 'done')). What have you done? ((the
11          body switching to the right and the fingers of the right hand
12          snapping for 'what,' then switching the body to the left and
13          the fingers of the left hand snapping for 'done'))
14   Tea: ┌ What have you done? ((the body switching right and left
15        │ together with the fingers snapping as the body
16        │ moves))
17   Stu: └ What have you done? ((stretching their rubber bands))
18   Tea: ┌ What have you done? ((the body switching right and left
19        │ together with the fingers snapping as the body
20        │ moves))
21   Stu: └ What have you done? ((stretching their rubber bands))
22   Tea:   What have you done? ((the body switching right and left
23          together with the fingers snapping as the body
24          moves))
25   Stu:   ((looking at the teacher's demonstration))
26   Tea:   What have you done? ((stretching her rubber band on 'what' and
27          'done'))
28   Stu:   (multiple students repeating after the teacher)
29   Tea:   Ok. Can you kind of hear? ((hands waving)) The words are all
30          (strung) together ((right hand making a sweep from right to
31          left)). The stresses ((hands waving)) are on those two words
32          and there is that flap ((right hand making a cup-like shape
33          in front of her mouth)) sound.
```

In line 1 of the above segment the teacher said out loud the sentence 'What have you done?' In lines 2 and 3 the students repeated after the teacher while looking at her and stretching their rubber bands on the words 'what' and 'done.' The teacher's 'Okay' in line 4 signaled her readiness to move to the next topic (Beach, 1993). This is seen in her subsequent turn when she introduced the topic *rhythm* in English sentences: 'We are already getting into the idea of rhythm in English and we we understand that words are not all equal in length and equal in stress' (lines 4, 5, and 6). The teacher then signaled to the students her ongoing discussion of the topic with the token 'and ah:::' and then continued 'English has ah:::' while positioning her body to prepare for a demonstration (lines 6 and 7). Gullberg (1998) argued that hesitation and pause are generally taken to indicate *planning*. In this way, the teacher's utterance 'English has ah:::' was more likely to indicate her *planning* for the ongoing topic rather than her *ongoing* discussion of the topic. This is further supported by her embodied positioning to prepare for a demonstration. The picture below illustrates the teacher's embodied positioning to prepare for a demonstration concurrently with the token 'ah:::.'

The teacher's embodied positioning to prepare for a demonstration concurrently with the token 'ah:::'

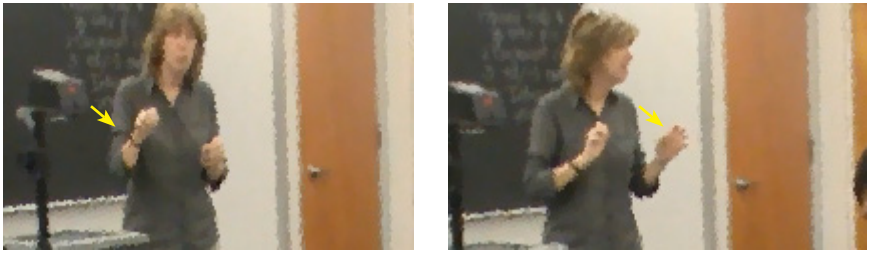
The teacher then suddenly decided to finish her turn rather than execute the demonstration that she had planned. This is seen in line 7 when she filled in 'stress words' to finish her sentence while switching her body back to a regular position and then raising her two hands to make an announcement that English has stressed words (lines 7 and 8). The picture below illustrates the teacher switching her body back to the regular position and her announcement.



