MULTIMODAL COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES FOR RESOLVING MISCOMMUNICATION IN MULTILINGUAL WRITING CLASSROOMS

A Dissertation in
Applied Linguistics
by
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2015
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This study investigates the communicative strategies of so-called non-native speakers or English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) speakers in the context of ESL writing classrooms at an U.S. university by employing a sequential analysis combined with ethnographic information. Following the latest work on ELF academic discourse (e.g. Björkman, 2013; Kaur, 2011b, 2011c; Mauranen, 2012; Smit, 2010), it closely examines how ELF speakers resolve or prevent miscommunication through repair conducted by using various multimodal interactional resources available in the classroom ecology (van Lier, 2000, 2004). Such ecological resources include gesture, embodied action, non-verbal vocalization (e.g., laughter and silence), classroom artifacts, and people in the classroom besides verbal speech. This study is one of the first attempts to illuminate the complex process of resolving or preventing miscommunication among ELF speakers by adopting a multimodal orientation to ELF interactional analysis and to expand the notion of ELF speakers’ communicative competence.

Through a sequential analysis with ethnographic information gained from regular classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews, the following patterns of resolving or preventing miscommunication among ELF speakers in the writing classroom have emerged. The first pattern is enhanced explicitness (e.g., Mauranen, 2007). Namely, in order to create extra explicit meaning, multilingual instructors and students employ various communicative strategies, including repeating key words/phrases, explicating with examples, using discourse markers, employing gesture that visualizes and concretizes abstract components, and combining information on PowerPoint slides and worksheets with verbal speech. The second pattern is the use of laughter and humor to mitigate face-threats related to overt repairs and to engage in relational work through laughing together. Another pattern is voluntary help by those who are the third-party participants in miscommunication phenomena, especially by representing their
peer’s point of view. As many studies (e.g., Hülmbauer, 2009; Kaur, 2011c; Meierkord, 1998) have demonstrated, ELF speakers in these academic writing classrooms generally display a tolerant attitude toward language variation and interactive cooperativeness. Nevertheless, the data demonstrates that multilingual students sometimes highlight problems through laughter and ridicule, supporting the claim that ELF speakers are not always collaborative and tolerant of perceived communicative problems (Jenks, 2012; Knapp, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2004). In other words, it became clear that the nature of ELF interactions is indeed context-dependent and cannot be characterized in definite manners (Mortensen, 2013). Lastly, the data analysis clearly reveals that these ELF speakers in the academic writing classrooms effectively coordinate multiple semiotic resources along with speech by an “ensemble” of the semiotic modes in order to achieve mutual attention to critical information and make their meaning transparent for their interlocutors, which contributes to their communicative success.

To conclude, I argue that miscommunication can be beneficial in ELF speakers’ achieving mutual understanding because it creates an interactional space wherein they can explicitly negotiate various layers of differences and collaboratively construct situated understanding. Furthermore, miscommunication can lead to building solidarity and relationships among classroom members. In other words, this study projects an alternative and positive picture of miscommunication phenomena rather than conceiving them as something that always brings negative consequences owing to the nature of intercultural communication simply caused by cultural and linguistic differences. This study also provides important pedagogical implications and suggestions for English language learning and teacher education. Finally, through integrating an analysis of ELF speakers’ use of multimodal and embodied interactional resources for meaning making, this study can overcome the “lingual bias” (Block, 2014, p. 56) that focuses
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Acknowledgments

I would like to express my greatest appreciation to my academic advisor and dissertation committee chair, Dr. Suresh Canagarajah for his guidance and encouragement throughout my five years in the Applied Linguistics program at Penn State. He has always raised critical comments that have enabled me to think more and pushed me to grow academically. Despite his very busy schedule, he has been nevertheless approachable and friendly all the time. Without his generous assistance, the completion of this dissertation would not have been possible. Also, he has believed in my competence as a scholar, which gave me confidence in finishing my dissertation work. Once I start my career as a professor very soon, I would like to also guide my students through providing them critical questions while giving encouragement at the same time as he exactly did to me.

My deepest gratitude also goes to my committee members, Dr. Susan Strauss, Dr. Karen Johnson, Dr. Xioaye You, and Dr. Ryuko Kubota for their advice and their insights on my dissertation. All of their diverse perspectives given through the process of comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal defense, and dissertation defense have uniquely shaped and enriched my dissertation work. I will definitely miss exciting discussion moments that I have had with such wonderful scholars once I graduate from this program. I also would like to extend my gratitude to the Applied Linguistics program at Penn State for supporting me financially through providing various teaching and research assistantships for five years. Thanks to their generous support, I was able to gain invaluable experience as a graduate instructor and researcher in the process of completing the PhD program, which prepared me for being a full-fledged scholar. I am also grateful for the Watz Dissertation Fellowship from Center for Language Acquisition for supporting my dissertation project. I am very thankful to the CRELLT (Center for Research on English Language Learning and Teaching) CA data sessions organized by Dr. Joan Kelly Hall.
and graduate students, which provided me an opportunity to share my dissertation data and get alternative, diverse perspectives for my data analysis. Furthermore, this dissertation would not have been possible without two wonderful ex-colleagues and instructors, who generously allowed me to collect data in their writing classrooms and encouraged the students to participate in my dissertation study. I cannot imagine how busy they were in managing all their teaching duties while participating in my research project for an entire semester. Without their and their students’ great support in participating in my dissertation research, I would not be able to complete the data collection successfully.

In addition, I would like to express a special thanks to my colleague and friend, Dr. Tania Smotrova for her continuous feedback and guidance on the gestural component of my dissertation. Joint viewing and discussion of my dissertation data with her has always generated new perspectives, which often made me change the analysis and enriched it in critical ways. It became an indeed entertaining and eye-opening opportunity when discussing on gesture use among ELF speakers with her. I am also grateful to my friend and supporter, Dr. George O’Neal for his careful reading of my all dissertation drafts and proofreading them thoroughly. His continuous encouragement and appreciation of my work truly moved my dissertation writing forward. Also, I want to thank Mr. Akira Kondo for our regular conversation about the progress of our dissertation work. When I was emotionally down and lost my way, his optimistic view about life and encouragement let me focus on the dissertation writing and to change myself into a different persona with more positive views. I also feel very grateful to have had the opportunity to know my fellow PhD students and friends, including Houxiang Li, Mei-Hsing Tsai, Katya Arshavskaya, Alissa Harding, Kaushalya Perela, Mint Leelsaetakul, Abby Dobs, Kwanghoon Yoon, Sheng-hsun Lee, Dingding Jia, Eunjeong Lee, and Ben Pin-Yun Wang. Casual
conversation and academic discussion with those precious friends enabled me to continue my PhD work. They made my PhD life “colorful” and “delightful” especially when it was extremely cold and gloomy here in State College. I also feel so lucky to have met a previous co-worker and mentor, Mr. Takenori Irikura, who gave me a number of great advices for teaching English at secondary schools and pushed me to the road for an academic career as an Applied Linguist, where I am now. I owe him a lot and he is the person who developed me as an educator who enjoys teaching English and communicating with students in the language classroom. I would also like to express my whole-hearted gratitude to Yufei Shen for being together and supporting me here when I needed it most during my dissertation writing. I would not have been able to complete this dissertation without his support, encouragement and faith in me. Finally, I could not be more thankful to my mother, Tomiko Matsumoto who allowed me to study in the U.S. and always supported and trusted me even though we are apart. She does not explicitly express her emotions, but I know that she loves me and believes in me, which gave me a lot of confidence as a whole person. I cannot express how much I appreciate everyone’s support to complete my PhD study and dissertation. “Arigato,” everyone! Life is wonderful because it is filled with a lot of unexpected and unimaginable opportunities to meet and know people and spend time with them. With all of the great memories, I will embark on a new life adventure as a multilingual scholar and teaching professional…
Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Aims and Scope of the Study

What do English as a second language (ESL) writing classroom interactions at U.S. universities look like? What kinds of miscommunication arise in such multilingual writing classroom contexts? What possible factors lead to miscommunication in such intercultural communication? What kinds of communicative strategies do multilingual instructors and students employ in order to deal with or prevent such ‘problematic’ moments? How are non-verbal resources employed along with verbal speech for achieving mutual understanding in such academic contexts? How do the classroom interactions possibly influence students’ writing? Is such miscommunication always ‘problematic’ in that it brings negative consequences? What are the potential means for making intercultural academic communication successful? This dissertation attempts to answer these questions from various angles.

It is a matter of fact that a large part of international communication today is conducted in a lingua franca, and that the majority of such lingua franca interactions worldwide often take place in English. English as a lingua franca (hereafter ELF) in such interactional contexts as business and academic settings is normally employed among people with a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. For instance, because of globalization, recently higher educational institutions like universities are more and more internationalized by accepting students from different countries, thus requiring English as a means for communication.

The new millennium witnessed increased research interest in the phenomenon of ELF especially after the first appearance of influential ELF studies (e.g., Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001). ELF research has to great degree contributed to exhibiting and understanding the
phenomena of English as a “contact language” (Firth, 1996, p. 240) and established the fact that expanding circle speakers (i.e., speakers in English as a foreign language context) do not always depend on inner circle norms (e.g., American or British English). Furthermore, it has demonstrated that Englishes by ELF speakers are not deficient, and that they can effectively achieve mutual understanding. Until now, the study of English as a lingua franca has been established as a field of research in its own right. As its recent trends, a number of researchers in the field of ELF (e.g., Björkman, 2013; Mauranen, 2012; Smit, 2010; Kaur 2009b) have started to examine ELF academic discourse, focusing on ELF speaker communicative strategies at university settings in various geographical locations.

Aligned with such ELF research trends, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the complex process in which ELF speakers try to either resolve or prevent miscommunication in multilingual writing classrooms. It closely examines naturally-occurring classroom interactions with the aim of describing and interpreting in-depth what kinds of communicative strategies are involved when both verbal and non-verbal resources are employed among ELF speakers for negotiating multiple layers of differences (e.g., linguistic and cultural backgrounds, English proficiency, pronunciation, content knowledge, and even unique personal characteristics) and dealing with miscommunication.

In order to accomplish these goals, this study examines data comprising approximately 45 hours of video recordings of multilingual writing classroom interactions at a U.S. university and carefully selects various kinds of ‘problematic’ moments of classroom interactions, in which ELF speakers work hard to resolve or prevent communicative problems at hand. The identification and selection of data excerpts for analysis are conducted based on regular classroom observation, ethnographic notes taken during the classroom observation, and
stimulated recall interviews with participants. The participants for this study are international undergraduate students and their multilingual instructors, both of whom are so-called non-native speakers of English, or as I prefer to call them “ELF speakers.” My own definition of ELF (see a fuller discussion on this definition in Chapter 2) emphasizes the aspect of language use or *practice* rather than positing it as a distinct language system in that ELF is employed in any interactional context where speakers of different first languages need a means of communication and where shared-ness is achieved through the actual process of interactional practice.

This study utilizes a sequential analysis along with ethnographic information gained through regular classroom observation and stimulated recall interview. The reason for adopting this methodology is that sequential analysis has the analytical power and rigor of exhibiting the detailed and complex *process* of resolving each unique miscommunication phenomenon and negotiating and achieving mutual understanding. Furthermore, gaining the participants’ own (re)interpretations allows me to take into consideration the rich contextual factors (e.g., participants’ emotions and relationships among interlocutors) involving each miscommunication, which might be unavailable through a sequential analysis only, and to demonstrate *multiple realities* associated to each miscommunication instance from each individual participant’s viewpoint. Here, multiple realities indicate the interlocutors’ and analyst’s (re)interpretations regarding how miscommunication phenomena are understood.

The present study contributes to the research of ELF interactional analysis in general and ELF pragmatics or communicative strategies in particular, by proposing a new definition of ELF through providing a more holistic view of language and by developing multimodal orientation to ELF interactional analysis through integrating perspectives from translilingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2007) and the multimodal turn (Block, 2014). In fact,
this study actually conducts ELF multimodal analysis through the use of video-recorded data. For the multimodal analysis, especially for analyzing gesture systematically, McNeill’s (1992, 2005) theoretical and analytical framework is employed. It also expands on the recent studies of ELF academic discourse by investigating a different interactional context, namely academic writing classrooms in a U.S. university, which will allow a comparison with other academic ELF interactional studies in Europe. Furthermore, this study attempts to shift a common, negative view toward miscommunication into something positive, by reconceptualizing miscommunication sequences as an interactional space where ELF speakers can explicitly negotiate understanding and possibly build solidarity and relationship through their efforts to negotiate differences.

This study has implications for English language pedagogy and language teacher education, suggesting that multilingual instructors and students need to be more aware of the effectiveness of coordinating ecological, multimodal interactional resources along with speech as part of their communicative strategies. In other words, verbal speech is not complete itself in terms of making sense of ELF speakers’ complex meaning-making process in their academic discourse. Instead, ELF speakers need an “ensemble” of multiple semiotic modes in order to achieve mutual attention to critical information and make their meaning transparent, which contributes to communicative success. This indicates that ELF speakers, including both multilingual students and instructors, should develop more sophisticated pragmatic devices for being successful in intercultural academic communication. More broadly, this study also calls for a shift in the goals of English language teaching and learning toward developing multilingual students’ pragmatic competence, or more precisely communicative strategies for negotiating differences such as accommodation skills and abilities to combine multiple semiotic modes for
communicative success rather than approximating to ‘native-speaker’ norms. Furthermore, this study can inform the field of language teacher education of the importance of developing language teachers’ awareness and readiness for envisioning miscommunication in multilingual classrooms as a space for negotiating understanding.

1.2 The organization of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of eight chapters including this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 provides an overview of extant literature on ELF interactional research, miscommunication, politeness, and laughter and humor in interaction, all of which will become a theoretical base for the data analysis chapters which follow. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this study, many issues in miscommunication and humor-related research are not addressed in a comprehensive manner. What has been selected in the literature review mainly provides direct support for the present study. Chapter 3 describes methodology, the participants, and data collection procedures in details, especially explicating why a sequential analysis is employed along with a comparison with ethnographic information and what “miscommunication” and “gesture” mean for the present study.

Chapters 4 through 7 constitute the major analytic portions of the dissertation. All of these chapters are engaged in the multimodal analysis of ELF interactions, therefore focusing on non-verbal, ecological, multimodal resources employed by ELF speakers for either preventing or resolving miscommunication in multilingual writing classrooms. First, the unique functions of gestures (including iconic, metaphoric, deictic, and beat) and embodied actions are closely examined in Chapter 4. Next, Chapter 5 delves into the roles of non-verbal vocalization, including laughter and silence in relation to miscommunication phenomena. Finally, Chapter 6 presents how classroom artifacts often integrated by gestures (specifically deictic gestures)
uniquely function and at times create unexpected miscommunication while Chapter 7 illustrates the processes by which third-party participants (i.e., instructors or students who are not originally involved in miscommunication phenomena but later actively join in the sequences) voluntarily help resolve miscommunication. The dissertation concludes with Chapter 8, which summarizes the major findings in relation to the research questions and the analytical foci for each data analysis chapter, the contributions, and implications of the present study, along with its limitations and directions for future research.
Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of the following five sections that will become a firm theoretical foundation for analyzing and interpreting classroom interactional data qualitatively. The specific target for analysis is miscommunication phenomena among English as a lingua franca (ELF) speakers in the context of ESL writing classrooms at a US university. What follows are the five sections: 1) ELF communicative strategies and academic discourse; 2) miscommunication and its phenomenon in ELF interactions; 3) roles of politeness in ELF interactions; 4) functions of laughter and conversational humor in ELF interactions; and 5) research questions. The first two sections become an overarching theoretical framework since the present study focuses on ELF speakers’ communicative strategies when facing miscommunication in classroom interactional contexts. The last two sections are specifically related to miscommunication, which become useful analytical tools for interpreting how ELF speakers can resolve miscommunication, while politeness (or face), laughter and conversational humor being taken into consideration.

2.2 ELF communicative strategies and academic discourse

First of all, in this section, the concept of English as a lingua franca will be explicated. Since ELF became common in applied linguistics, there have been hitherto a lot of debates and troubles associated to how to define ELF as an object of study. Thus, it is important to review various viewpoints regarding ELF and to develop a thorough definition of ELF for this study. After considering the concepts of ELF, preceding studies regarding ELF pragmatics and emerging ones about ELF academic discourse at university settings will be reviewed. Lastly, building on the recent conceptualizations of ELF, the present study further integrates an
embodied and multimodal orientation to ELF, through taking into consideration translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2007) and multimodal turn (Block, 2014).

2.2.1 Theoretical conceptualizations of ELF

It is a matter of fact that a large part of international communication today is conducted in a lingua franca, and that the majority of such lingua franca interactions worldwide takes place in English. English as a lingua franca has received much scholarly attention since the beginning of the new millennium (e.g., Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001). In fact, ELF itself has been conceptualized in a number of different ways. For instance, House (1999) defines ELF interactions as “interactions between members of two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue” (p. 74). In a similar vein, Firth (1996) develops the term Lingua franca English to refer to “a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language for communication” (p. 240, emphasis in original). These two share a view that ELF is a tool for intercultural communication in which so-called native English speakers are absent.

On the other hand, Jenkins (2000, 2002, 2006), Seidlhofer (2001, 2009a, 2011), and Mauranen (2012) have developed conceptualizations of ELF on their own. During the period of its inception, ELF used to exclude ‘native’ speakers from its analysis, which echoes with Firth and House’s definitions introduced above, possibly because its original focus was to legitimize English language use in the expanding circle, which was considered as norm-dependent based on Kachru’s (1985, 1992) World Englishes paradigm. Furthermore, during early 2000s, ELF has been rather conceived as a ‘language system’ or a ‘variety’ that can be described, reified, and codified in terms of distinctive linguistic features, as observed in projects of collecting
interactional data (e.g., two ELF corpora, namely ELFA and VOICE) in order to identify the lingua franca core (LFC) that is claimed to be critical for intelligibility across English varieties.