The teacher's regular position and her announcement that English has stressed words

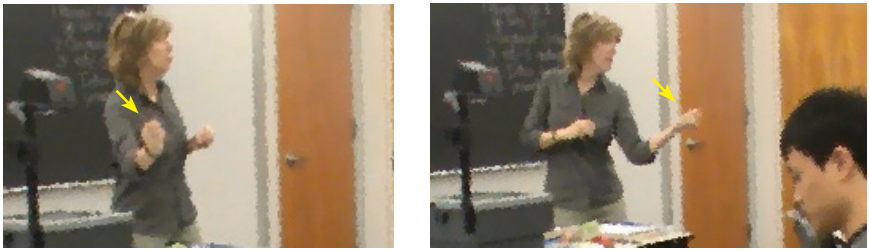
The teacher's hand-raising coincided with the phrase 'stress words.' In discussing mathematicians' gestures as words, McNeill (1992) observed that there were no gestures coinciding with phrases or clauses. Moreover, gestures tended to coincide with nouns rather than verbs. McNeill then suggested that it is appropriate to think of these gestures as imagistic words that take the place of linguistic words. The similarity between the teacher's gesture and those of McNeill's mathematicians suggested that her hands represented the imagistic word of the linguistic nominal 'stress words.' After the announcement, the teacher further pursued the topic, '(in) this case what and done' (line 8) while placing her right hand to the right to indicate 'what,' and then her left hand to the left to indicate 'done' (lines 9 and 10). By placing her right hand to the right for 'what' and her left hand to the left

for 'done,' the teacher was assigning a space for each of the relevant words. The picture below illustrates the moment when the teacher was assigning the space.



The teacher's space assignment for 'what' and then 'done'

According to McNeill (1992), "a part of space can be identified with a particular character or place in the story. Then subsequent events involving that character or place may be accompanied by gestures in the same space" (p. 171). In line with McNeill, after assigning the space for 'what' and 'done,' the teacher uttered 'What have you done?' (line 10). In association with her utterance, the teacher switched her body to the right and snapped the fingers on her right hand for 'what.' She then switched her body to the left and snapped the fingers on her left hand for 'done' (lines 10, 11, 12, and 13). The picture below illustrates the teacher's demonstration for 'what' and 'done.'

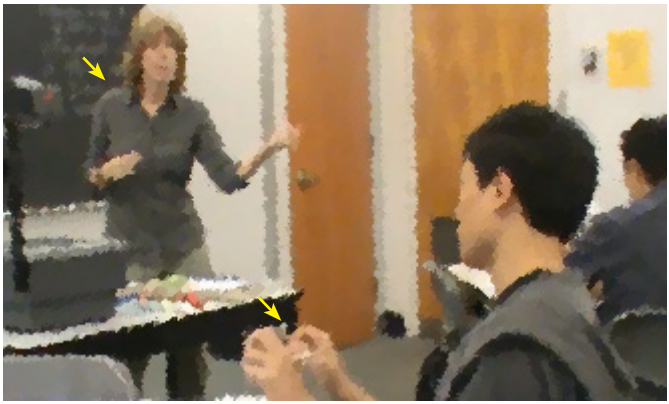


Switching her body and snapping her fingers to the right for 'what' and then to the left for 'done'

At this moment, the teacher's talk, embodied movements (switching her body from right to left), and gestures (finger snapping) worked together harmoniously to illustrate the stress rhythm for 'what' and 'done.' While, on the one hand, the teacher's talk, her embodied movements, and her gestures were designed to assign the stress for 'what' and 'done' at the phonological level of speech production; on the other hand, these actions induced us to seek or imagine a different context for the stressed words 'what' and 'done.' In this case, the front of the classroom was a stage on which the teacher was performing like a singer, and her students were the audience.

In lines 14, 15, and 16 the teacher demonstrated her performance the second time by saying 'What have you done?' while switching her body from right to left together with her fingers snapping on 'what' and 'done.' Her body movements,

her gestures, and her rhythm which were performed precisely on 'what' and 'done' motivated the students to perform the stressed words with her without being asked to do so. This is seen in line 17 when they repeated after her and in the meantime stretched their rubber bands on 'what' and 'done.' At this point, the teacher was like a singer on a stage who successfully engaged the audience (her students) in performing the rhythm on the stressed words with her. This singer-audience dynamic exchange was observed again when the teacher performed the stress rhythm a third time (lines 18, 19, and 20), and the students enthusiastically followed her by repeating and stretching their rubber bands to indicate the rhythm on 'what' and 'done' (line 21). The picture below illustrates the singer-audience dynamic exchange between the teacher and her students when she performed the stress rhythm the third time.