Contrastively, as its recent trend, the theoretical constructs and approaches of ELF have been refined even though there is still some degree of inconsistency in that each ELF scholar continues to seek pre-existing shared linguistic forms (see Jenkins, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009a). It is notable that ELF clearly recognizes that ‘native’ speakers also participate in lingua franca communication. As Seidlhofer (2009a) remarks, “Obviously communication via ELF frequently happens in and across all three of Kachru’s circles” (p. 236). Therefore, as its newer conceptualization, ELF is defined as communication in English chosen as the common language among speakers who have different “linguacultures” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 164), which entails second language users, foreign language users, and native speakers as well. Similarly, Seidlhofer (2011) defines ELF as “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (p. 7, emphasis added). Mauranen (2012) further argues that using a lingua franca indicates “being a user of a second language (L2) but not a learner” (p. 4). In other words, it is considered that ELF speakers equal the “users” of English as a means of authentic communication and that English is not an object of learning for them.

In addition, through incorporating perspectives of Pennycook (2007) and Canagarajah’s (2013) translingual practice, ELF has gradually moved closer to the practice-based approach. The practice-based approach “focuses on accounting for communicative success based on negotiation strategies, treating form as emergent from these strategies” (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 60). In this light, the newer ELF approach has given more emphasis to the exploration of pragmatics negotiation practices and communicative strategies instead of identifying LFC.
Furthermore, based on a critical appraisal of various existing ELF definitions, Mortensen (2013) attempts to provide an alternative approach to the conceptualization of ELF, simply defining it as “the use of English in a lingua franca scenario” (p. 36, emphasis added). Language scenario here is understood as the linguistic resources available in a given communicative encounter between two or more speakers by virtue of their individual language repertoires. His alternative definition, which is close to Seidlhofer’s (2011) discussed above, proposes a more general, wider, function-based view of ELF and underscores “language use” or practice rather than positing ELF as a distinct, independent language system that tends to lead to attempts to reify ELF as a ‘bounded’ object.

Considering the context of the present study, I argue that multilingual writing classrooms in the U.S. are construed as contact zone or ELF interactions where English functions as a contact language employed among people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Pratt (1991) defines contact zones as “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power” (p. 34). Although I do not envisage multilingual writing classrooms as such a gloomy space where cultures clash and grapple and people struggle with power relations, I consider the writing classrooms as such contact zone or ELF interactions where multilingual students and instructors try to achieve mutual understanding through negotiation strategies despite their differences in terms of language, culture, proficiency, personal backgrounds, and so on.

As for ELF’s important theoretical underpinning, it is argued that all interlocutors who participate in ELF communication need to make adjustments to local varieties and engage in negotiation for the benefit of all interlocutors, which is not necessary to so-called native speaker norms. In short, the ELF approach focuses on interactional achievements in constructing mutual
understanding. This viewpoint is quite distinctive from SLA that typically examines communication between ‘NSs’ and ‘NNSs.’ Firth and Wagner (1997) criticize SLA’s analytical framework that simply compares L2 with L1 speakers of English. However, Jenkins (2007) critiques Firth’s take on ELF in his approach in that he originally demonstrated how English can be used successfully in lingua franca communication despite ‘deficiencies,’ in comparison to ‘native’ speakers’ use. Rather, from an ELF perspective, it is required to investigate ELF interactions in its own right and to describe them in its own terms independent of ‘native’ speaker norms. More specifically, it attempts to examine differences from native speaker norms as the possibility of “legitimate variances” through taking into consideration communicative effectiveness instead of their linguistic accuracy.

To sum up so far, instead of using the term, ‘non-native’ speakers that implies that ‘non-native’ speakers should aspire to the ‘native-ness’ (Jenkins, 2000), this study utilizes an alternative term, “ELF.” Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the present study goes beyond the current conceptualizations of ELF through integrating embodied and multimodal perspectives. I argue that current ELF conceptualization and research agenda entail the “lingual bias” (Block, 2014, p. 56). According to Block (2014), in the field of SLA and multilingualism, there is a general “tendency to conceive of communicative practices exclusively in terms of the linguistic (morphology, syntax, phonology, lexis)” (p. 56). It is common that gesture and other embodied actions tend to be considered mere illustrative supports to speech. In other words, Block (2014) argues that language should be not analyzed in isolation without considering a range of embodied and multimodal resources simultaneously aligned with linguistic elements. The present study integrates such embodied and multimodal orientation as a missing component for ELF conceptualizations that can enrich ELF research endeavor.
Similarly, translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013, 2014) also takes into consideration semiotic resources “beyond words” to construct meanings. Canagarajah (2014) rightly argues that language is seen “as one of many sign systems that involves different symbolic means of representation and working in alignment with diverse modalities, media, and ecologies” (pp. 76-77). Simply put, from a perspective of translingual practice, meaning making is considered as social practice engaging holistically with other ecological and contextual affordances. Furthermore, this approach also discusses performative competence to negotiate diverse linguistic norms in contact situations without pre-assuming shared knowledge of linguistic forms, norms, and conventions. In other words, shared-ness is not pre-given but “achieved” through the process of interactional practice.

To recap, through combing perspectives of multimodal orientation and translingual approach, this present study develops a more holistic and multimodal orientation to ELF conceptualizations, which differs from the existing orientation of ELF. The present study incorporates multimodal interactional resources into verbal components for the analysis of ELF speakers’ meaning making processes. By adopting Seidlhofer’s (2011) definition, this study defines ELF as any use of English and possibly other available language(s) (which encompasses not only linguistic elements but also non-verbal, embodied, and multimodal interactional resources employed for meaning-making potentials, such as gesture, embodied actions, non-verbal vocalizations, people, and material objects in the environment) among speakers of different first languages and any interactional context where shared-ness is achieved through the actual process of interactional practice. In other words, this definition expands what ELF actually entails, which includes both linguistic and non-linguistics resources, and highlights the function of its English use instead of positing it as a language system.
2.2.2 ELF pragmatic strategies

As its latest trend, as Jenkins, Cogo, and Dewey (2011) point out, more and more ELF research has been involved in describing how interactions in multilingual communities are successfully achieved, namely through ELF speakers’ pragmatic strategies (e.g., Firth, 1996; House, 1999; Meierkord, 2000; Wagner & Firth, 1997). As mentioned in the previous section, one of the reasons for the popularity of investigating pragmatic competence among ELF speakers is that it has moved closer to the practice-based approach.

Since the present study tries to analyze ELF speakers’ interactions and identify their communicative strategies for resolving miscommunication, I will summarize four major findings on ELF pragmatic research in general regardless of differences in terms of interactional contexts (either formal settings such as classrooms and business meetings, or informal settings like student residence talk). First and foremost, a number of ELF pragmatic studies (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Firth, 2009a, 2009b; House, 2003; Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Mauranen, 2006a, 2007, 2012; Meierkord, 1998, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004, 2009b) has found out that ELF interactions mostly demonstrate a high degree of interactional robustness, cooperation, consensus-seeking behavior, and resourcefulness among ELF speakers.

Furthermore, it is reported that in such interactions overt misunderstanding is less frequent despite supposedly being predisposed to misunderstanding because of their variance in language form, proficiency, and culture (e.g., Mauranen, 2006a: Kaur, 2011b; Seidlhofer, 2004). This finding is clearly opposed to Gass and Varonis’s (1991) argument: “When interlocutors do not share the same native language or the same sociocultural rules of discourse, the possibility for miscommunication is profound” (p. 122). To put it differently, interactional achievement of mutual understanding through negotiation strategies seems to be a major characteristic of ELF
communication, and a strong orientation towards securing mutual intelligibility may exist. In relation to it, it is found that ELF speakers have a collaborative, humble, and tolerant attitude toward differences that interlocutors generally bring with them (e.g., Hülmbauer, 2009; Kaur, 2011c). In fact, Meierkord (1998, 2000) specifically attributes successful ELF communication to such ELF speakers’ cooperative and collaborative attitudes. Secondly, when non-understanding occurs, ELF interlocutors often share responsibility for repair and exhibit a high degree of interactional competence in the way they signal non-understanding so as not to disrupt the interactional flow and yet provide enough contextual information to the interlocutor for the problem to be solved (Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Kaur, 2009a; Meierkord, 2000; Pitzl, 2005).

Thirdly, ELF pragmatic research that examines the turn-taking behavior in actual interaction, has specified a variety of ELF speakers’ adept communicative strategies for achieving mutual understanding. For instance, according to a number of studies (Cogo, 2009; Hülmbauer, 2009; Hülmbauer et al., 2009; Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Matsumoto, 2011; Mauranen, 2007, 2012; Watterson, 2008), repetition has been identified as one of the most common, and robust strategies among ELF speakers that ensure communicative success despite their differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such repetition seems to fulfill the functions of “ensuring accuracy of understanding,” thereby clarifying meaning, confirming each other’s interactional construction, and “showing listenership” (Hülmbauer, 2009, p. 333). Cogo (2009) similarly argues that repetition, which is recycling of speakers’ utterances, is used as an accommodation strategy (see Giles et al., 1987; Giles & Coupland, 1991). Accommodation strategy, especially speech accommodation, indicates that speakers actively accommodate linguistic aspects of their speech to each other (i.e., converge) or they can actively accentuate differences in linguistic features (i.e., divergence). Thakerar, Giles, and Cheshire (1982) further
note that such accommodation or divergence of speech depends on the social goals, including evoking listeners’ social approval, attaining communicative efficiency between interactants, and maintaining speakers’ positive social identities.

In addition to repetition, paraphrasing and rephrasing also appear to function as proactive means to help avert problems of understanding in ELF interactions (Cogo, 2009; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Kaur, 2009a; Mauranen, 2006b, 2007). As for its possible reasons, Mauranen (2007) explains that when an utterance is rephrased or paraphrased, the chances that it will be understood increase, and therefore ELF speakers use these strategies in order to achieve comprehensibility. In other words, ELF interaction demonstrates that mutual understanding is not taken for granted, but that speakers consciously engage in a joint effort to monitor understanding at every stage of communication, to eliminate ambiguity from the outset, and to raise explicitness, or what Kaur (2009a, 2011b, 2011c) and Cogo (2009) call, “pre-empting strategies.” Likewise, Mauranen (2006a) names such strategies as “proactive strategies,” including clarification and self-repair, which pre-empt potential problems, ensure understanding, and resolve communicative problems. In addition, closely related to proactive or pre-empting strategies, other ELF studies (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Dewey, 2007; Hülmbauer 2009; Meierkord, 2004) looking at the adjustments to “form” based on pragmatic needs identify ELF speech characteristics, such as simplification, regularization, semantic transparency, and enhanced explicitness through verbal redundancy. Furthermore, various scholars (e.g., Cogo, 2009; Hülmbauer, 2009; Smit, 2010) argue that code-switching is a creative strategy of ELF talk which contributes to accommodating linguistic and cultural differences and that ELF speakers actively exploit their shared status as intercultural users of English by making use of plurilingual resources from which they can draw. In other words, ELF interlocutors can “rely upon the
nonnative status as a resource for sense-making” (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 290). However, it is expected that code-switching is a less common communicative strategy if speakers do not have a common L1.

Furthermore, earlier work such as Firth (1990, 1996) has revealed that when the hearer faces problems in understanding the speaker’s utterance, ELF speakers at times let problems pass and “make the other’s ‘abnormal’ talk appear ‘normal’” (Firth, 1996, p. 245). That is, without repair, ELF speakers sometimes accept and even incorporate the utterances of their interlocutors as normal although they might perceive such utterances as ‘marked.’ In other words, Firth finds that there are very few cases of other repairs in the business-related phone conversation and that these ELF speakers seem to focus on the message content rather than form. Based on Firth’s findings, House (1999) suggests that both the “let it pass” and “make-it-normal” strategies reflect ELF speaker conversational behavior that is supportive and cooperative. Nevertheless, it is worth noting here that such cooperative and harmonious behaviors are not always the case (e.g., Jenks, 2012; Knapp, 2002; Seldlhofer, 2004). At times ELF speakers are not mutually supportive and tolerant of perceived communicative problems. For example, Jenks (2012) demonstrates that ELF interactants in the setting of chat rooms highlight troubles through using laughter and joking, and ridicule rather than just let it pass. In other words, it can be argued that whether ELF speakers let it pass or highlight troubles depends on specific interactional contexts, communicative goals, and interlocutors. All in all, as Hülmbauer et al. (2009) summarize well, ELF interaction generally demonstrates valuable features such as linguistic flexibility, expanded usage of available resources, the exploitation of strategic competence, communicative cooperation, and mutual accommodation, as well as meta- and cross-linguistic sensitivity, all of which can feed into the success of ELF interaction.
Finally, Canagarajah (2007) and Kaur (2011b) similarly point out that the diversity is at the heart of ELF interaction. Specifically, ELF is “intersubjectively constructed in each specific context of interaction” and its form “negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes” (Canagarajah, 2007, p. 926). In Hülmbauer’s (2009) words, “situationality factor” determines every lingua franca interaction anew and on its own. It can be assumed that each ELF interaction in situ reveals alternative and creative ways of making meaning through reciprocal communicative processes between speakers with “the varieties of English spoken, the levels of proficiency displayed and the cultural norms and communicative styles” (Kaur, 2011b, p. 2704). In other words, in the diversity of culture, proficiency, and communication styles represented in ELF interactional situations, ELF speakers need to depend to a greater degree on the successful handling of linguistic resources of ELF along with various non-verbal resources in order to achieve mutual understanding.

After summarizing major ELF interactional studies, it is worth noting here that most findings above have come from non-educational settings like business meetings (i.e., Business English Lingua Franca) and informal talk, or simulated settings for research purposes. In other words, there has been to date less ELF work based on naturally-occurring data from classroom settings. As observed, it is apparent that the ELF approach has merits for examining interactional data from non-educational settings. Therefore, I argue that it is equally possible to apply the ELF approach to more traditional settings of SLA research, namely classroom interactions. In fact, as its latest trend, a series of ELF interactional studies (Björkman, 2013; Mauranen, 2012; Smit, 2010) related to academic ELF discourse in university settings have being emerging, which will be examined in the next section.
2.2.3 The needs of investigating academic ELF discourse

The investigation of academic ELF discourse is still a new, emerging area in the field of ELF research. Before 2001, in which a project of the English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings corpus (ELFA: www.eng.helsinki.fi/elfa) was launched, ELF in academia did not attract much scholarly attention. However, since the successful compilation of the ELF academic spoken corpus, ELF academic discourse has turned into a lively research field. Its unique characteristic of “academic English,” which is a target of studies on academic ELF discourse, is “no one’s native language (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1994, p. 8). In other words, regardless of the status of native or non-native speakers of English, all the people in the academic community nevertheless need to acquire such English through practice. As a result of rapid globalization, a great number of higher educational institutions throughout the world have been adopting English for a medium of instruction with the increase of linguistically and culturally-diverse students. Thus, in such contexts many students need academic English to succeed in their studies.

As one of the important reasons for investigating academic ELF spoken discourse, Mauranen (2012) argues that situations demanding sophisticated language, such as academic environments, can yield data that is relevant to seeing a bigger picture of ELF in comparison to rather minimal ELF encounters between strangers. In a similar vein, Björkman (2013) states that the academic world is one of the most influential ELF settings because knowledge is usually disseminated through such academic interactions. According to Mauranen (2012), the characteristics of academic ELF discourse may differ in many ways from the ones in non-academic settings (e.g., Firth, 1990, 1996; House, 1999, 2002; Meierkord, 1998, 2002; Pitzl, 2005, 2010). For instance, academic ELF interactions may have institutional goals rather than simply ‘survival’ purposes. Furthermore, more sophisticated demands on verbal skills are
necessary for participating in academic discussions, which often involve exchanging concepts and ideas that are abstract, novel, and complex. Therefore, besides linguistic aspects, many socio-cultural and conceptual meanings need to be negotiated, and the language needs to be adapted to the complexities of academic situations. More specifically, as Mau‌ranen (2012) claims, a central concern in academic settings is negotiating the conceptual domain, that is, seeking to increase participants’ shared knowledge. At the same time, spoken face-to-face interactions usually foreground interpersonal relations. Namely, participants have to manage turn-taking and respond to others’ contributions, within which all the concerns for face values, social status, and other social parameters come into play.

Furthermore, Björkman (2013) argues that most academic settings are high-stakes in nature. High-stakes refers to the situations where there are normally serious consequences for speakers in the case of communicative ‘troubles’ and where speakers are probably aware of their necessity to convey the message well to the audience. In the academic classroom settings like the present study, ELF speakers should achieve communicative goals set for the situation. Also, being incomprehensible about the topic discussed in the classroom would lead to the incompletion of the work, and this would affect the students’ and instructors’ performance. This kind of academic interaction is different from social speech where disturbance in communication has no or few consequences (e.g., Meierkord, 2000) and also the simulated interaction where the participants feel as if they can change or abandon the topic anytime at their convenience because of lack of sense of a similar investment in academic contexts (e.g., House, 1999, 2002). In this high-stakes nature of academic ELF interaction, it is expected that different types of pragmatic strategies might be employed by ELF speakers in comparison to low-stakes ELF interactions. In
brief, academic interaction is a very complex, high-stakes task, involving both content and interactional matters to be managed through ELF.

With regard to another unique characteristic related to ELF academic discourse, ELF speakers in academic contexts might share knowledge of a disciplinary area and of university settings, which can become common ground. Yet, such disciplinary and university-related knowledge must expect diversity as well, given the different academic traditions from which ELF speakers may originally come. Furthermore, Mauranen (2012) claims that academic ELF can be a working language of more long-lasting communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), although the typical image of ELF interaction is associated with fleeting encounters between strangers. Whilst it is true that some academic communities are mobile with relatively weak social ties in nature, some have more stability and contact for a long term, which might develop specific interactional patterns, academic discourse, or culture.

In fact, what has been so far discussed as unique characteristics of academic ELF discourse can be also applied to other professional contexts, such as business ELF settings (namely Business English Lingua Franca) since such contexts also have stability and are high-stakes in nature. However, as discussed above, in comparison to such ELF business interactions, academic ELF interactional practices have been less investigated so far, which needs exploration. Finally, while studies on academic ELF in the form of writing and literacy (e.g., Canagarajah, 2009, 2011, 2013) is a legitimate option for investigating academic ELF discourse, the present study focuses on ELF spoken interactions, mainly because I argue that it is in speech that variability in language is most readily discernible and that interactants negotiate such variability in real-time. In other words, spoken interactions can exhibit varied, complex, and jointly achieved negotiation and accommodation processes more clearly than writing, and such analyses
of spoken interactions can be the necessary first step in raising awareness of ELF and ultimately legitimizing its use and its users.

2.2.4 Work on ELF academic discourse in university settings

Since the present study focuses on the analysis of ELF interactions in academic contexts, the recent work by Måuranen (2012), Smit (2010) and Björkman (2013), all of which investigate academic ELF oral discourse at university settings, will be reviewed in turns. First of all, through analyzing the ELFA corpus, Måuranen (2012) identifies the features of ELF communication in form and function at different linguistic levels, including vocabulary, grammatical constructions, and phraseologies. Her study is innovative in terms of conjoining social and cognitive perspectives on ELF; namely, she integrates macrosocial, cognitive, and microsocial perspectives. What is the most relevant for the present study is a microsocial perspective. Måuranen demonstrates how ELF speakers collaboratively manage academic spoken interaction to maximize understanding through processes of accommodation, adaptation to variability, and enhanced explicitness. In particular, she stresses the significance of the strategy of enhanced explicitness among ELF speakers, which includes repetition and (self) rephrasing, metadiscourse (i.e., discourse organization), and syntactic strategies such as negotiating topics. Måuranen argues that explicitness strategies among ELF speakers contribute to avoid misunderstanding due to gaps in shared knowledge in culturally and linguistically hybrid academic context. Furthermore, Måuranen points out how the common features in ELF talk, including repetition, echoing, and rephrasing, actually facilitate interaction and comprehensibility. More specifically, Måuranen (2007) sees repetition and reformulation as an “important means of coping with the exigencies of spoken language” (p. 248) that reflects speakers’ intended purposes instead of sporadic signs of ‘dysfluency.’ These ideas reflect an
alternative perspective of examining ELF interaction. Finally, she emphasizes the significance of collaboration among interlocutors, observing that co-construction is one of the most prominent features of ELF academic discourse.

On the other hand, through collecting naturally-occurring classroom interactions themselves, Smit (2010) and Björkman (2013) examine the use of ELF as a classroom language in a hotel management program at a university in Austria and in a technical engineering university in Sweden respectively. Both of them have provided important insights into how communicative effectiveness can be achieved in ELF spoken communication in universities in Europe. For analytical focus, Smit (2010) examines overt repair sequences when miscommunication arises, use of directives (i.e., questions, commands, and offers) in ELF classroom discourse, and role of explaining in an ELF classroom. Most notably, she examines the longitudinal development of ELF class talk in a “community of practice” (Wenger, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Smit’s study is novel in that it is the first attempt to investigate ELF used as a classroom language during the complete duration of the educational program. Her major findings are the following. First, she finds that despite diverse linguistic, cultural, and professional backgrounds among members, classroom interaction was generally collaborative, with all participants aiming for communicative success and shared understanding. In other words, all efforts were made to help them overcome communicative difficulties. Secondly, it is revealed that these ELF speakers in the classroom learned to understand each other over time, with instances of misunderstanding (in particular occurrence of mishearings) rapidly decreasing. Thirdly, explicitness (i.e., a high level of directness) was found to be particularly important for their achieving understanding and not treated as impolite, because they had great interest in achieving communication for the purpose of teaching and learning. In fact, ELF speakers mostly
ignored linguistic ‘errors,’ and focused more on constructing knowledge together. In sum, Smit discovers that as a classroom community of practice developed, fewer communication difficulties were perceived and a strong sense of working together to meet objectives through developing strategies of being direct and collaborative was formed. Her study can be a new addition to knowledge of ELF, specifically from ethnographic perspectives.

On the other hand, Björkman (2013) qualitatively and quantitatively investigates linguistic form and communicative effectiveness of ELF usage in addition to ELF speakers’ own perceived attitudes toward ‘non-standard’ forms. More specifically, Björkman examines morpho-syntactic, ‘non-standard’ language use and pragmatic strategies that ELF speakers use in both lectures and student group work. Her research findings demonstrate that despite very frequent non-standard, divergent use at the form level, there was little overt interactional disturbance in student group work. Through a close analysis it is found that only non-standard formulation of questions resulted in overt disturbances and affected communicative effectiveness. Björkman (2013) argues that one of the possible reasons for few cases of overt interactional disturbance is “the proactive work carried out through pragmatic strategies” (p. 199). Lastly, based on her findings, she underlines the importance of pragmatic ability in comparison to high grammatical proficiency in academic settings. Björkman’s study illustrates that in ELF academic contexts, pragmatic competence needs to be more prioritized than linguistic accuracy.

To sum up, the recent work by Mauranen (2012), Smit (2010) and Björkman (2013) on ELF academic spoken discourse has added to the existing knowledge base on ELF pragmatics by examining high-stakes academic interactional settings in ELF. These studies demonstrate ELF speakers’ various communicative strategies to resolve communicative problems, especially
strategies of enhanced explicitness. I argue that more studies on such academic ELF spoken discourse, especially ELF communicative strategies in such academic contexts are necessary.

2.2.5 The gap in ELF pragmatic research

Through the review of existing ELF pragmatic research in both non-educational and educational settings, one significant gap is salient. As discussed in the section of ELF theoretical concepts, ELF pragmatic research has predominantly focused on linguistic description and identified unique verbal strategies that contribute to communicative effectiveness among ELF speakers. In other words, similar to SLA, the ELF research field also seems to be pre-occupied with the “lingual bias” (Block, 2014, p. 56) that focuses only on linguistic resources in language acquisition and use. It is true that such existing research on microanalysis of ELF interaction has greatly contributed to the detailed description of linguistic phenomena in ELF talk. Yet, it is equally true that ELF interactional research has not been seriously concerned with other interactional resources such as gestures, embodied actions, sounds, and material objects that ELF speakers might employ as their negotiation strategies. Some scholars in ELF (e.g., Firth, 2009b; Canagarajah, 2013) have rightly called for greater integration of nonverbal resources in future analysis. Furthermore, there are a small number of attempts to integrate paralinguistic aspects into ELF interactional analysis (e.g., Liang, 2012 who attempts to take a semiotic approach to ELF). Yet, such attempts have not been adequate. For instance, Pitzl (2010) tries to examine “non-linguistic means for clarifying matters” (p. 92); yet, it is only in a limited way, that is, in a case of fragile talk in her interactional data. This is understandable to some degree because the ELF research endeavor has so far been to identify unique linguistic features (e.g., lexical, grammatical, phonetic, and semantic aspects) that are distinctive from so-called native speakers’ norms but can be at least equally effective, or work better for specific interactional contexts.
 Nonetheless, since communication involves engaging with diverse semiotic and linguistic resources and ecological affordances (Atkinson, 2002, 2010, 2011; Atkinson et al., 2007; van Lier, 2000, 2004) and alignment of diverse ecological resources is a strategy for meaning construction all the time (Canagarajah, 2013), it is crucial to examine how ELF speakers effectively make use of whatever semiotic resources they have at their disposal to construct mutual understanding. In particular, gesture, which is one of the elements of semiotic resources, seems to play an important role in intersubjectively constructing meaning, and the ignorance of gestures is in danger of missing important functions of such non-verbal elements. Furthermore, ELF speakers may at times encounter difficulty in expressing themselves verbally and may utilize gesture more often for interactive purposes (Gullberg, 1998), especially taken into consideration that the proficiency level of ELF speakers might vary widely.

In short, following Block’s (2014) suggestion on paying more attention to embodiment and multimodality (e.g., Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010; Jewitt, 2009, 2011; Kress, 2009, Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, Kress et al., 2005), ELF pragmatic research can shed more light on the ways in which ELF speakers are able to sustain interactive competence and successfully negotiate meaning. Jewitt (2009) rightly describes multimodality as “approaches that understand communication to be more than about language, and in which language is seen as one form of communication … among other modes such as image, gesture, gaze, posture, and so on” (p. 14). If speech alone is taken into consideration without noticing such multiplicity of modes that people might draw on for meaning making in the situated contexts, ELF speakers’ successful negotiation strategies cannot be fully identified especially in case of less proficient ELF speakers who might integrate other interactional resources besides speech. Thus, it is crucial to shift the prevailing emphasis on the verbal component of ELF interactional investigation to a more
holistic, comprehensive analysis of ELF speakers’ meaning making processes. By this holistic approach, I argue that the present study can significantly contribute to ELF pragmatic research.

2.2.6 Summary

In summary, through reviewing the ELF research field, it is revealed that academic ELF discourse is worth investigating further. In order to legitimize ELF speakers’ language use and practice, the recent studies (e.g., Mauranen, 2012; Smit, 2010; Björkman, 2013) have tried to describe in detail how ELF speakers from a wide spectrum of L1s and cultural backgrounds successfully communicate with each other in European university settings. I argue that such investigations should be expanded to different academic domains and into different geographic contexts. As academic institutions continue to become increasingly international, there should be more ELF work done in various contexts where English functions as a contact language for pedagogical purposes. Furthermore, according to Mauranen (2006a), how ELF speakers deal with misunderstanding or how they seem to be preempting the possibility of misunderstanding largely remains unexplored. In other words, it is still not certain how and why it is possible that miscommunication is less frequent despite the hybrid nature of ELF interactions. Thus, the research that examines the ELF interactional phenomenon associated with miscommunication is necessary. Lastly, such investigation of ELF speaker classroom interaction should consider not only the use of speech but also the embodied and multimodal resources in order to get a fuller picture of ELF speakers’ communicative strategies and interactive competence.

2.3 Miscommunication and its phenomenon in ELF interactions

As seen in the previous section, ELF interactional research (e.g., Björkman, 2013; Deterding, 2013; Kaur, 2011c; Mauranen, 2006b; Pitzl, 2005, 2010; Smit 2010; Watterson, 2008) has just started to investigate miscommunication phenomenon in ELF interactions and
communicative strategies for resolving such ‘problematic’ talk. Yet, as we will observe, each researcher defines miscommunication phenomena in different ways. In this section, the notions of miscommunication will be discussed especially in relation to ELF interactions.

2.3.1 Understanding and misunderstanding

Before the concepts of miscommunication are discussed, it is necessary to address a closely-related term, namely, “understanding” or intersubjectivity (i.e., a concept from conversation analysis, see Schegloff, 2000). In fact, language specifically serves an important function of connecting our minds and achieving intersubjective understanding and shared intentionality. However, given our individual and situational differences in experiencing the world, communication through linguistic and other types of sign systems can only approximate an absolute form of understanding (i.e., ‘transfer’ the speaker’s meaning to the listener’s mind). Nevertheless, it is also true that we constantly approximate understanding as we engage in our daily communication. In general, co-constructing understanding is one of the main purposes and expected outcomes of our communication. Therefore, it can be considered that understanding is “not a state in which minds share the same content, but is rather a dimension of coordinated social interaction itself” (Bailey, 2004, p. 409).

Furthermore, an implicit ideology of communication with regard to understanding and misunderstanding may exist. To be precise, understanding is generally considered a natural condition of communication. On the other hand, misunderstanding represents a ‘failure’ of something that is natural. For instance, the traditional transmission model of communication is built on the assumption that complete understanding is ideal and that incomplete understanding is ‘deviant’ from it. In other words, from such a positivistic view, misunderstanding tends to frame itself as something ‘deficient’ that needs to be avoided or otherwise repaired. Nevertheless,
as Bailey (2004) claims, misunderstandings can be interpreted “more profitably as normal instances of the negotiations of social and linguistics lives” (p. 410). It is because it is only when we misunderstand each other – when we encounter some ‘problematic’ issues in interaction – that we clearly identify the ongoing process of understanding. In other words, paradoxically, the interactions in which misunderstandings are explicitly addressed and repaired by interlocutors can highlight our ability to achieve intersubjective understanding.

Furthermore, studies from the field of intercultural communication (e.g., Bührig & ten Thijie, 2006; Bremer et al., 1996; Tzanne, 1999) have provided useful insights regarding the concept of (mis)understanding. First of all, rather than seeing it as a passive entity, understanding is considered dynamic, referring “to both the process of explicating an utterance’s contextual references and the product resulting from calculating their communicative meaning” (Fetzer, 2004, p. 57). From this point of view, understanding and misunderstanding do not stand in dichotomy, but in “continuum” from more or less. In addition, understanding can be seen as a collaborative, mutual endeavor with all participants working together on constructing successful communication rather than a communicative ‘burden’ assigned only to specific individuals. In short, understanding is a mutual goal for both listener and speaker (Linell, 1995). What this implicitly means is that ‘problems’ in understanding are an intrinsic part of communication and that they are an interactive feature that is not to be blamed on anybody (e.g., Stati, 2004). In sum, understanding should be not construed as an automatic process of ‘transferring’ its absolute form from one brain to the other, but rather as a coordinated and ongoing “negotiation” process through all interlocutors’ endeavor.

2.3.2 Integrative miscommunication model
After the concept of understanding in relation to misunderstanding is briefly considered, the conceptualization of miscommunication requires detailed explication. As Coupland, Wiemann and Giles (1991) rightly put it, miscommunication is indeed “an interesting and slippery concept” (p. 1). In fact, there is a long history of research on miscommunication, and as a result there are a great number of ways that miscommunication has been defined in the literature (e.g., communication studies, pragmatics, politeness theory, conversation analysis, and interactional sociolinguistics to name a few), resulting in various theoretical approaches. Furthermore, as Gass and Varonis (1991) argue, what is more exacerbating is the overall lack of theoretical and methodological coherence in the literature. Pitzl (2010) also observes that commonly used terms of miscommunication can be applied to very different communicative situations. As examples, Pitzl lists a number of terminologies utilized for so-called miscommunication phenomenon, including misunderstanding (e.g., Dascal, 1999, Ochs, 1991; Tzanne, 1999; Weigan, 1999), nonunderstanding (e.g., Bremer et al., 1996), incomplete/partial understanding (e.g., Gass & Varonis, 1991), pragmatic failure (e.g., Thomas, 1983), problematic talk (Coupland et al., 1991) and communication breakdown (e.g., Milroy, 1984), and repair (e.g., Schegloff, 2000; Wong, 2000). Thus, the diversity of perspectives and research traditions brings a challenge to defining what counts as a miscommunication. Nevertheless, it is beyond the scope of this study to review all the diverse perspectives and research traditions regarding miscommunication here. Therefore, through summarizing Coupland et al.’s (1991) integrative model of miscommunication, this section surveys some of theoretical and methodological approaches that have been taken towards miscommunication.

It is apparent that the diversity of conceptualizations and approaches reflects the complexity of miscommunication phenomenon itself. A number of researchers dealing with
miscommunication thus claim that it is necessary to “invok(e) diverse theories and perspectives to achieve comprehensive explanations … and (come) up with an eclectic model comprehensive and powerful enough to handle diverse cases of misunderstandings” (House, 2000, p. 146). As one of the best attempts to develop such a model, Coupland et al. (1991) propose an “integrative model of levels of analysis of miscommunication (p. 13). They attempt to group “structural, layered organization of perspectives on miscommunication” (p. 12) according to the underlying analytic goals and assumptions. This model has six levels intended to reflect the basic assumptions in different research paradigms about where miscommunication is located, along with a continuum of “progressively deeper analyses” and “‘weightness’ and social significance” (Coupland et al., 1991, p. 12). At the same time, this model tries to capture differences in terms of whether repair is possible or not, and how aware participants are that communicative problems exist. The main theoretical approaches to miscommunication at each level will be summarized in turns to overview a variety of theorizations and analytical approaches related to miscommunication.

The first level is based on the premise that all communication is to some degree intrinsically imperfect and problematic. Although miscommunication can be said to occur at this level as part of an ongoing negotiation of meaning, in most cases, it would not be labelled as such, and thus the issue of repair is not concerned as relevant at this level. In other words, the intrinsic imperfection of communicative exchange and the inherent ambiguity and incompleteness of messages are recognized, but these constraints are not typically treated as ‘problems.’ At the second level, communicative efficacy begins to be affected by usually minor ‘mishaps’ of understanding or ‘deviations’ from an assumed norm, which may or may not be recognized as mis-communicative. At this level, participants may demonstrate “some low-level
awareness of the imperfection and effortfulness of interaction” (Coupland et al., 1991, p. 13). Therefore, it is construed that such misunderstandings are repairable by participants at a local level and most of them are detected in the immediately following turn and successfully repaired by the third or fourth turn (Bazzanella & Damaiano, 1999). The third level is specifically associated with deficit or competency models. At this level, miscommunication “takes on implications of personal inadequacy” (Coupland et al., 1991, p. 13). The underlying assumption is that the ‘problematic’ people can be ‘fixed’ so that some training can get them to perform appropriately on later occasions.

To sum up so far, all these levels above are generally predicated on the assumption that miscommunication is a largely unintentional byproduct of some inherent ‘deficiency’ in the process of communication, or the result of a knowledge or competency deficit in individuals involved. Namely, it is ‘deficiency-based’ models of interpreting miscommunication. At these levels, miscommunication may be analyzed as ‘failed’ understanding or transmission of information, or as a ‘failure’ to achieve desired outcomes based on transmission models. In practice, however, deterministic accounts provided by such models often fail to account adequately for contextual factors, or for dynamic interactional dimensions of more complex instances of miscommunication phenomena.