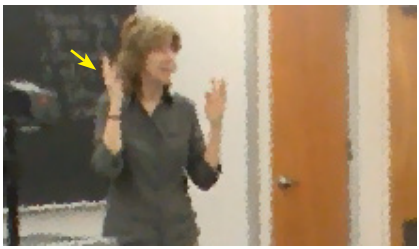


The teacher performed the rhythm the third time and the students' enthusiastic engagement

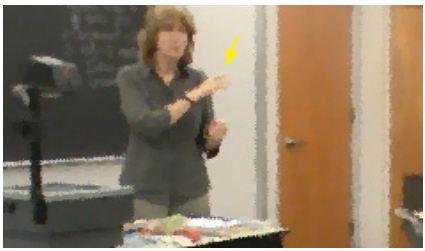
The teacher now was like a singer who was in the middle of her performance. She performed the rhythm on 'what' and 'done' the fourth time by switching her body from right to left together with her fingers snapping on 'what' and 'done' as she moved (lines 22, 23, and 24). Her students' interest, however, seemed to wind down at this time. They looked at the teacher's performance, but did not engage in the performance with her as they had done previously (line 25). While the students' interest seemed to come to an end, the teacher unexpectedly called their attention back to her performance by changing her demonstration. She performed the stress rhythm on 'what' and 'done' a fifth time, but this time not with her body switching from right to left and her fingers snapping on 'what' and 'done;' rather, with the rubber band in her hand, she stretched it precisely on 'what' and 'done' as she uttered them (lines 26 and 27). What is significant at this point was the teacher's employment of the rubber band to demonstrate the stressed words in a sentence. She had taught her students how to use their rubber bands to indicate the stress on syllables (as discussed in the previous section), and now she showed them how it could be used to indicate the stressed words in a sentence. The teacher's introduction of a new concept of stress (from syllables to words) fits with Krashen's

(1985) notion of comprehensible input – an input just beyond the learners' current language competence. Here, the learners' current language competence was their ability to use the rubber bands to indicate stressed syllables, and the input that was just beyond their current competence was to use the rubber bands to indicate the stressed words in a sentence. The teacher's use of the rubber band to indicate the stresses on 'what' and 'done' successfully brought the students' attention back to her performance. They repeated after her to show their engagement and support for her performance (line 28).

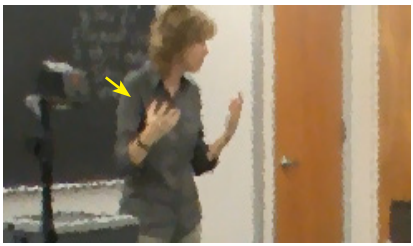
After multiple demonstrations, the teacher decided to end them at this point. She uttered 'Okay' to signal to her students that her performance was over, and she was now ready to move on (line 29). This is seen in her subsequent turn when she asked her students 'Can you kind of hear?' while waving her hand from her face to her ear to indicate the possibility of hearing (line 29). She then made a remark on how the sentence is produced by saying 'the words are all strung together,' while sweeping her hand from right to left (lines 29, 30, and 31). Here, the teacher wanted to let the students know that native speakers of English often produce the relevant sentence in a manner that is so fast that the individual words are not pronounced clearly and separately, but rather all are strung together. Even so, she stated that 'the stresses are on those two words,' while waving her hands near the center of her body to indicate 'the stresses' (line 31). She then continued 'and there is that flap sound,' and in the meantime, her hand made a cup-like shape in front of her mouth to indicate the flap (lines 32 and 33). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's talk simultaneously with her gestures.