At the fourth level, as Coupland et al. (1991) put it, “strategic use of communication enters into the analysis” (p. 14). At this level, it is seen that miscommunication arises from a failure to negotiate a working consensus or to achieve interactional alignment, and may involve a greater or lesser degree of “intentionality.” An underlying assumption is that interactants normally orient to multiple, simultaneous and sometimes conflicting goals. Thus, interactions are assumed never to take place solely at the instrumental level, and may simultaneously include the
dimensions of affective, relational and identity management. Communication breakdowns at this level may be analyzed as a misreading of an interlocutor’s intentions, which is a result of incorrect inferencing based on different expectations, implicit assumptions or attitudes. At this level, repair is recognized to be possible through repeated or modified attempts to achieve goals in interaction or through the negotiation of a new relational work. Relevant analytical frameworks at this level include pragmatics, politeness theory (e.g., Brown & Levinson, 1987), and conversation analysis. The fifth level is related to miscommunication arising primarily from differences in intergroup or cultural norms. It is usually assumed that this kind of miscommunication that arises out of differing cultural and linguistic norms (e.g., Gumperz, Jupp & Roberts, 1979) is unintentional and repairable by means of learning. However, it is worth noting that unlike in the deficit models (at the levels 1-3) it is learning about social practice or processes rather than skill acquisition through training. In particular, the analytical framework of intercultural communication research (e.g., Thomas, 1983; Gumperz & Roberts, 1991; Gallois & Giles, 1998; Scollon & Scollon, 2001) is usually grouped at this level. Finally, the sixth level is an ideological analysis. Such analysis of miscommunication requires employing meta-analytic and critical approaches since it tends to be associated with hegemonic structures which are largely invisible to participants (Fairclough, 1992, 1995; van Dijk, 1998). At this level, miscommunication is closely related to social identities, value systems and structural power imbalances, and analyzing power relationships is part of the analysis of ‘problematic’ institutional discourse.

To summarize, as seen above, this integrative model has illuminated a number of theoretical and analytic dimensions of the concept of miscommunication and succeeds in going beyond a single perspective and approach by highlighting the points of convergence and
divergence between different ways of conceptualizations. However, there are caveats. Many existing approaches can be analyzed as operating at more than one level simultaneously, in recognition of the fact that a single perspective is often not enough “to explain the richness and complexity of understanding and misunderstanding in discourse” (Bou-Franch, 2002, p. 19). It is also true that any kind of categorization cannot capture the complexity of actual phenomena. Thus, it can be said that there has been no single approach that can provide a satisfactory and comprehensive account of miscommunication.

Nevertheless, it is equally true that different perspectives and analytic methods may all have valuable insights, even where they are incommensurable. The main purpose here is to provide an overview of different theorizations for miscommunication in order to survey the field and to find the relevant ones for the present study on analyzing miscommunication in ELF academic discourse. In fact, Coupland et al.’s (1991) model is quite useful for assessing the applicability of conceptual and analytic tools for research purposes. It is apparent that for the present study, the ‘skill-deficit’ view of miscommunication (i.e., levels 1-3) is not adequate in that it does not recognize the complex reality of how miscommunication instances actually evolve in ELF communication. Rather, the levels 4 and 5 probably fit for this research purpose since from a more holistic perspective, interactions are assumed to take place not only at the instrumental level but also at dimensions of affective, relational and identity management, and since intentionality is also taken into consideration for the possibility of miscommunication. Furthermore, it is considered that miscommunication might arise from differences in cultural and linguistic norms with which ELF speakers may bring. Finally, level 6 might be also applicable in the case in which ELF interactions reveal the power relationships, for instance, the difference of power between teacher and students in the classrooms.
2.3.3 The relation between miscommunication and intercultural communication

Historically, the most common and long-standing analytical approaches to miscommunication are pragmatics and conversation analysis (hereafter CA). Generally, both of them construe miscommunication as ‘unfavorable’ phenomena that should be worked against. However, there is a distinction between these two approaches. Namely, while pragmatics puts forward a broader spectrum of studies on communication breakdown and failures, CA narrowly focuses on disclosing the structural patterns of repair because of its strong interest in structural analysis of interaction. In particular, from the perspective of CA, it is normally considered that the repair initiation is seen as a “possible disjunction with the immediately preceding talk” (Schegloff, 2000, p. 207). Thus, miscommunication is seen to hold the progress of the normal conversation and “replace or defer whatever else was due next” (Schegloff, 2000, p. 208). In other words, miscommunication sequences are perceived to be a ‘side’ sequence of talk in order to return to the normal part. Furthermore, from the conversation analytic perspective, a repair is construed as something that is actively initiated either by the speaker of the trouble source or by its recipient whenever “problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, and understanding the talk in conversation” (Schegloff, 2000, p.207) arise, which might be not always the case in ELF interactions (e.g., Firth, 1996).

Besides the field of pragmatics and CA, intercultural communication studies including interactional sociolinguistics (e.g., Bailey, 2004; Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz & Hymes, 1972; Scollon & Scollon, 2001) have focused largely on intercultural misunderstanding because it is generally perceived that miscommunication is rife in such intercultural encounters owing to ‘non-standard’ contexts which involve so-called non-native interlocutors. In other words, it is generally believed that a close relationship between miscommunication and intercultural
communication exists. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are critiques towards the tendency of intercultural communication studies since culture is particularly ‘foregrounded’ in the explanations of miscommunication. Basically, it is simply interpreted that differences in contextual presuppositions and frames of the participants’ cultures cause misunderstanding. For instance, Blommaert (1991) critiques such a “cultures collide” interpretation of intercultural encounters. In a similar vein, Tzanne (1999) questions “exclusive preoccupation with participants’ stable background features” (p. 15) as explanation of miscommunication in intercultural communication. Briefly put, what is problematic is that the notion of culture is made too salient, transcendent, and deterministic. It is possible that culture-specific traits are not necessarily the most salient aspects of the individuals when people are engaging in intercultural communication. In fact, there should be many possible causes of miscommunication that might be overshadowed by too much emphasis on cultural differences. In summary, interactants’ cultural characteristics are one of many possible causes of miscommunication, and such cultural differences cannot be pre-determined as its definite cause without examining what is actually happening and what is being made relevant by interlocutors in each situated context of interactions.

2.3.4 A dialogical perspective on miscommunication

As seen in the preceding sections, there is a common perception in the field of pragmatics, conversation analysis, and interactional sociolinguistics that miscommunication is a ‘problematic’ and ‘aberrant’ behavior, which needs to be avoided. Furthermore, it is presupposed that such miscommunication can be ‘eliminated’ with strategies like repair. In comparison to such a “monological focus” (Good, 1999, p. 10) that examines miscommunication in a rather separate manner, a dialogical theory tradition (e.g., Coupland et al., 1991; Linell, 1995) takes a
more neutral or even positive attitude towards miscommunication. In this tradition, it is
presupposed that understanding and miscommunication are conceived as a “matter of degree”
(Linell, 1995, p. 184). In fact, language use and communication are construed as problematic in
essence (Coupland et al., 1991). Therefore, communication sequences are not themselves
construed as either failures or successes, “but an intrinsic part of the cycle of creating a ‘working
consensus’” (Coupland et al., 1991, p. 8). A number of researchers (e.g., House, Kasper, & Scott,
2003; Fraser, 1993; Dascal, 1999; Anolli, Ciceri, & Riva, 2002) generally agree that
miscommunication should be seen as a normal, ubiquitous, integral part of communication.

Furthermore, from a dialogical perspective, miscommunication that is omnipresent in
our talk can build better understanding, social relationships and socialization. Coupland et al.
(1991) argue that ‘problematic’ sequences of talk at times “may positively contribute to ongoing
interaction and social relationships” (p. 3, emphasis in original). For instance, Linell (1995)
suggests that some episodes of misunderstanding may “increase the depth of understanding in
ways that, without them, would be difficult to come by” (p. 185). According to Linell, the
interconnected relationship between communication and miscommunication opens up to the
potential for arriving at an in-depth understanding through miscommunication. Furthermore,
focusing on interpersonal relations, Brown and Roger (1991) argue that miscommunication is
necessary for the management of interpersonal tensions. On the other hand, focusing on
misunderstandings among children, Ochs (1991) relates misunderstandings to the process of
language socialization and sees them as “opportunity spaces for constituting and learning social
order (p. 58). With this insight, misunderstandings are more than language activities, but social
and cultural activities as well. Therefore, social life does not break down because of
misunderstandings, but they “structure” social life. In short, as many researchers argue, it is
possible to consider that miscommunication positively contributes many social functions and interactions.

2.3.5 Investigating miscommunication in ELF interactions with a dialogical view

From such a dialogical view of miscommunication, it can be argued that miscommunication sequences can create the interactional negotiation “space” in which interlocutors are actively able to work towards a consensus and elaborate meanings through repairs, which can lead to achieving a higher level of understanding and communicative success. In other words, repairs can be considered something beyond a ‘side-sequence’ or ‘lack of progression’ of the superordinate sequence as CA approach has so far envisaged. This alternative perspective can apply well to the context of ELF interactions, where interlocutors are expected to negotiate cultural and linguistic traits for clarification. Therefore, close examinations of miscommunication sequences dealt with by ELF speakers can provide a positive perspective to the phenomenon of miscommunication. In fact, there is some evidence available from ELF studies that miscommunication is not necessarily a failure on the part of the communicators. As Firth’s (1996) study demonstrates, although the information transfer may be impaired or delayed by “let it pass” strategies, the communicative process can be nevertheless successful on an interpersonal level (e.g., establishment or maintenance of rapport). This indicates that miscommunication can arise at multiple levels and may differ greatly in degrees of severity, and thus a problem at one level may leave others unaffected or even have positive effects.

Furthermore, it is argued that in ELF interactions, miscommunication does not always have to be repaired by explicit strategies such as “[c]onfirmation checks, clarification requests, restatements, repetitions, understanding checks, and the like” (Wong, 2000) to successfully return from a ‘side’ sequence. Although Vasseur, Broeder, and Robert (1996) consider that
explicit procedures of indicating problems might be more effective, it is true that interlocutors usually do not resort to a single procedure, but rather combine various procedures of resolving miscommunication in the spontaneous manner. In fact, such a flexible use allows interactants to “find a balance between continuing the interaction and frequently halting it for clarification” (Vasseur et al., 1996, p. 89). Importantly, as Pitzl (2010) argues, successful interactional management of miscommunication means maintaining relative smoothness and cooperation in a conversation, while ensuring a sufficient amount of understanding at the same time. Therefore, a close examination of the way in which ELF interlocutors manage miscommunication is one way of exhibiting how successful their interactions are.

In summary, the present study approaches miscommunication phenomena in ELF interactions based on the insights that miscommunication is a normal and even “positive” part of communication and that it has diverse causes and appearances, courses of development, and consequences. Also, importantly, with the dialogical view that miscommunication is an intrinsic part of interaction, miscommunication phenomena among ELF speakers are examined in the classroom contexts without assuming ‘predetermined’ participants’ cultural identities as the sole cause of miscommunication. Finally, I consider ELF speakers’ competence of managing miscommunication is part of their communicative success, and I envisage that an in-depth examination of ELF miscommunication phenomena can yield an alternative and positive picture of miscommunication.

2.3.6 Existing studies on miscommunication from ELF perspectives

After overviewing the conceptualizations of miscommunication and introducing the dialogical perspective on miscommunication, the next step is to review conceptualizations of miscommunication useful in analyzing actual instances of miscommunication in ELF
interactional contexts. For this purpose, the definitions and categorizations of miscommunication from existing ELF literature will be examined besides its major findings. First of all, focusing on non-understanding phenomena in ELF business settings, Pitzl (2005) examines the processes of indication, negotiation, and resolution of non-understandings. Following Bremer (1996), Pitzl defines non-understanding as a point in a conversation “when the listener realizes that s/he cannot make sense of (part of) an utterance” (p. 40). Pitzl (2005) takes a more holistic ELF perspective that takes into account the interpersonal dimension of interaction and considers that the successful negotiation of meaning may contribute something “positive” to an interaction, namely on an interpersonal level. From the data analysis, Pitzl finds out that regardless of length or causes of non-understanding, all non-understanding instances were resolved and that ELF speakers reacted to non-understandings competently without interrupting communication.

Similar to Pitzl’s approach, Watterson (2008) also focuses on non-understanding phenomena and communicative strategies to repair for ensuring mutual understanding in small ELF group interactions. In order to differentiate non-understanding from misunderstanding, by employing Bremer (1996), Watterson (2008) also defines non-understanding in the same way with Pitzl’s. His analysis demonstrates that ELF interlocutors often share responsibility for repair rather than assigning the responsibility to one specific interlocutor.

On the other hand, as for examining misunderstanding phenomena in ELF communication, the earlier work of House (1999) provides a number of insights. Based on Coupland et al.’s (1991) model, House classifies misunderstanding into the following four types: 1) operational (processual) misunderstandings (i.e., those occurring when habitualized expectation patterns are stronger than the reality of verbal input); 2) language-based misunderstandings, which occur at different levels of encoding and decoding; 3) conceptually-
based misunderstanding, which are related to differences in culture-specific pragmatic and discourse knowledge, and communicative preference patterns; and 4) strategic misunderstandings, which are deliberately used by speakers in order to gain an advantage over their interlocutor. Through the data analysis, House argues that despite her hypothesis that misunderstandings in ELF talk are caused by differences in interactants’ pragmatic-cultural norms (i.e., the third type categorized above), misunderstanding usually resulted from interactants’ lack of “pragmatic fluency” (House, 1996) or interactional competence at linguistic level. In addition, ELF speakers were strongly self-oriented and did not orient to others or what she calls “parallel talk” (p. 80), which also often led to misunderstanding. It is also argued that superficial consensus and an overuse of “let it pass” behavior might mask actual instances of miscommunication. It is worth noting, however, that these findings should be considered with the nature of the interactional setting and the communicative end. In other words, these ELF speakers in House’s study, who were situated in a non-academic context, might have not seriously engaged in the interaction since there was nothing at stake.

As the recent attempt to examine misunderstanding phenomenon in ELF academic discourse, Kaur (2011c) identifies the sources and nature of misunderstanding in ELF interactions in Malaysia. Following Watterson (2008), Kaur demarcates misunderstanding from non-understanding by adopting Bremer et al. (1996): “non-understanding arises when the listener realizes that (s)he cannot make sense of (part of ) an utterance”, while misunderstanding happens when “the listener achieves an interpretation which makes sense to her/him – but it wasn’t the one the speaker meant” (p. 40). Based on the data analysis, Kaur states that none of the misunderstandings in ELF communication can be attributed to the differences in ELF speakers’ cultural backgrounds, which is similar to House’s (1999) finding. Rather the sources of
misunderstandings are ambiguity in speakers’ utterances, mishearing, and lack of world knowledge. Kaur claims that the reason behind such diminished role of culture in ELF communication is because cultural differences are often tolerated and overlooked as the participants try to negotiate and co-construct understanding.

On the other hand, Mauranen (2006a) examines misunderstandings in academic ELF in Europe, whose focus is how ELF speakers deal with misunderstanding (i.e., retrospective misunderstanding) or how they preempt the possibility of misunderstanding (i.e., prospective misunderstanding). Mauranen concludes that there are relatively rare instances of overt misunderstandings in ELF interactions possibly because these ELF interlocutors in academic contexts work hard to achieve mutual understanding through constantly checking, monitoring, and clarifying meanings, which she calls proactive strategies. Similarly, Smit (2010) also examines misunderstandings in ELF academic discourse in Austria. She limits its analysis into “the verbalized instances of mismatches between speaker intention and listener interpretation, i.e., the cases of interactional repair” (p. 222). Based on the quantitative analysis of all repair instances, Smit claims that repair is a frequently used strategy in the hotel management classroom that she investigated and that it decreases over the course of time. More specifically, in contrast to everyday communication (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977) and classroom settings (e.g., Markee, 2000) as well as ELF academic settings (e.g., Mauranen, 2006b), other-repair was used very frequently in this setting. Furthermore, it is found that directness in other-repair did not lead to any face-threat among interlocutors. In fact, teachers and students preferred explicit ways of initiating repairs, which is quite interesting when considering the collaborative and tolerant nature of ELF interactional atmosphere. Most importantly, Smit’s longitudinal investigation demonstrates the developmental shift from repairing mishearing to co-constructing
views on topics, which can suggest that problems of intelligibility can characterize ELF interactions only initially and temporally.

In different geographical contexts, namely in the south-east Asia, Deterding (2013) also examines causes of misunderstandings and communicative strategies for resolving and preventing them in ELF interactions. What Deterding means by misunderstanding is “instances where one speaker fails to understand something that is said by another speaker” (p. 21), which sounds too broad, but his analysis mostly focuses on pronunciation intelligibility at word or phrase level. His study is unique because interactional participants got involved in the process of transcription and analysis by providing detailed feedback about what they said and what they did not understand, which ended up with identifying more instances of covert misunderstanding cases in his view. What he found from the data analysis is that the overwhelming majority of misunderstanding instances happen owing to ELF speakers’ different pronunciation and that there are more instances of such misunderstanding related to pronunciation than ones reported by Smit (2010). This is probably because compared with participants who were in a two-year course in Smit’s study, all the participants in Deterding’s were strangers. Furthermore, it is found that participants in his study are likely to be less direct and use “let it pass” strategies while participants in Smit’s were quite direct in asking for clarification by employing other-initiated repairs when dealing with misunderstanding. These two studies demonstrate an intriguing contrast in terms of ELF speakers’ preferred communicative strategies for dealing with misunderstanding, possibly affected by each unique interactional context and their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Thus, it is worth a further investigation of miscommunication phenomena among ELF speakers in a variety of interactional contexts.
2.3.7 Summary

To sum up, there have been several ways of defining and analyzing miscommunication phenomena even in the ELF literature. As for definitions and how to differentiate misunderstanding and non-understanding conceptually, the definitions of Bremer (1996) and Bremer et al. (1996) adopted in Watterson, Pitzl, and Kaur’s studies reviewed above can be useful for the present study as well although it is not always straightforward in the actual analysis to determine whether interlocutors are aware or unaware of the mismatch of their interpretations. Furthermore, this study especially follows Smit’s approach that mostly limits the focus on “overt” repair sequences in order to investigate on how miscommunication unfolds in ELF academic classroom settings (see Chapter 3 for detailed discussion on how to identify miscommunication phenomena). It is quite intriguing to examine how miscommunication is managed by such overt repair work while maintaining a collaborative and tolerant atmosphere among ELF speakers. Furthermore, to fill the gap in ELF miscommunication-related research that predominantly focuses on ‘linguistic’ strategies for repair, the present study tries to examine what kinds of non-verbal, embodied, and multimodal resources might be incorporated with verbal speech for resolving miscommunication among ELF speakers. Lastly, it is worth noting again that through taking a dialogical perspective on miscommunication, repair sequences are not seen as something ‘negative’ to be avoided and responsible on a single participant, but as a “positive” space to be created to achieve a higher level of understanding through each interlocutor’s effort. I argue that a solid understanding of the relevant interactional practices in actual ELF academic classrooms will become a basis towards understanding the larger issue of miscommunication phenomenon.
2.4 Roles of politeness in ELF interactions

In addition to the issues of ELF and miscommunication, another important theoretical concept to be reviewed is politeness, especially drawing on Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model to analyze the use of language and face among ELF speaker interactions. The reason why politeness is important for the present study is that the issue of face is always involved whenever engaging in any type of interaction and in particular when interactants have to deal with miscommunication. I envisage that ELF speakers are equally capable of being considerate about their interlocutor’s face similar to ‘native’ speakers and that such politeness is part of ELF culture. If such politeness strategies among ELF speakers are clearly demonstrated, it can lead to legitimatizing ELF speakers’ communicative success.

2.4.1 Brown and Levinson’s politeness model

Building on the concept of face developed by Goffman (1967), Brown and Levinson (1987) explicate that face constitutes two particular wants: negative and positive faces. Negative face is the want of being unimpeded by others, and positive face is the want to be desirable to at least some others. Therefore, negative politeness means both verbal and non-verbal elements that target the addressee’s negative face wants (e.g., apologies and hedges). On the other hand, positive politeness indicates verbal and nonverbal components that target the addressee’s positive face wants (e.g., compliments and in-group sense). Furthermore, it is generally considered that two model persons should share the mutual interest of maintaining each other’s face value and constantly attend to it in interaction. In short, interactants generally try to avoid causing loss of face in their others. Nevertheless, Brown and Levinson argue that there should be some cases that certain kinds of verbal and nonverbal acts intrinsically threaten face, which are called face-threatening acts (hereafter, FTAs). Importantly, with regard to FTAs, they state, “any
rational agent will seek to avoid these face-threatening acts or will employ certain strategies to minimize the threat” (p. 68). In handling such face-threats, speakers employ specific strategies that either soften or enforce the threat for their intended purposes. It is important to note that FTAs do not necessarily mean a negative evaluation of an addressee’s face especially when a speaker demonstrates the sense of in-group-ness and when his or her intention is to reinforce solidarity with the addressee.

2.4.2 Discursive approach to politeness and relational work

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of politeness, which was briefly summarized above, is generally construed as the most robust one that can provide a useful framework for analyzing linguistic politeness based on the notion of face and the degree of (in)directness and interpreting face-threatening acts. Nevertheless, a number of researchers (e.g., Locher, 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts, 2005; Watts, 2003; Watts, Ide & Ehlich, 2005) have proposed an alternative way of looking at politeness in order to overcome inherent problems in Brown and Levinson’s model. Eelen (2001) critiques that in their model, polite behavior is inherent to the theory itself, and that the interactants’ (especially listener’s) assessments regarding whether an utterance is perceived as polite or impolite remains unquestioned. In viewing relational work in terms of “appropriateness” rather than politeness, several scholars (e.g., Locher, 2004, 2006; Locher & Watts, 2005; Watts, 2003; Watts et al., 2005) have proposed an alternative, “discursive approach to politeness.” Simply put, relational work is defined as “the ‘work’ individuals invest in negotiating relationships with others” (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 10). Most importantly, the conceptualization of relational work considers more than politeness and covers any behavior that has impact on interpersonal relations regardless of being positive, negative, or neutral.
The researchers who use the framework of relational work claim that politeness totally depends on the interactants’ assessments of linguistic behaviors with respect to norms of “appropriateness” in interactions rather than knowledge of ‘prefabricated inherent’ linguistic devices. In other words, what is appropriate or polite cannot be predicted as default, but it must be “discursively” determined at the local level. In addition, the discursive approach to politeness is aware of historicity of norms that are at the basis of judgments on politeness, and such norms are constantly negotiated. In addition, Locher (2004) defines relational work as “the process of shaping relationships in interaction by taking face into consideration” (p. 322). That is, face work seems to play an important role in relational work as well. Therefore, the concept of relational work can be a more integrative framework for analyzing the use of language in relation to politeness and face in ELF interactions. In the present study, Brown and Lenvison’s politeness model is adapted to this discursive approach by sequentially examining how addressees orient to and assess verbal and non-verbal behaviors and how norms of appropriateness are negotiated in and through interactions.

2.4.3 Politeness and repair in ELF interactions

What is highly relevant to the present study is that such face and relational work provide an analytical lens that can illuminate how ELF speakers assess appropriateness regarding how to resolve miscommunication, more specifically, through overt repair that involves negative face or face-threatening act. In other words, the threat to the social image of self and other is possibly seen as an integral part of repair work. For instance, it is generally assumed that because interactants try to avoid causing loss of face in their others’, repair is carried out in such a way that the one who initiates it puts the blame on him or herself. Thus, it is generally either the speakers who self-repair or the listeners who initiate repair by claiming some fault of their own
(Svennevig, 2008). Nevertheless, it is not quite sure whether this general tendency regarding repair realizations is similar to the interactional norms in ELF settings, which deserves special attention.

Furthermore, conversational humor, which will be discussed in the next section, can be one of interactional strategies not only for softening such face-threats associated with miscommunication but also for building solidarity among interlocutors, which is considered a dimension of relational work. Davies (2003) argues that the strategy of joking can be classified as that of positive politeness “oriented toward solidarity and affiliation through establishing common ground” (p. 1362). Of special relevance to ELF academic discourse is Mauranen’s (2007) statement that one of the major concerns in academic settings is managing turn-taking, with all the concerns for face and social status that come into play in context. In other words, it is true that in ELF academic interactions, interlocutors actively engage in face work and build relationships while seeking to increase their shared knowledge in community of practice.

Nevertheless, it seems that work is still scarce when it comes to putting forward face and politeness issues for analyzing ELF interaction in relation to miscommunication. For instance, through analyzing informal talk at a student’s residence hall in the UK, Meierkord (2000) argues that one of the characteristics of ELF conversations in this context is the considerable use of politeness phenomena including routine formula in openings and closings and back-channeling similar to native speakers. More specifically, ELF speakers in her study wish to save face and collaborate with each other through employing supportive behaviors, such as back-channeling and laughter. In particular, Meierkord (2000) notes that laughter in the course of the negotiation of meaning may serve as a face-saving device.
On the other hand, several studies that specifically examine the relationship between ELF speakers’ repair realizations (associated with face work) and attempts to achieve understanding have showed inconsistent findings. For instance, House (1999) has found that the generally shared assumption of mutual understanding does not seem to require much explicit repair. In other words, interactants try hard to assure their abilities to follow conversation without repair. Similarly, through investigating problem-solving processes in elicited information exchanges, Watterson (2008) identifies willingness among ELF interlocutors to leave misunderstandings dormant or to change topics abruptly without repair. In comparison to these studies, by examining more natural conversational data, Wagner and Firth (1997) find out that interactants attempt to use all available information in conversation as a resource to negotiate interpersonal meaning, in particular through repair. In a similar vein, Pitzl’s (2004) analysis of business negotiations also demonstrates that the interactants often employ explicit repair. Furthermore, Mauranen (2006a) focuses on misunderstanding in ELF academic discussions and demonstrates that self-repair is identified as a strong orientation toward securing mutual intelligibility. Interestingly, Mauranen’s study demonstrates that self-repair outnumbers other-repair, which implies that the ELF speakers in this academic context might consider interlocutors’ face when dealing with communicative problems. As observed, depending on specific ELF interactional contexts, it can be quite distinctive in terms of interactional norms regarding how repairs are realized and what kind of communicative behaviors are construed as “appropriate” in relation to face and relational work among ELF speakers.

2.4.4 Summary

Based on the brief reviews of ELF studies related to politeness and relational work, it becomes clear that the relationship between repair realizations, achieving understanding, and
face in ELF discourse deserves further exploration in order to address whether and how ELF speakers are concerned with face and politeness especially when dealing with miscommunication. As Blum-Kulka and Weizman (1988) state, miscommunication is inevitable because of participants’ face interests, which induces speakers to keep a certain level of ambiguity. If this statement is true, ambiguity might inherently create miscommunication, and interlocutors need to constantly make a decision about what and how they deal with such miscommunication while taking into consideration face and relational work. ELF interactions are not an exception. ELF speakers also need to deal with such complex communicative demands with regard to face and politeness while maintaining a certain degree of mutual understanding. In particular, it is worth noting that in academic ELF contexts, which are usually high-stakes in nature, achieving understanding is a very important matter for ELF speakers in comparison with other interactional settings (e.g., informal talk among friends). Yet, considering face and politeness is their relevant concern as well. Thus, ELF speakers need sophisticated balance between them in academic discourse.

2.5 Laughter and conversational humor in ELF interactions

The previous section has reviewed politeness and relational work related to repair in ELF interactions. In the present section, the roles of laughter and conversational humor are reviewed in relation to ELF interactions. Of course, laughter is normally considered a signal that something is funny or humorous (Attardo, 1994), or a reaction directed to humor, but it serves more varieties of roles, in particular in managing difficult and delicate moments (Glenn & Holt, 2013). In other words, laughter is something, which is interactionally coordinated and used to accomplish specific tasks (e.g., Glenn, 2003). Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff (1987) also argue that similar to other elements of talk, laughter is “a systematically produced, socially organized
activity.” (p. 152). In fact, how ELF speakers employ laughter and/or construct humor has been an under-researched field. I envisage that laughter and humor have a potential to be a powerful pragmatic means for dealing with delicate moments such as miscommunication and engaging in politeness and relational work at the same time in ELF interactions.

2.5.1 Functions of conversational humor

In the field of sociolinguistics and CA, a great number of studies focusing on humor have been carried out until now. These studies examine the types, styles and roles of humor in social interactions, or more precisely conversational humor, in a variety of formal settings such as the workplace (e.g., Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Marra, 2002; Holmes, Marra, & Burns, 2001; Schnurr & Holmes, 2009; Pullin, 2011; Pullin Stark, 2009) and the classroom (e.g., Davies, 2003), and informal settings (e.g., Coates, 2007; Hay, 2000). However, Coates (2007) argues that there does not seem to be a general agreement on the term, “conversational humor.” In fact, a number of researchers tend to utilize a narrow interpretation, focusing on specific speech acts like joking (e.g., Davies, 2003; Norrick, 2003). Of course, joking is one type of humor, but humor includes more interactional elements. According to Chiaro (1992), a joke tends to distract from a normal or serious conversation. By contrast, humorous talk may emerge from the ongoing sequence of talk and involve participants’ joint efforts, shared laughter, and manifestation of intimacy.

Such a joint activity by humorous talk might contribute to the creation and maintenance of solidarity among conversation participants (Bell, 2006). As Holmes and Hay (1997) observe, “successful humor is a joint construction involving a complex interaction between the person intending a humorous remark and those with the potential of responding” (p. 131). Furthermore, Kreuz and Roberts (1995) argue that humorous co-construction is “a complex social
phenomenon with rich semantic, pragmatic, and paralinguistic dimensions” (p. 29). More specifically, Davies (2003) explains that specific characteristics, for instance, lexical, syntactic, prosodic, and pragmatic elements as well as interactional rhythm should be matched for joking to proceed. In short, collaboration is seemingly an essential component for humorous talk, because one of the major functions of humor is constructing friendliness, solidarity, or “positive politeness” (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Thus, it can be considered that interactional humor is part of politeness or relational work. Nevertheless, it is important to note that in addition to its function of constructing solidarity, humor may at times also serve to express subversive attitudes or the aggressive feelings of participants (e.g., Hay, 2000; Holmes, 2000; Holmes & Marra, 2002) depending on the specific interactional contexts and the interlocutors’ intentions.

2.5.2 The roles of laughter in ELF interactions

Before the discussion on the roles of humor in ELF interactions, the functions of laughter, which is closely related to humor, will be discussed. In fact, it is considered that laughter and humor are two-unit turns linked by temporal and relevancy conditions. Recently, interactional studies have started to illuminate unique functions of laughter among ELF speakers. For instance, through examining multilingual students’ interactions during group work in contact zone situations, Canagarajah (2013) argues that laughter serves diverse purposes in the process of negotiation. First, laughter signals a lack of understanding (e.g., Schegloff, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Pitzl, 2010; Kaur, 2009b) as ELF and CA researchers have seen laughter in relation to repair. More specifically, as Pitzl (2010) observes, “In ELF situations all participants are equally likely to employ laughter simultaneously as a ‘symptom’ of ‘non-understanding’ and as a face-saving device” (p. 41). Furthermore, Canagarajah (2013) explicates more functions of laughter, such as reducing tensions among interlocutors, sugarcoating challenges and disagreements,
mitigating assertiveness, and helping maintain comity and preserving group solidarity.

Furthermore, Deterding (2013) identifies other kinds of functions of laughter among ELF speakers, including showing what they have understood as amusing and just laughing with other interlocutors for the purpose of interactional alignment. Pullin Stark (2009) also observes that laughter can occur as a reflection of embarrassment or surprise among ELF speakers. Taking all these into consideration, laughter can play a unique and important role in ELF communication, which might be different from communication between so-called NS-NS or NS-NNS, and needs further investigation with regard to the functions of laughter with actual ELF interactional data.

2.5.3 The roles of humor in ELF interactions

This study focuses on the sequences of miscommunication in ELF speaker interactions, which involve a certain degree of negative face for interlocutors and requires politeness for dealing with communicative ‘problems.’ In such interactional situations, in addition to laughter, the use of humor as a speech act might consequently lead to mitigating face-threatening feelings and constructing solidarity and a sense of community among ELF interlocutors. However, it is apparent that constructing humor needs complex and high-level interactive competence through maintaining spontaneous fine-tuning of understanding. More specifically, as Davies (2003) states, in order to participate fully in conversational joking, it is necessary “to acquire the appropriate sociocultural knowledge” and “to achieve appropriate level of interpretive and productive expertise” (p. 1364). In other words, the usage of humor among ELF speakers, which probably requires subtle and spontaneous reactions in terms of production and interpretation, can exhibit the communicative achievement of ELF speakers.

While there are a great number of studies on humor in conversation, both among monolingual native speakers of a shared culture only (e.g., Attardo, 1994; Drew, 1987) and
between ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers (e.g., Bell & Attardo, 2009; Moalla, forthcoming, Rogerson-Revell, 2007), there have been very few studies focusing on ELF interaction where all interlocutors are “users” of English instead of ‘learners’ (see Pullin Stark, 2009). For example, Bell (2007) sees construction of humor as a great challenge even to advanced L2 learners because sophisticated linguistic, social, cultural, and interactional competence, situated interpretation, and linguistic and interactional accommodation would be necessary for it. Furthermore, Davies (2003) examines how sympathetic ‘native’ speakers can provide non-native speakers (more precisely, beginner-level ‘learners’') support in order to enable them to joke through scaffolding. In short, based on such existing studies on conversational humor, it is preassumed that there is a risk that without support from ‘native’ speakers, intended humor by ‘non-native’ speakers might be heard as ‘error’ (Piller, 2002).

Furthermore, such studies on humor in the communication between ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers (e.g., Bell, 2006; Davies, 2003) show that ‘non-native’ speakers are often confronted with the issues of power inequality and marginality in terms of distribution of linguistic knowledge and language competence when compared to ‘native’ speakers. To be specific, in these studies, it is usually ‘native’ speakers who seem to control interactions and carefully make adjustments in creating humor to avoid a potential risk for miscommunication. Furthermore, ‘non-native’ speakers are already set as someone who should be ‘blamed’ for miscommunication since they are treated as not-yet mature language ‘learners.’ This power inequality can create a bias in the researcher because it tends to create assumptions about deficient ‘non-native’ speakers in comparison to ‘native’ speakers without giving a further impetus to examine what is actually going on in interactions. Thus, it is worthwhile to examine humorous constructions in ELF contexts in which all speakers might feel less risk to attempt
humor because of seemingly more equal status between interlocutors. In contrast, Moalla (forthcoming) investigates the humor construction and interpretation among non-native and native speakers, and finds out that the use and understanding of humor can be challenging for both of them alike. She even argues that the solution to interactional difficulties does not lie in raising ‘non-native’ speakers’ awareness to ‘native’ speakers’ cultural and social norms but the joint effort to facilitate communication, overcome differences, and avoid misunderstandings through accommodation strategies. In other words, it can be said that rather than conforming to a ‘native speaker’ norm, constructing conversational humor requires people from different cultures to collaboratively share, interpret, and negotiate meaning.