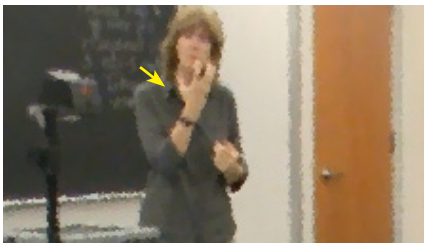
Hands waving close to her ear to indicate the possibility of hearing



Hand sweeping from right to left to indicate the words are strung together



Hands waving near the center to indicate 'the stresses'



Hand in a cup-like shape to indicate the flap

The teacher's hand movement from her face to her ear together with her utterance 'Can you kind of hear?' depicted the relationship between the verb 'hear' and the function of the organ 'ear.' Her sweeping gesture from right to left indicated how the words are all strung together. It was the abstract representation of how the words are clustered together, and thus how fast they are produced (e.g., as fast as a sweep of her hand). Her hands waving in association with the nominal 'the stresses' represented an imagistic gestalt of the meaning which is inherent in the relevant nominal phrase (her gesture was similar to that of McNeill's mathematicians discussed earlier). Her hand in a cup-like shape in front of her mouth indicated a flap. According to Goodman (1976), representation (here the teacher's hand in a cup-like shape) does not depend upon similarity between signifier and signified, but instead enables us to apprehend and imagine the objects (or concepts) in certain ways. We see that the teacher employed a series of gestures to indicate the concepts of hearing, stringing of the words in a sentence, the nominal phrase, and the flap sound. These gestures displayed the images of the relevant concepts which, according to McNeill (1992), are pragmatically co-expressive with speech.

It is important to highlight the teacher's gesture for the flap sound. We have seen in the previous section that the teacher's gesture for the flap was a hand extending outward. However, she formed her hand in a cup-like fashion for the flap in this section. The pictures below illustrate the teacher's hand mechanism for the flap in the previous section and in the current one, respectively.

The flap in the previous section

The flap in the current section

In her study of learners' perceptions of teachers' gestures in a foreign language class, Sime (2008) found that Mrs. A (the teacher)'s use of gesture for the word 'reflex' and 'copy' (as a verb with the meaning of imitating an action) was the same by moving her arms backwards and forwards in both situations. In Sime's view, this indicates that there is a lack of standardized patterns of gesture as opposed to the standardized form of words in a sentence. However, this did not prevent the students from understanding Mrs. A. On the contrary, they were able to use their teacher's gestures in conjunction with speech to decode meanings. Similar to Mrs. A's use of gesture in Sime's study, this teacher's varied use of gestures for the flap did not prevent the students from understanding her. Instead, they were able to associate her gestures with her speech to interpret their meaning in the same way as the students in Sime's study did.

3. Using gestures to demonstrate the articulation of the phrase 'It would'

This section discusses how the teacher uses concrete gestures to teach the articulation of the phrase 'It would.' The transcription below illustrates the teacher's demonstration moment.

Note that the following abbreviations are used for names.

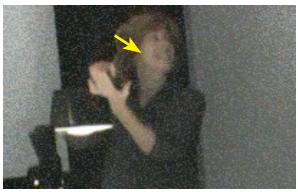
Tea: teacher Stu: student(s)

```
01  Tea:   It may be easier for you to just figure I am going to say it
02         ((left hand making a cut into right hand, tip of the tongue
03         touching the alveolar ridge and making an eh eh sound)).
04  Tea:   I am ready to do the double yoo ((tip of the tongue tries to
05         touch the alveolar ridge while speaking)).
06  Tea:   It ((left hand making a cut into right hand, lips rounding))
07         would ((left hand detaching from right hand))
08  Tea:   It ((tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge, left hand
09         making a cut into right hand, lips rounding)) would.
10  Tea:  ┌It would. It would. It would. It would. Okay?
11  Stu:  └It would. (multiple students)
12  Tea:   So you just have ((two fingers touching her cheeks)) to do a
13         little fancy ah::: work with your lips in order to put your
14         tongue on the alveolar ridge. Put your lips already rounded to
15         say the double yoo next((talking while lips are rounding))
16  Tea:  ┌It would. It would. It would.
17  Stu:  └It would.
18  Tea:   Okay. So if that is a difficult transition for you, practice it
19         ( ) probably. It would be a good idea. It would be a good
20         idea.