As an example of studies dealing with ELF speaker humorous interactions, Pullin Stark (2009) investigates ELF speakers’ strategic use of humor drawing on the concepts of face and relational work. The analysis demonstrates that bosses effectively employ humor in order to manage a business group and to promote harmony in the context of meetings at the workplace. She maintains that humor is identified as a powerful tool to maintain relationships in the workplace where an unequal power relationship or institutional hierarchy exists. This line of argumentation related to promoting harmony through humor among ELF speakers is supported by Matsumoto (2014) as well. She sequentially examines the processes in which two dyads of female ELF speakers co-construct humor at their dinner table in an international graduate student dormitory. In comparison to Pullin Stark’s context, power relationships among these ELF speakers are less clear since they are friends. Her analysis demonstrates that through skillfully utilizing contextual cues such as joint laughing, smiling, and abruptness of talk, these female ELF speakers successfully construct humorous sequences in order to achieve and maintain solidarity and to minimize possible disagreements. Such investigations regarding ELF speaker
humor construction in various interactional settings are indeed necessary. The present study will contribute to this specific area through examining ELF speakers’ use of humor in relation to miscommunication in academic writing classroom contexts.

2.5.4 Summary

As observed, humor often functions as a social device used to amuse and create rapport and solidarity among interlocutors. Besides business and less formal interactional settings, this function can also be seen in other types of interactions, such as academic ones among multilingual students and instructors in the classroom setting. In particular, it will be interesting to observe what kind of norms might exist or develop in terms of appropriate contexts for laughing and constructing humor interculturally among ELF speakers as classroom practice. Since there has been few empirical investigations into the issue of humor among ELF speakers in general, and functions of humor and laughter among ELF speakers in the classroom context in particular, the present study will contribute to understanding of the phenomenon of constructing humor and roles of laughter in ELF interactions in relation to miscommunication.

2.6 Research questions

Based on the literature review, the three major research questions have emerged in order to fill in the existing gaps especially in the field of ELF pragmatic research. The data analysis in Chapters 4 to 7 attempts to answer the following research questions: 1) In what ways does miscommunication surface among ELF speakers in two multilingual writing classrooms while maintaining politeness?; 2) How do ELF speakers integrate non-verbal, embodied, and multimodal resources (including gesture, embodied action, laughter, facial expression, silence, and material objects and people in classroom ecology) with speech when resolving or preventing miscommunication?; and 3) What are the outcomes of such miscommunication sequences?
Whilst this study tries to answer all the questions, the focal question will be the second. It is because identifying the actual communicative strategies employed by ELF speakers in miscommunication sequences are one of the important tasks in the field of ELF pragmatics for uncovering possible clues of ELF successful communication. Not only for the purpose of contributing to the research-based knowledge for ELF pragmatics, this focus is crucial in terms of providing pedagogical implications because communicative strategies among ELF speakers that will be exemplified and analyzed from Chapters 4-7 can become an empirical basis on which to build meaningful pedagogical approaches for English language teaching and learning. The pedagogical implications in relation to the potential of an ELF-informed pedagogy will be discussed in the concluding chapter 8.
Chapter 3

Methodology and Data

3.1 Methodology

The analytical framework for the present study draws on a variety of approaches to interpretively analyze the interactional practices of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), because “an eclectic approach is not only richer but also essential in dealing with the complexities of talk” (Eggins & Slade, 1997, p. 23). As examined in Chapter 2, miscommunication phenomena themselves are complex in nature, and need a flexible framework that can incorporate multiple theoretical orientations, analytical methods, and data sources to address the complexities. In this light, the analysis of multilingual academic writing classroom interactions in the present study integrates various approaches, namely a sequential analysis along with ethnographically-gained information, which will be considered in each subsequent section.

3.1.1 Sequential Analysis

As a major analytical approach, this study employs sequential analysis (e.g., Koshik, 2002; Markee, 2000; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002) and incorporates ethnographic information gained through interviews with my research participants and classroom observations as a participant observer in order to examine sequences of miscommunication in general and to answer research questions in particular. The sequential analysis is quite effective in terms of taking a bottom-up approach and explicating the detailed process that allows ELF speakers to accomplish successful communication while dealing with miscommunication. The strength of sequential analysis lies in its ability to reveal and document “how” talk is sequentially structured and interactively managed by interlocutors’ actions.
In fact, a number of researchers in the field of ELF (e.g., Firth 1990, 1996, Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Lesznyák, 2004) have adapted the conversation analytic framework in order to investigate ELF interactions. As one of CA’s theoretical and methodological assumptions, Heritage (1995) points out the following: “social interaction is informed by institutionalized structural organizations of practices to which participants are normatively oriented” (p. 396). This indicates that there should be a stable interactional order known among conversational participants and that they should orient to such order during interactions. Nevertheless, it is assumed that in ELF interactions, ELF speakers do not necessarily orient to a certain ‘shared’ interactional norm and that they do not share a stable linguistic or pragmatic competence. In other words, ELF speaker interactions may differ from the pattern of so-called native speaker interactions and the structure of ELF speaker interactions may be more flexible than that of native speakers’ (Deterding, 2013). Therefore, Firth (1996) attempts to modify the CA approach through introducing ELF interactional data and revealing the procedures by which an interactional order is sequentially “created.” Similarly, Wong (2000) reveals the possibility of different organization of repair work from normative order shared among native speakers. In short, following such Firth and Wong’s attempts, the present study also employs sequential analysis for investigating ELF interactions in general and how ELF speakers deal with miscommunication problems without pre-assuming normative conversational orders or patterns.

3.1.2 Ethnographic approach

The present study is rather distinct from a ‘pure’ CA approach in that it incorporates ethnographic information gained from classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews from participants. The major reasons why I have combined the sequential analysis with
ethnographic perspectives are the following. With the ethnographic information gained from my research participants as well as my own perspective as a participant observer, the sequential analysis can turn into broader interpretations, which allow triangulation of the data and provide multiple interpretations regarding miscommunication sequences. Importantly, the ethnographic information regarding participants’ own (re)interpretations through stimulated recall interviews is crucial in understanding how and why specific miscommunication instances were dealt with and how such miscommunication sequences may have impact on their understanding, which can be inaccessible through a description of interactional sequences only. Moreover, the manner of how miscommunication is dealt with depends to a great degree on the interlocutors’ relationships, social positions, group dynamics or larger frameworks of social activities, which might be only accessible through integrating ethnographic information. In brief, ethnographic information gained through interviews and observations should be combined with a close description of the moment by moment constitution of social life in talk-in-interaction. Nevertheless, the interview information should be treated with caution since participants may claim that they did not understand something although they understood at the time of recording – or vice versa, possibly because they forgot or they reinterpreted interactional moments with the researcher. Also, contradictory information from the sequential analysis might arise from the interview data. In such cases, the researcher needs to make a decision regarding which interpretation is more probable by taking into consideration the data analysis and all available contextual information.

3.1.3 Research Questions

Through such combined methodological approaches, the following research questions, which have been evolved from the literature review in Chapter 2, will be answered: 1) In what ways does miscommunication surface among ELF speakers in two multilingual writing
classrooms while maintaining politeness?; 2) How do ELF speakers integrate non-verbal, embodied, and multimodal resources (including gesture, embodied action, laughter, facial expression, silence, and material objects and people in classroom ecology) with speech when resolving or preventing miscommunication?; and 3) What are the outcomes of such miscommunication sequences?

3.1.4 Analyzing Miscommunication

To explicate the research questions, some possible types and sources of miscommunication, communicative strategies and multimodal resources for dealing with miscommunication, and outcomes of miscommunication are illustrated in turn. Some potential ways of appearing as miscommunication will be non-understanding, misunderstanding or “letting it pass” (see the detailed discussion about categories of miscommunication in the section 3.7.1). As for possible sources of miscommunication, trouble with understanding different pronunciation is pointed out as the most common since ELF speakers usually have accents influenced by their linguistic backgrounds (e.g., Deterding, 2013; Jenkins, 2000, 2002; Matsumoto, 2011). Another source of miscommunication can be related to a mismatch in terms of understanding content knowledge, for instance, academic writing concepts, which is indeed unique in this writing classroom context. Therefore, it can be said that miscommunication involves not only linguistic and cultural aspects but also conceptual understanding or logical reasonings. Yet, it should be noted that it is unlikely that instances of miscommunication are caused by only one single, clearly identifiable element. In other words, miscommunication is usually triggered by multiple causes or the result of a complex interaction between linguistic and non-linguistic discoursal contributions and contextual factors like shared knowledge, communicative purposes or frames (Linell, 1995). Therefore, when examining possible sources
of miscommunication, it is crucial to examine each individual instance as carefully as possible without making a predetermined conclusion.

Next, possible communicative strategies that ELF speakers employ are referred to in ELF pragmatic research, which has been reviewed in the previous chapter. In particular, Björkman (2014) has recently developed a framework of verbal communicative strategies among ELF speakers based on academic interactions, which is relevant to high-stakes ELF interactions like the present study. Her framework for communicative strategies is divided into self-initiated and other-initiated, as adopted from the categorization of CA. Self-initiated communicative strategies entail the following: 1) explicitness strategies (a. repetition, b. simplification, c. signaling importance, and d. paraphrasing); 2) comprehension checks; and 3) word replacement. On the other hand, other-initiated strategies include the following: 1) confirmation checks (a. paraphrasing, b. repetition, and c. overt question); 2) clarification requests; 3) co-creation of the message; and 4) word replacement. It is assumed that ELF speakers spontaneously select specific communicative strategies depending on the types of miscommunication, communicative contexts, and purposes. In addition to verbal communicative strategies identified by ELF pragmatic research, I envisage that there should be multimodal resources or non-verbal communicative strategies that are meaningfully employed among ELF speakers for communicative success. As Canagarajah (2013, 2014) rightly argues, communication involves diverse semiotic and ecological resources beyond words. For instance, gesture might be used as explicitness strategies to demonstrate meanings more clearly with visualized images. Laughter can be another means for mitigating face-threats related to miscommunication and framing interactions into something humorous (Matsumoto, 2014). Furthermore, ELF speakers also employ material objects available in the classroom environment in order to clarify meaning.
Lastly, the three possible end-points of miscommunication sequences can be the following (see Gass & Varonis, 1991). The first case is that ELF interlocutors achieve mutual understanding. In other words, they successfully resolve miscommunication, and then shared understanding is achieved however temporary it is. Moreover, it is considered that such understanding might have two types: achieving the original meaning or renegotiated meaning through repair sequences. Yet, it might be hard to distinguish between these two through a sequential analysis. Another possible outcome is that they achieve partial understanding after negotiating ‘troublesome’ issues. To put it differently, in such cases, miscommunication may be not fully resolved and therefore there is still incomplete understanding left. Such incomplete understanding may include cases that they prioritize face-work and politeness over mutual intelligibility and decide to let it pass (e.g., Firth, 1996; Wong, 2000). The last possibility is that they end up with giving up mutual understanding, which seems to be very rare in ELF interactions. To sum up, with a flexible and combined methodological approach (i.e., application of sociolinguistic discourse analysis of sequential analysis and associated ethnographic information), each instance of miscommunication among ELF speakers will be analyzed in depth.

3.2 Research participants

Two experienced ESL instructors voluntarily participated in this study. Each participant’s nationality is the following: Nepalese and Ukrainian. One male instructor (Teacher M), who is from Nepal, is a Ph.D. student at a public university in the United States, and the female instructor (Teacher L), who comes from Ukraine, is a post-doctoral teaching fellow at the same academic institution. At the time of data collection, both teachers have resided in the U.S. for approximately 6 years and already taught the ESL 015 (an academic writing course for international undergraduate students) for a couple of years. Therefore, it can be said that these
instructors are quite familiar with both the teaching context and materials for this course. Among many other non-native ESL instructors, I specifically selected these experienced teachers in order to avoid potential miscommunication originating from lack of teaching expertise, specifically lack of the teachers’ conceptual control over the content of instruction. Besides, importantly, since instructors often play a dominant role in classroom interactions, this study intentionally picked so-called non-native instructors based on the concept of ELF so that interactions are not necessarily controlled by the norms of ‘native’ speakers of English. Furthermore, ‘non-native’ instructors are chosen because of my special interest in the examination of classroom interactions among “multilingual” instructors and students. In sum, this study tries to examine sequences of miscommunication among ELF speakers that did not originate from instructors’ lack of teaching expertise, but possibly trigged by teachers and students’ differences in terms of linguistic, cultural, and personal aspects and understanding of writing concepts in the multilingual classroom settings.

In addition, the multilingual students enrolled in two ESL015 courses that were taught by these multilinaul teachers are also research participants. Teacher M taught the course (19 students) during the summer session in 2013 and Teacher L taught the course (19 students) during the fall semester in the same academic year. The students in these courses were recruited on a voluntary basis, and all of them agreed to participate in my research. From my regular observations in each classroom, it is found that besides varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds, these multilingual students’ competence in terms of speaking and writing in English may differ widely. Although any type of formal measurement on the students’ linguistic competence (e.g., TOEFL scores) is not available, based on the regular classroom observation, it demonstrated that students from countries such as India, Mexico, or Ecuador tend to speak more
fluently and participate in classroom discussions more actively than other students with other national backgrounds. However, it is true that such oral proficiency among these students does not necessarily guarantee their high competency in writing. I assume that the interactional context, where ELF speakers with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds and linguistic competence mingle with each other, can naturally create the opportunity to negotiate differences at various levels and resolve miscommunication among them in order to achieve mutual understanding. Table 3.1 below demonstrates the information about students’ gender and nationality for each course as the general information. Yet, it should be noted that these factors might not be categorically relevant for a sequential analysis unless participants orient to their nationality and gender in their interactions.

Table 3.1. Students’ gender and nationality in two courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Teacher M</th>
<th>Teacher L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Count in Summer</td>
<td>Count in Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Research sites and classroom contexts

I collected classroom interactional data for two semesters in total from two classrooms taught by the two instructors mentioned in the previous section. I video-recorded classroom interactions, particularly focusing on whole class interactions in which students and teachers were discussing potential topics for essay assignments and negotiating understanding about writing concepts, and Q & A sessions about students’ written essays followed by in-class oral presentations. Although the courses taught by two instructors mostly shared the course objectives, the contents in the syllabus (see APPENDIX A and B) were slightly different mainly because of the difference in terms of the length of each semester, that is, 7 weeks during the summer session versus 15 weeks during the fall semester. Compared with a normal semester, the summer session was short and intense (i.e., meeting every day from Monday to Friday). Furthermore, I noticed some differences in teaching materials and instructional techniques deriving from the preferred teaching styles of these instructors. For instance, Teacher L incorporated more group or pair discussions for introducing academic writing concepts (e.g., comparison, contrast, and analogy) than Teacher M. Although Teacher M also made efforts to include discussions among his students, he often did a lecture about academic writing concepts using PowerPoint presentations rather than letting his students discuss and articulate them orally. As a participant observer, I was present in the classroom all the time during the summer and fall semesters after the second week.
when I got consent from both instructors and students. Each meeting of these ESL writing courses lasted for 75 minutes. I videotaped the whole 13 class sessions of Teacher M (about 16 hours) and 23 class sessions of Teacher L (about 29 hours) without selecting which class sections or class activities to record. The disparity in the number of videotaped class sessions and hours was solely caused by the difference between the intensive (Teacher M) and regular semester (Teacher L) schedule.

As for the contextual information about two classrooms, they are distinctive in many ways. The following sub-sections discuss such differences that might mediate the interactional patterns in each classroom: 1) student population, 2) contents of teaching or genres of writing, 3) instructional activities, and 4) teacher’s feedback to students’ written drafts.

3.3.1 Student population

As clearly observed in Chart 1 above, the majority of students in Teacher M’s class was Chinese, 11 out of 19 students. This number represents the general population of international students in this university. On the other hand, the students’ linguistic backgrounds in Teacher L’s class were more diverse. The largest number of students comes from India and the second largest is from Korea and China. Such differences in the students’ population seem to influence the manner of the students’ participation in classroom interactions. More specifically, based on my classroom observation, in the beginning of the semester in particular, most students in Teacher M’s class were less interactive except for a few vocal students with Arabic linguistic backgrounds. In contrast, a number of students in Teacher L’s class, especially the ones from India, were very active in terms of asking and answering questions from the beginning of the semester even though every class session started at eight in the morning. This is probably
because many students in her class generally feel comfortable and confident about speaking in English according to their answers to the questionnaire (see APPENDIX C for questions).

3.3.2 Contents of teaching, genres of writing, and requirements for each assignment

As mentioned, mainly because of the different lengths of two semesters, the contents of teaching and genres of writing to cover for each semester were different. Both courses covered “extended definition essay” (1st major assignment) and “argumentative essay” (final assignment). On the other hand, “critique essay” was for Teacher M’s class only, and “compare and contrast essay” and “analytic essay” were only covered by Teacher L’s. Furthermore, in addition to writing products, in Teacher L’s class each student was required to make an oral presentation about both the compare and contrast and the argumentative essays while in Teacher M’s class students orally presented the argumentative essays only. Therefore, generally speaking, the students in Teacher L’s class had more opportunities to orally discuss written essays in class than the students in Teacher M’s class did.

In fact, although the ESL program itself makes a general decision on what types of assignments (or genres of writing) should be covered for each semester in order to ensure that all the sessions of ESL 015 would achieve the shared goals for students who should be ready to write academic papers for undergraduate courses in the U.S. university (see APPENDIX A and B for course objectives), each instructor designed the writing assignments in slightly different ways as observed in the handouts (APPENDIX F and G for each instructor’s requirements for argumentative essays). These requirements certainly shaped the classroom interactions in which students and instructors were engaging. How each writing assignment and its requirements set by these teachers shaped classroom interactions will be explained in the data analysis chapters that follow.
3.3.3 Instructional activities

Both instructors similarly articulated in the questionnaire (see APPENDIX D) that classroom interactions and discussions about ideas for writing are essential in the writing classroom since articulating ideas would facilitate and enhance the process of writing. However, what was seen in their actual class activities was quite distinctive. Based on my class observation, Teacher M always brought his PowerPoint presentations that contained a lot of explanations about academic writing concepts (e.g., counterarguments and refutations) and lectured about the concepts to the students without having much discussion among them up to the moment when the class began working on argumentative essays. Thus, especially during the earlier semester, the students in Teacher M’s class mostly listened to his lectures without discussing the concepts in pairs or groups. On the other hand, Teacher L prepared only word documents that contained the class activities and the main points to announce for each session, and she always let students discuss academic writing concepts and reading materials from the textbook in whole class, pairs, or groups and share their opinions orally. The difference in terms of how much discussion activities were utilized in each classroom is critical since it shaped how comfortable students in each classroom were about discussions and presentations and how they actually engaged in such activities.

3.3.4 Teachers’ feedback to students’ writing drafts

Finally, the difference in terms of teacher feedback to students’ writing drafts for major assignments is discussed. Especially because of the instructors’ teaching conditions, how much feedback was given was quite different. Teacher L’s teaching load for the fall semester were 3 sessions of ESL 015, which ended up with having about 60 students in total. Therefore, it was extremely hard for her to provide students many opportunities to revise their drafts in a similar
manner to Teacher M. Furthermore, her feedback style was brief and concise, but specific and clear about what students needed to change for revision. On the other hand, Teacher M was teaching 2 sessions of ESL 015 during the summer. Despite the intensive schedule, he managed to give his students as many chances to revise their drafts as possible by not being so strict about the deadline for each submission. Furthermore, what was most distinctive was that Teacher M did a mandatory individual meeting for the first assignment with all of his students. During the whole semester, Teacher M tried to give a detailed and individualized feedback to students’ drafts in both oral and written forms.

Another important difference is that although both teachers employed peer review activities in class to provide the other type of feedback besides theirs, their approaches were different. Specifically, Teacher L’s peer review sheets were very specific and filled with many questions that her students needed to answer through reading their peer essays (see APPENDIX E) while Teacher M’s ones were more general and less clear in terms of what students should focus on compared with Teacher L’s. Especially because Teacher L was not able to afford time for giving detailed feedback for each student, she seemingly intended to train her students for carefully reviewing peers’ papers. In fact, she did in-class peer review activities for all the major essay assignments. Contrastingly, Teacher M spent more time on providing his feedback to students’ drafts and spent less time on making students engage in peer review activities in class.

3.4 Rationale for data selection

As mentioned, naturally-occurring interactional data were collected in two ESL writing classrooms taught by two experienced instructors during the summer and fall semesters in 2013. In other words, the data are authentic speech that is not solely generated for research purposes. Also, it can be argued that this academic writing class is neither purely a language-teaching
setting nor a content course (e.g., science or engineering), since students need to write about specific topics in which they are interested based on their understanding of academic writing concepts. Even though I observed and video-recorded whole class interactions related to all the genres of writing dealt with in these courses – that is, extended definition essays, compare and contrast essays (only from Teacher L’s class), analytic essays (only from Teacher L’s class), critique essays (only from Teacher M’s class), and argumentative essays – I am specifically interested in analyzing interactions related to argumentative essays and selectively transcribing the sequences of interaction only in relation to miscommunication. It is mainly because I argue that argumentative essays are associated with students’ own stance-making and they should make arguments on their points of view, which can naturally create the opportunity to share their opinions and negotiate understanding with others. In other words, compared with other genres, this argumentative essay may generate more opportunities that students would initiate discussions with other classmates and instructors and that they may face discrepancy and misunderstanding or non-understanding moments because of differences in cultural, linguistic, and personal backgrounds about topics for argumentative essays. Furthermore, the argumentative essays were assigned as the final project, so at the time when students engaged in this assignment, students and instructors seemingly felt more comfortable to argue their opinions in the classroom in comparison to the earlier periods of the semesters. In addition, since this assignment contributed most to their final grades, students appeared to devote a lot of time and effort to this writing assignment, which might have affected the manner in which they engaged in classroom interactions. Lastly, the argumentative essays involve all the content knowledge covered in the whole semester (such as summary and paragraph structure including thesis statement) in addition
to new concepts (e.g., argumentation and refutation), so students might have struggled with multiple writing concepts simultaneously.

### 3.5 Data collection procedure and types of collected data

After getting consent from instructors and students, I started to observe the classroom regularly and video-record classroom interactions at the same time throughout each semester. The data collection involved the following: 1) video-recording of classroom interactions, 2) classroom observation notes, 3) instructor and student questionnaires, 4) artifacts from the classes, and 5) stimulated recall interviews with both instructors and specific groups of students. The groups of students were selected because they were involved in the data that contained miscommunication-related sequences. As the major data source for analysis, the video-recorded interactional data consisted of approximately 16 hours from Teacher M’s course and 29 hours from Teacher L’s (45 hours in total).

When recording the whole class interactions, in-class presentations and Q & A sessions, group work, and in-class writing workshop, three video cameras were set up to capture both a teacher’s (or presenter’s) behavior and students’ (or audience’s) behavior simultaneously. These video cameras were positioned as follows. One was located in the back of the classroom, which captured a teacher or presenters’ view. Another two cameras were positioned either in left or right end of the classroom in front, which captured students’ views from two angles so that I can observe all the students’ behaviors in the classroom. This enabled me to explore the dialogic nature of teacher and student interaction and also to integrate what other people were doing at specific moments for analysis, which at times provides crucial contextual information. As the data preparation for analysis, interactional sequences, in which an instructor and student(s) were trying to manage miscommunication and co-construct understanding through employing verbal,
non-verbal, and multimodal resources, were selected for transcription in detail. Especially because the identification process of miscommunication sequences depends on the researcher’s own interpretation, in order to minimize my bias, I asked a few other researchers with expertise in analyzing oral interactions to check whether they agree with my identification and interpretation of miscommunication sequences in order to ensure reliability.

The selected sequences of talk related to miscommunication were transcribed following conventions adopted from conversation analysis (see ten Have, 2007, APPENDIX H) after identifying specific sequences of interest. For purposes of identification, interactants’ perspectives, namely whether they orient to the talk as being ‘problematic’ was taken into consideration (see detailed discussion about how to identify miscommunication sequences in Section 3.7). In other words, miscommunication is conceived of primarily in an *emic* (i.e., insider) perspective. The excerpts selected were transcribed in detail in terms of hand and arm gestures drawing on McNeill’s (2005) notation system. Other embodied actions (i.e., bodily actions that add to the semantic meaning of language at times integrated with material objects, including body position and orientation, head movements, facial expressions, and eye gazes), and material objects available in the environment are also transcribed in detail when those features seemingly play important roles in contributing to negotiating meaning and resolving miscommunication. By extending analysis of ELF interactions to a more complete range of communicative actions or diverse ecological resources, this study will contribute to shifting the prevailing emphasis on the verbal component of ELF interactional investigation to more holistic analysis of ELF speakers’ meaning making processes. Similarly, audio-recorded stimulated recall interviews with instructors and focused students regarding their retrospective comments on video clips were also annotated for the key information first. After identifying specific sequences
relevant for analysis, the selected parts of the sequence only were transcribed so that they can either confirm interpretations based on the sequential analysis or provide alternative interpretations regarding miscommunication in which those participants were involved.

As a participant observer, I observed classroom interactions and took detailed field-notes while video-recording. In addition to such in-class field-notes, I wrote formal ethnographic observation notes within a couple of days after each classroom observation. The contents of my field-notes and observation notes constitute the following: the number of students who attended and missed each session; the students’ seating arrangements (also, how they changed as the class time progressed); sequences of instructional activities; the general atmosphere of the classroom depending on specific moments of the semester; instructors and students’ unique behaviors and utterances; their attitudes to class activities; relationships among students (e.g., who tended to work with who as a pair/group members or who showed his or her leadership in group activities); and most importantly, the specific sequences that I identified as possible miscommunications. Such a long-term observation and constant reflection through taking notes enabled me to record the detailed contextual information and to identify key incidents in general and miscommunication sequences in particular without relying on my subjective perspectives. Furthermore, such classroom observation notes were utilized as ethnographic texts, which can provide emic perspectives for better understanding interactional scenes.

Furthermore, all the participants filled out a questionnaire (either for students, see APPENDIX C, or instructors, see APPENDIX D) before the recording started, covering relevant background information including linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Such background information was utilized only in relation to precise behavioral evidence from recorded interaction to avoid haphazard invocation of background information in order to explain what was seen in
interactions. This is because it is inappropriate to take the nature and impact of these background aspects on the interaction for granted. Rather, it is important to analyze which features of such background information are actually made relevant by the participants. Besides questionnaires, the data collection also included the following class artifacts relevant to analyze classroom interactions shown in Table 3.2.

### Table 3.2. Collected class artifacts from two courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of artifact</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Teacher M</th>
<th>Teacher L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course syllabus</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed handouts in class</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s PowerPoints for class lectures</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s word documents that include lesson plans</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ PowerPoints for presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ drafts of writing (all genres covered for each course)</td>
<td></td>
<td>183</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These artifacts at times became crucial interactional components that students and teachers oriented to and integrated, which needs special attention for analysis.

As another important data source, besides classroom interactions, the stimulated recall interview with students and instructors were conducted. After identifying specific interactional sequences related to miscommunication, I created the short video-clips for each instance with rough transcriptions and asked students and instructors involved in those interactions to participate in an individual stimulated recall session. Both instructors and 11 students from each
session (i.e., 22 students in total) agreed to participate in stimulated recall sessions and they were all audio-recorded after I obtained the permission from them. In order to avoid my participants’ forgetting about what was going on at specific interactional moments, I tried to conduct stimulated recalls during the same semester as soon as possible after such miscommunication-related interactions were identified (usually within a couple of weeks at latest). Although I acknowledge that they might forget what they were thinking and what they misunderstood at the moment at the time of post hoc interviews, I still value their own perspectives or more precisely (re)interpretations about miscommunication instances, which can open up alternative perspectives or interpretations on miscommunication phenomena among ELF speakers.

At each stimulated recall interview, I asked my participants to watch a short video clip within which I interpreted that there were some possible miscommunication sequences and to recall their thoughts and feelings at the time through asking questions (see APPENDIX I for sample questions). Participants were asked by the researcher to comment on “critical moments” or “a point of significance, an instant when things change” (Pennycook, 2004, p. 330). Namely, they are parts of the interaction that pointed to either imminent misunderstanding or were otherwise indicative of interactive ‘troubles.’ Participants were also invited to comment on their interlocutors’ interactional behaviors in selected stretches of the discourse. Each stimulated recall session took approximately 10-50 minute long depending on how many instances to be discussed during one session. The main purposes of these stimulated recall sessions with participants were to identify similarities and differences between my own interpretations and their retrospective views in relation to miscommunication sequences and to do member check with them. The only part of stimulated recall interview relevant for analyzing specific miscommunication sequences were selectively transcribed for analysis.
3.6 Important features of gesture for transcription and analysis

As discussed in the previous section, gestures in particular are transcribed in great detail, drawing on McNeill’s (2005) notation system, which needs further elaboration with regard to what “gestures” actually mean. For analysis especially in Chapter 4, the focal gesture is synchronized gesture with speech in accordance to McNeill (1992, 2005). On the one hand, gesture conveys meaning globally, relying on visual and mimetic imagery. On the other hand, speech conveys meaning discretely, relying on codified words and grammatical devices (Goldin-Meadow, 2003). Thus, concurrent speech with gesture can present a more complete meaning, which constitutes “co-expressivity” (McNeill & Duncan, 2000). This study aligns with McNeill’s claim that gesture should be conceptualized dimensionally rather than categorically. According to McNeill (2005), gesture can be divided into iconics, metaphorics, deictics, and beats. First of all, iconic gesture resembles the aspects of the actual event or entity and embodies “picturable aspects of semantic content” (p. 39). Moreover, iconic gestures may be “kinetographic,” representing some bodily action(s) (Lazaraton, 2004, p. 84). In short, iconics usually bear some physical resemblance to objects or actions. Metaphoric gesture presents abstract ideas or concepts as concrete images and at times involves a metaphoric use of space. Deictics are pointing gestures, and entail “locating entities and actions in space vis-à-vis a reference point” or serves a metaphorical function by referring to abstract entities (McNeill, 2005, pp. 39-40). Finally, beats are “flicks of the hand(s) up and down or back and forth that seem to ‘beat’ time along with the rhythm of speech” (p. 40). Functionally, such beats bring attention to some aspects of discourse, regulate the flow of speech, and monitor speech production. Despite such classification, it is crucial to point out that the classification system is not as distinct as it may appear since gestures often overlap with other gestural forms. Therefore, this study does not
attempt to classify gesture in a very strict manner although the categories mentioned above are referred to for analysis.

In concert with McNeill’s (2005) classification, some features of Kendon’s (2004) classification system of gesture are employed especially because of the scope of the present study examining gesture in classroom interaction. Namely, Kendon introduces “pragmatic functions,” where gesture reflects a “speaker’s attitude to the referential meaning” (p. 158). To put it another way, pragmatic functions of gesture may relate to features of an utterance’s meaning that are more than a part of its referential meaning. More specifically, according to Kendon, pragmatic functions of gesture consist of the following three types: “modal” (intensifying an evaluation), “performative” (constituting a speech act such as an offer), and “parsing” (marking out the aspects of discourse structure) functions (p.159). In addition, gesture can also serve “interactive or interpersonal functions” such as regulating turns at talk, giving someone the floor, and indicating the addressee of an utterance (p.159). In brief, Kendon adds aspects of interactive and pragmatic functions of gesture to its referential functions that McNeill (2005) has mostly focused for analysis. Therefore, through a combination of McNeill and Kendon’s classifications, gestures are able to be examined as a multidimensional and multifunctional phenomenon.

In addition to its classification, when analyzing synchronized gesture with speech, identification of strokes\textsuperscript{viii} is essential. According to McNeill (2005), a stroke is an obligatory element of gesture and a meaning-bearing phase. More precisely, it is the highest point of physical and meaning-making effort. The stroke is normally synchronous with co-expressive speech and highlights the specific meanings that the speaker wants to convey. Such a stroke is the point at which speech-gesture dialectic unfolds in the flow of interaction, or what McNeill
(2005) and McNeill and Duncan (2000) call “growth point.” At this point, synthetic and dynamic gesture merges with sequential and static speech in a dialectical relationship, which works like ‘fuel’ for expressing different aspects of meaning (McNeill, 2005). Besides strokes, as McNeill (2005) notes, gesture hold is the crucial phase where co-expressiveness with speech continues and meaning is not “fully discharged” (p. 33). Kendon (2000) also claims that gesture holds can serve as the maintenance of gesturer’s intention and attitude even after gesturer’s turn completes.

The other prominent notion from McNeill (2005), which is crucial for analysis, is “catchment.” According to McNeill, a catchment is “recognized when one or more gesture features occur in at least two (not necessarily consecutive) gestures” (p. 116). Catchments, which entail recurring gestural features such as “handedness, shape, movement, space, orientation, dynamics, etc.”, usually reflect a common theme (pp.116-117). Such images can provide clues to “cohesive linkages” in discourse to serve as “a kind of thread of visuospatial imagery that runs through a discourse to reveal the larger discourse units that encompass the otherwise separate parts” (pp. 116-117). As a result, monologic catchments in particular can provide the interlocutor “a gesture-based window into discourse cohesion” (p. 117). Importantly, catchments seemingly play an important role in “achieving alignment between interlocutors by helping to establish a common ground” (p. 164). In other words, catchments can be considered as a dialogue of gestures in which they build upon the earlier movement of another party. Arnold (2012) also provides a set of important criteria for identifying catchment, especially dialogic ones co-constructed by more than two interlocutors. According to Arnold, to be labeled as such, two or more gestures have to share at least one element of form and meaning. Also, importantly, catchments can exhibit some variations in non-essential attributes while their crucial features (namely, the information most relevant to the task at hand) need to be retained. These criteria
provide the analyst with flexibility in terms of identifying a wide range of catchments happening in the classroom interaction (see also Smotrova, 2014, pp. 415-416 for fuller discussion).

In summary, taking into account McNeill (1992, 2005) and Kendon’s (2004) frameworks, gestures are closely examined as a multidimensional phenomenon that can fulfill a range of functions (i.e., both interpersonal and intrapersonal functions, see also Furuyama, 2000; McNeill & Duncan, 2000 for details). Moreover, this study takes into account Goodwin’s (2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2007) suggestion of incorporating other non-verbal elements for gesture analysis. That is, not only gestures but also other elements such as postural configuration, head movements, eye gazes, facial expressions, and the environment surrounding interlocutors, should be integrated for analysis, because such different kinds of semiotic systems are juxtaposed to each other to generate complex semiotic effects and create a coherent action. In short, this study aims to consider gesture as part of the whole complex of multimodal interactional resources rather than isolating it from other modalities.

3.7 Identification of miscommunication sequences, levels of understanding, and humor sequences

In this section, the detailed information regarding how to identify miscommunication sequences, interpret levels of understanding, and find out humor sequences will be explicated in turns.

3.7.1 Identification of miscommunication sequences

Emic perspective

How to identify sequences of miscommunication is one of the critical matters for this study. First of all, from an emic perspective, interactants’ perspectives should be only taken into consideration. Specifically, whether ELF speakers orient to the talk as being ‘problematic’ in
sequences of talk matters. As Schegloff (1987) mentions, it is important that “the parties themselves address the talk as revealing a misunderstanding in need of repair” (p. 204). In other words, this study mainly adopts the conversation analytic approach to interactional repair. The interactional structure of conversation normally provides participants with opportunities to repair or head-off potential misunderstandings (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977). Such repairs entail a variety of techniques (e.g., confirmation checks, clarification requests, restatements, repetitions, and comprehension checks) used by both parties in interaction to resolve what they perceive as some ‘problematic’ aspect of talk. Also, the initiation of repair on potential misunderstanding typically occurs in the turn immediately following the problematic display (Schegloff, 1992; Schegloff et al, 1977). As a result, when miscommunication arises, there should be some identifiable organization of sequences that signal something ‘troublesome’ and clear orientation to it among interlocutors.