```

Since the phrase 'It would' is difficult for the students to pronounce, the teacher explained to them: 'It may be easier for you to just figure I am going to say it.' While speaking, the teacher performed a gesture of cutting into her hand by raising her right hand horizontally then bringing her left hand up to meet her right hand at a perpendicular angle for the word 'it.' Immediately after, the tip of her tongue then touched the alveolar ridge and made an 'eh eh' sound (lines 1, 2, and 3). Keeping her tongue in that position, the teacher continued 'I am ready to do the double yoo' (lines 4 and 5). The teacher then produced the word 'it' again using the cutting gesture (line 6). She then rounded her lips to produce the word 'would' and in the meantime disassembled her cutting gesture (lines 6 and 7). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's talk simultaneously with her gestures.

The teacher's cutting gesture for the word 'it'

Making the eh eh sound while tongue tip touching the alveolar ridge



Saying 'I am going to do the double yoo' while tongue tip touching the alveolar ridge

Making the cut again while producing 'it'

Lips rounding to produce 'would'

Producing 'would' while left hand disassembling from right hand

Step-by-step, the teacher demonstrated the mechanism to produce the phrase 'It would' for the students. First, she showed the students how the sound '-t' in 'it' is unreleased by making a cut into her hand. According to Calbris (2003),

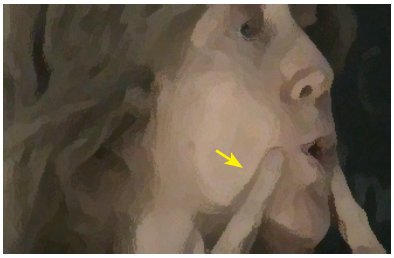
> "The schema of cutting underlines numerous and various notions: separation, cutting into elements, division into two halves, blockage, refusal.... Gesture represents the visual and proprioceptive operational schema and, through it, the two extremes of the semantic continuum stretching from the concrete to the abstract: it presents the cutting of a real object into pieces in the same way it represents the work of analysis" (p. 20).

In this way, the teacher's cutting gesture stretched from the concrete action of cutting a real object into pieces to the abstract action of how the sound '-t' is produced – that is, the tongue tip touches the alveolar ridge, and this blocks the 't' from being released. Second, she made an 'eh eh' sound while the tip of her tongue was touching the alveolar ridge. Her goal was to show the students that the tongue tip has to be in that particular position to articulate 'it.' Third, she announced 'I am going to do the double yoo' as her tongue tip touched against the alveolar ridge. Fourth, after showing the students how to articulate 'it,' the teacher produced the word while making the cut in her hand again. Fifth, she rounded her lips to do the 'w.' Last, she produced the word 'would' while disassembling her hand gesture to indicate that the cut was no longer relevant for 'would.' The disassembling of her hands from each other was not depicted in isolation but in the context of a series of gestures (from being cut for 'it' to being un-cut for 'would'). Hence, her disassembling gesture, hence, was in line with Streeck's (2009) claim that "it is not the single gestural act that depicts, but the series of such acts, which cumulatively build up an image" (p. 131).

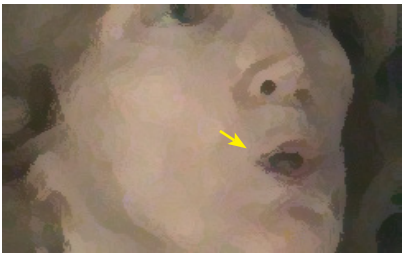
The teacher repeated the demonstration as she uttered 'It would' again (lines 8 and 9). Having demonstrated for the students how to put their tongues and their lips in a proper position for the phrase 'It would,' the teacher produced a series of 'It would. It would. It would. It would' (line 10). She then asked them 'Okay?' (line 10) to indicate her intention toward closure and her readiness to move to the next topic. After such a clear and vivid demonstration by the teacher, the students were ready to launch into practice. They repeated after the teacher while she was producing the series 'It would' without being asked to do so (line 11).

The teacher then marked the ending of her demonstration with the boundary marker 'So' and then continued 'You just have to do a little fancy ah::: work with

your lips in order to put your tongue on the alveolar ridge. Put your lips already rounded to say the double yoo next.' As she spoke, the teacher put two fingers on her cheeks near the lips to indicate the lip movement, and then rounded her lips to indicate the articulation of the 'w' (lines 12, 13, 14, and 15). The pictures below illustrate the teacher's talk coupled with her gestures.



Putting fingers on her cheeks near her lips to indicate the lip movement



Lips rounding to indicate the articulation of the 'w'

As she summarized for the students how to produce the phrase 'It would,' the teacher put two fingers on her cheeks near the lips to show the students that the lips had to make a particular motion by putting the tongue tip on the alveolar ridge. In discussing objective gestures, Gullberg (1998) grouped them into two kinds: deictic (pointing) gestures and physiographic gestures (gestures which visualize what they refer to). Gullberg then further grouped physiographic gestures into two sub-kinds: iconographic gestures which trace the form of a visual object and kineographic gestures which depict bodily actions. In this way, the teacher's gesture to her cheeks is a form of pointing gesture. The teacher's lips rounding to indicate the articulation of the 'w' is a form of kineographic gesture as it depicts a bodily action. The teacher's pointing and kineographic gestures together created a complete template for the students to review step-by-step how to articulate their lips to produce the phrase 'It would.' The teacher then produced the series 'It would. It would. It would' again (line 16). The students, once again, showed their engagement by repeating after the teacher 'It would' without being asked to do so (line 17). The teacher then marked her intention to close the topic with 'Okay' and the boundary marker 'So' (line 18). She then suggested the students to practice it on their own: 'if that is a difficult transition for you, practice it ( ) probably. It would be a good idea. It would be a good idea' (lines 18, 19, and 20). Here, the teacher realized that the transition of the tongue tip from the alveolar ridge for 'it' to the rounding of the lips for 'would' is difficult for the students. Hence, she suggested that they had better practice it with the example 'It would be a good idea.'

Conclusion: summary and pedagogical suggestions

1. Summary

This study looked at how a teacher used talk, the body, and material artifacts to teach pronunciation in an adult ESL classroom. It discussed how the teacher used material artifacts (rubber bands) to teach stressed syllables. The analysis revealed three factors that contributed to the teacher's success. First, the teacher's introduction of the rubber bands created a change in the nature of students' participation in the classroom. They quickly learned how to use the tool and explored it in their own environment. Second, the teacher's talk coupled with her gestures and the tool helped the students recognize their pronunciation error, and how to correct it. Lastly, the teacher's simultaneous talk and gestures to summarize the practice provided an opportunity for the students to review the material that they had just learned. In particular, the students did the following: they associated the deictic terms 'these' and 'those' with the word list through the teacher's environmentally coupled gesture; they made an inference between the teacher's cutting gesture and the unreleased '-t;' they reviewed the endings that occurs after '-t' through the teacher's listing gesture; they related the idea of 'productivity' with the teacher's hands in a cup-like shape and associated the productivity of a 'flap' or 'tap' through the teacher's outward hand-movement.

The study then looked at the teacher's use of rhythm and embodied movements to teach the stressed words in the sentence 'what have you done?' The analysis revealed that the teacher harmoniously employed talk, embodied movements, and gestures to teach the stresses on 'what' and 'done.' This was done by her body switching from right to left as she snapped her fingers on 'what' and 'done' when she uttered them. The teacher's performance, which was like that of a singer on a stage, successfully engaged the students in performing the stressed words with her. The analysis also showed how the teacher successfully scaffolded her students to use the rubber bands to illustrate the stressed words in a sentence (she had taught them to use the rubber bands to indicate the stress on syllables in words, and now she taught them to use the rubber bands to indicate the stresses within a sentence). Furthermore, the analysis showed that the teacher's concurrent talk and gestures as she concluded the demonstration provided the students a chance to review the stresses on 'what' and 'done' better than by talk alone. In particular, the teacher moved her hand close to her ear to ask the students if they could hear the stresses, made a sweep from right to left to illustrate how the words are strung together, created an imagistic gestalt of the meaning which is inherent in the nominal 'the stresses,' and formed her hand in a cup-like shape to indicate the flap sound.

Finally, the study discussed how the teacher taught the students to produce the phrase 'It would.' Step-by-step, the teacher used talk coupled with gestures to demonstrate how the phrase is produced. First, she employed a cutting gesture in association with the word 'it' to indicate that the sound '-t' is unreleased. Second, she made the 'eh eh' sound with her tongue tip touching the alveolar ridge to show the students that the tongue tip has to be in that particular position for 'it.' Third,

she alerted the students that she was going to do the 'w' with her tongue tip still touching the alveolar ridge. Fourth, she made the cutting gesture into her hand while producing 'it' again. Fifth, she rounded her lips to produce the 'w.' Lastly, she produced the word 'would' while disassembling her hand gesture to indicate that the cut was no longer relevant for 'would.' The teacher's vivid demonstration encouraged the students to repeat after her without being asked to do so. At the conclusion of her demonstration, the teacher once again used talk simultaneously with gestures to create a complete template for the students to review, step-by-step, how the phrase is produced. In particular, she pointed at her lips to show the students how the lips had to make a particular movement for 'it,' and then rounded her lips to articulate the 'w.' The teacher's demonstration successfully elicited students' involvement. They once again repeated after her without being asked to do so.

2. Pedagogical suggestions

The findings from the study yield the following pedagogical suggestions for teachers when teaching stressed syllables/words and the articulation of complicated phrases such as 'It would.'

When teaching stressed syllables/words, the teacher should use an artifact like a rubber band to show the students where the stress falls on a syllable in a word, or on a word in a sentence by stretching the rubber band on the stressed syllable/word (the teacher can also use other tools such as a stick or a tin can and create a sound as s/he produces a stressed syllable or a stressed word). As seen from the study, the students quickly learned how to use the rubber band to illustrate the stressed syllables/words and then explored using it in their own environment. In this way, the students not only learned to use the tool, they also learned the mechanism for producing stressed syllables and words (e.g., they learned where the stress is, and how and when to produce it). In addition, the teacher should incorporate rhythm with body movements when teaching stressed words in a sentence. By incorporating rhythm with body movements, the teacher is like a singer performing on a stage. This enhances the chances of eliciting students' involvement. As evidenced in the study, the students enthusiastically performed the task with the teacher without being asked to do so. When a teacher transforms her role to be like a singer, s/he is more likely to generate a positive response and involvement from the students.

When teaching the articulation of complicated phrases, the teacher should clearly demonstrate, step-by-step, how a complicated phrase is produced. In particular, the teacher should show her students which articulators are needed and where to place them. This can be done through the teacher's demonstration of how her tongue, alveolar ridge, lips, or teeth are properly positioned, and then how she articulates them. The teacher can also draw the articulators and the places of articulation on the board to help the students see them more clearly. The teacher then can give the students examples to practice, first with her guidance, and then on their own.

Transcription Symbols

Data are transcribed according to the system developed by Jefferson and described in Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974: 731-733), with adaptation.
Bold italics: Italics indicate some form of emphasis, which may be signaled by changes in pitch and/or amplitude (Jefferson used underlining).
Overlap bracket: A left bracket marks the point at which the current talk is overlapped by other talk.
Lengthening: Colons indicate that the sound immediately preceding has been noticeably lengthened.
Intonation: Punctuation symbols are used to mark intonation changes rather than as grammatical symbols:

A period indicates a falling pitch contour.

A question mark indicates a raising pitch contour.

Comments: Double parentheses enclose material that is not part of the talk being transcribed.
Problematic Hearing: Material in single parentheses indicates a hearing that the transcriber was uncertain about.
Time: Numbers in parentheses indicate silence, represented in seconds. For example, (5.0) represents 5 seconds of silence.
Pause: A dot in parentheses (.) indicates a micropause. It is hearable but not readily measurable.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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