In a similar vein, in relation to ELF interactions, Mauranen (2012) argues that instances of non-understanding are easy to detect, because interlocutors are usually quick to take up problematic expressions. Therefore, in order to locate specific sequences of potential non-understanding or misunderstanding, I pay closer attention to the surrounding discourse and consider the previous and next turns, which involve confirmation checks, repair requests, and general requests for clarification. This is because such items are considered indicators of miscommunication in ELF research (Mauranen, 2006a).

**Categories of miscommunication in ELF interactions**

In order to investigate the phenomenon of misunderstanding among ELF speakers, Mauranen (2006a) classifies two types of misunderstanding as follows: 1) “‘retrospective’ misunderstanding” which is “explicitly recognized by at least one of the interlocutors” through
signaling by direct questions or repetition of troublesome items and 2) “‘prospective’ behavior which is “advance prevention of misunderstanding” (p. 131) through the use of confirmation checks and self-repairs, and which does not entail overt markers of misunderstanding. Mauranen argues that in order to get a better picture of the misunderstanding-related phenomenon, speakers’ proactive talk should be considered in addition to the retrospective kind. In fact, such prospective behavior has been reported to be a prominent feature of ELF interaction (Mauranen, 2006b). In short, Mauranen’s classification entails both actual and potential miscommunication problems, which has provided a solid base for ELF research on miscommunication phenomena.

Building on Mauranen’s classifications of misunderstanding, for the present study, the sequences of potential miscommunication were identified and categorized by the following four dimensions although each category may overlap: 1) non-understanding sequences which entail overt repairs signaled by minimal utterance, “huh?” “mhm?” (i.e., “open-class repair initiator” Drew, 1997; Schegloff, 1997, 2000), partial or whole repetitions following certain trouble-source items, or direct questions or utterances such as “what did you say?” or “I didn’t get it.”; 2) non-understanding sequences that seemingly entail potential trouble sources, but does not entail overt repairs (i.e., interlocutors intentionally “let it pass,” or pretend understanding (e.g., Firth, 1996; Wong, 2000); 3) misunderstanding sequences that seemingly entails potential trouble sources, but are not recognized by interlocutors (e.g., conversational tokens such as “I got it” that signals the new state of understanding appeared only in the end); and 4) sequences that interlocutors seemingly attempt to prevent miscommunication by use of pre-empt strategies (e.g., confirmation checks and self-repair). In particular, this study selected and analyzed the first category of miscommunication as a major focus. This is because analyzing miscommunication (especially a latent one that lies beyond the linguistic analytic research, like the third category
above) seems practically impossible, and focusing on the observable instances of
miscommunication such as overt repair sequences is more manageable based on existing
classroom research (e.g., Lyster, 2002; Varonis & Gass, 1985). In other words, the present study
mainly concentrates on the visible non- or misunderstanding instances when participants
explicitly give voice to their communicative ‘problems’ through employing linguistic markers or
using nonverbal resources and collaboratively engage in repair work.

Besides overt repairs, this study also attempts to analyze the second category (i.e.,
interlocutors intentionally “let it pass.”) only when such features become observable. It is certain
that such phenomena require “more interpretative work” (Vasseur et al., 1996, p. 77) in
comparison to overt repair sequences since they display only implicit symptoms. Although Firth
(1996) states that “since neither party orient to or display awareness of the ‘misunderstanding’ …,
it is rendered interactionally irrelevant” (p. 243 emphasis in original), typical features of “let it
pass,” including lack-of-uptake, minimal responses, over-riding, and nonverbal behaviors such as
laughter, can be interpreted as implicitly pointing towards miscommunication (Pitzl, 2010).
Furthermore, such covert “let it pass” phenomenon indicated implicitly through sequential
analysis can be interpreted more effectively through integrating stimulated recall interview data.
However, it should be noted that in some cases misunderstanding may not surface at all and even
participants may never realize that misunderstanding happens in their interaction, which is out of
the scope for this study. Lastly, besides non-understanding sequences which entail overt repairs
and involve “let it pass” phenomena, the forth category, or sequences that ELF speakers
seemingly attempt to prevent miscommunication by the use of pre-empt strategies are also
included for analysis following Mauranen’s (2006a) recommendation. The major reason for
rather broadening the definition of miscommunication is to demonstrate a variety of ‘problematic’
moments in multilingual classrooms in which ELF speakers work hard to negotiate meaning and resolve or prevent their communicative problems at hand.

**Structure of repair and negotiation of meaning**

As for the structure of miscommunication that entails overt repairs (i.e., the first category discussed in the previous section), Varonis and Gass’s (1985) model related to the negotiation of meaning (see Figure 3.1) is useful because it shows a rigid structure with only “four functional primes” (p. 73). This model is divided into two main parts, namely trigger (T) and resolution. Trigger is defined as “an utterance on the part of the speaker which results in some indication of non-understanding on the part of the hearer” (p. 74). The subsequent sequences normally consist of the following stages: indicate (I), respond (R), and react to respond (RR). However, it is true that not all instances can follow the same pattern of these four simple processes. Also, it is noteworthy to state that although these conceptual categories with a simple representation are helpful in terms of identifying miscommunication sequences that entail overt repairs and negotiation of meaning, I do not intend to utilize Varonis and Gass’s concepts for interpretation since they entail negative connotation from SLA. That is, they assume that interactions should be compared according to so-called native speaker norm, which is irrelevant for analyzing intercultural communication from an ELF perspective. Furthermore, they hold the opinion that negotiation of meaning ‘halts’ the progress of a conversation from the perspective of transactional functions of communication. Since SLA research has been exclusively concerned with ‘learner language,’’ the models of interpreting differences in communicative practices have tended to see

![Figure 3.1. Model of negotiation of meaning adapted from Varonis & Gass (1985, p. 74)](image)
negotiation of meaning in terms of ‘correction,’ not possibility of interactive negotiation or accommodation strategies, which is a focus of this study. Despite such negative theorization behind it, this model allows the systematic identification of miscommunication through focusing on the sequential development of the repair and negotiation of meaning.

**Procedures of indicating non-understanding**

As for identifying the procedures of indicating non-understanding, the systematic model of procedures for indicating non-understanding (see Figure 3.2) presented by Vasseur et al. (1996) is quite useful. This model illustrates a “continuum of procedures” which covers the whole spectrum of more or less commitment (i.e., directness and explicitness) and focusing (specificity) (Vasseur, et al., 1996, p. 76). It includes symptoms, or implicit and indirect behaviors interpreted as revealing non-understanding, and explicit and direct signals for non-understanding. Therefore, this model overcomes the limitation of categorizations of the indicating procedures by Varonis and Gass (1985) and Wong (2000) that only entail direct and explicit procedures. In other words, this model of non-understanding enables the analyst to identify and capture a greater variety of possible miscommunication phenomena, including covert, implicit ones in actual interactions.

**Figure 3.2.** Model for the procedures for indicating non-understanding
Adapted from Vasseur, Broeder & Roberts (1996, p. 77).
3.7.2 Understanding at three levels

In relation to miscommunication, how to interpret “understanding” is important since understanding is the main analytical point of reference in ELF research. For my research purpose, Smith’s (1992) three-fold differentiations of understanding into “intelligibility,” “comprehensibility,” and “interpretability” are quite useful (see also Smith & Nelson, 1985) in that they illustrate understanding involved with different levels. The first level, intelligibility is recognizing words or utterances only. Jenkins (2000) similarly states that intelligibility refers to understanding of a word on the phonetic and phonological level. The second level, comprehensibility is at the level of the meaning. In other words, comprehensibility includes understanding of meaning and content matters. In addition to intelligibility (i.e., recognizing the sounds) and comprehensibility (i.e., recognizing meaning), Smith (1992) explains interpretability as being able to recognize meaning beyond words or utterances, or the speaker’s intentions or purposes. Furthermore, it is important to add to Smith’s differentiations that understanding at these all levels should be interactionally achieved between the listener and the speaker who share the responsibility (Smith & Nelson, 1985), in particular in an ELF community that usually forms rather egalitarian communicative practices.

3.7.3 Identification of humorous sequences

Lastly, as one possible type of communicative strategy, or more precisely a speech act, to deal with miscommunication (see other examples of communicative strategies in Section 3.1.4), humorous sequences in relation to laughter are also identified. This is because the employment of laughter that leads to humorous construction can resolve miscommunication successfully. Following Holmes and Marra (2002), humorous utterances are defined as those identified by the analyst on the basis of nonverbal, prosodic, and discoursal clues, “as intended
by the speaker(s) to be amusing and perceived to be amusing at least some participants” (p. 1693). In other words, humor sequences can be identified in that a portion of talk is produced or treated by participants as humorous. More specifically, as a means of identifying instances of humor, various contextual and linguistic cues are relevant, which include the speaker’s tone of voice, the audiences’ auditory and discoursal responses, laughter, and facial expressions (especially smiles). All of these are considered together when identifying humorous sequences of talk while each instance of humor in conversations has to be examined in the particular interactional contexts in which it occurs. This is important because conversational humor is always context dependent, jointly achieved, and negotiated among interlocutors involved.

3.8 Conclusion

To conclude this methodology chapter, a critical issue for this qualitative, interpretive study, or my subjectivity, needs to be discussed. First of all, I am aware that my position as a researcher and my regular presence in these classrooms certainly affected how the instructors and students engaged in classroom interactions although they probably became less attentive to me and the video cameras as the semester progressed. Nevertheless, none of the classroom interactions were elicited solely for my research purposes. Furthermore, I acknowledge that throughout the process of this research (in particular, when interviewing instructors and students for stimulated recalls, identifying miscommunication sequences for transcription, and interpreting interactional data), my status as an ELF speaker, my positionality as a researcher, or my potential role as another instructor from students’ view influenced how I communicated with them, how they treated me, what they shared with me, and how and what I analyzed as relevant data.
Of course, it is acknowledged that there is an inherent weakness in qualitative studies, namely, subjectivity. It is true that subject position can become my research bias. However, this study provides in-depth, complex interpretations about miscommunication sequences among ELF speakers through sequential analysis and member check by stimulated recall. Furthermore, as Stake (1995) and Usher (1996) claim, subjectivity can become strength especially when researchers are aware of their own bias. Rather than suspending it, they can use it as the essential starting point for understanding and acquiring knowledge. Most importantly, I would like to make full use of my subject position as a non-native ELF speaker, which is shared with my research participants, so that this study can illuminate the phenomenon of miscommunication in ELF academic discourse from a more insider perspective. In brief, while being aware of my subjective position and potential bias, I will utilize my subjectivity to access insider knowledge among participants and to discover multiple realities in relation to miscommunication in multilingual writing classrooms and their skillful employment of communicative strategies for dealing with miscommunication and achieving successful intercultural communication.
Chapter 4

Miscommunication and Embodiment:

The Functions of Gesture and Embodied Action

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 4-7 will illustrate 14 instances of miscommunication in total, most of which ELF speakers (multilingual instructors or students) overtly signal non-understandings or misunderstandings as part of repair work in the context of multilingual writing classrooms, in which they deploy a variety of communicative strategies and interactional resources in order to deal with miscommunication. As discussed in Chapter 3, for the purposes of demonstrating a variety of miscommunication phenomena, the following chapters include excerpts involving local miscommunication that is often triggered by linguistic problems and that can be easily resolved during negotiation sequences, global miscommunication that needs longer sequences of repair and at times does not reach mutual understanding owing to different logics and conceptualizations of academic writing, and “let it pass” phenomena where interlocutors pretend to understand. In other words, the present study examines unique instances of miscommunication that illustrate a range of miscommunication types and characteristics rather than including all the complete instances of miscommunication available in the whole corpus.

The two main principles of selecting miscommunication phenomena for analysis were: 1) both my participants and I perceived something as ‘problematic’ and involved negotiation; and 2) interlocutors actively employ non-verbal interactional resources such as gesture, laughter, silence, and classroom artifacts in order to resolve or prevent miscommunication. In relation to the second principle, this study tries to demonstrate “multimodal repair turns” (Olsher, 2008, p. 118) in which multimodal and embodied interactional resources employed by ELF speakers can
complement or enhance the meaning illustrated through speech. In short, this dissertation tries to illustrate how the strategies that ELF speakers adopt for communicative success can be realized by nonverbal, embodied, and multimodal means along with speech.

Through adopting an ecological perspective on language use and learning in the classroom (e.g., van Lier, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2004), the present study sees the classroom as an ecosystem in which instructors and students interact with each other through engaging with multiple ecological resources. Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) argue that such ecological resources mainly comprise four elements at least, including “participants” (each individual who participates), “processes” (a systematic series of actions or activities), “artifacts” (entities from the environment, including classroom materials), and “structures” (relatively stable forces of organizations such as the curriculum) (p. 782). These ecological resources in the classroom can serve as “affordances,” which is one of key concepts of van Lier’s ecological approach to language learning. van Lier (2004) defines affordance as “what is available to the person to do something with” (p. 91). From this ecological perspective, affordances are interpreted as the potential starting point of the meaning-making process and this process is an “active relationship” that involves engagement between the learner and the environment (van Lier, 2004, p. 92). It is thus important to pay close attention to meaning potential which is constantly emerging through interlocutors’ active engagement with the environment, which is in fact a multidimensional semiotic space.

The four chapters, including the present one, draw special attention to a range of different ecological resources or ecological affordances that ELF speakers can actively incorporate for meaning making—such as gestures, embodied actions, non-verbal vocalizations, classroom artifacts and participants in the environment, and speech—and in doing so, offer an
alternative way of capturing ELF speakers’ communicative effectiveness involving diverse
semiotic modes and of exploring their communicative strategies situated within the classroom
ecology. Each chapter focuses on gestural (movements associated with hands and arms) and
embodied actions (other bodily actions that contribute to meaning making) (Chapter 4), non-
verbal vocalizations including laughter and silence (Chapter 5) and material objects (Chapter 6)
and people in the environment (Chapter 7), which can contribute to communicative effectiveness
but have been so far not seriously taken into consideration in any ELF pragmatic research.

I argue that attention to such ecological resources allows us to uncover the complex
process in which ELF speakers achieve mutual understanding and resolve miscommunication in
the classroom ecology. According to Guerrettaz and Johnston’s (2013) categories introduced
above, the four foci for the present study roughly fit into “participants” and “artifacts.” The
reason why I focus on these ecological affordances is that in comparison to “processes” and
“structures,” these visible elements appear to directly get involved in the process in which ELF
speakers deal with miscommunication and are also manifested explicitly in face-to-face
interactions like ones in the classroom. In contrast, the “processes” and “structures” are more
subtle and indirect in nature, which might be hard to capture.

As already introduced in both Chapters 2 and 3, the three research questions to be
answered throughout the data analysis chapters are the following: 1) In what ways do
miscommunication sequences arise among ELF speakers in two multilingual writing classrooms
while maintaining politeness?; 2) How do ELF speakers integrate non-verbal, embodied, and
multimodal resources (including gesture, embodied action, laughter, facial expression, silence,
and material objects and people in classroom ecology) with speech when resolving or preventing
miscommunication?; and 3) What are the outcomes of such miscommunication sequences?
It is a matter of fact that both verbal and non-verbal interactional resources can contribute to resolving or preventing miscommunication. Yet, the present study rather zooms into the functions of non-verbal interactional resources and treats verbal elements as part of the background to some degree. Although verbal speech is somewhat treated as the background for analysis, this does not necessarily mean that I consider verbal speech is less important. I fully acknowledge that speech often contributes to the speaker’s meaning in a significant manner while other non-verbal embodied resources have compensatory or subsidiary functions. Therefore, when verbal speech seems to contribute to meaning along with other interactional resources in important ways, it will be noted without ignoring it. Moreover, it is acknowledged that since each semiotic mode offers different affordances, people often use different modalities simultaneously to bring together complex “multimodal ensembles” (Bezemer & Kress, 2008, p. 166). As Bezemer and Jewitt (2010) argue, meanings realized by any mode are always interwoven with the meanings available through other modes co-present, and people make a complex composition of modes that can communicate what they want to mean the best. Nevertheless, for purposes of the analysis, in each chapter I attempt to highlight the function of a specific semiotic modality that seemingly plays the most prominent role in meaning making and resolving miscommunication in comparison to others at each specific moment.

As for the organization of each chapter from 4 to 7, the present chapter focuses squarely on the functions of gestural and embodied actions when ELF speakers deal with miscommunication. Because of the nature of the classroom interactions related to academic writing concepts, it is assumed that students and teachers often employ metaphoric gestures associated with writing-related concepts, as observed in Zhao’s (2007) study. Since gestures and embodied actions can provide different kinds of affordances from speech and other interactional
resources, namely, three-dimensional and dynamic, actively engaging the motor modality, it is expected that they have important, unique functions in ELF speaker interaction. Chapter 5 investigates the functions of non-verbal vocalizations, specifically laughter as its primary focus and silence as secondary. In particular, it aims to demonstrate that laughter has multiple, potentially significant pragmatic roles in the multilingual classroom interactions, which is not just for signaling something funny. Lastly, Chapters 6 and 7 closely examine the roles of material objects (e.g., textbooks, worksheets, PowerPoint slides, and writing on the blackboard) and people (i.e., instructors and peers who are third party participants with different ethnic backgrounds) respectively that possibly contribute to the resolution of miscommunication phenomena. Each chapter is organized by sections, each of which illustrates unique functions of multimodal, non-verbal resources. This chapter consists of the following sections: 1) enhancing explicitness by teachers’ gesture for resolving miscommunication; 2) enhancing explicitness by students’ gesture for resolving miscommunication; 3) disagreement between teacher and student exhibited by gestures; and 4) the functions of embodied action for resolving non-understanding.

4.2 Enhancing explicitness by teachers’ gesture for resolving miscommunication

The first section will illustrate two instances of how the multilingual teachers employ gestures meaningfully when they face miscommunication in their writing classroom interactions. Excerpts 1 and 2 demonstrate that the teachers’ gestures seem to serve as enhancing explicitness of meaning conveyed by speech or without it and confirming understanding. The next sequence of talk comes from Lifen’s sixth (from China) Q & A session right after she finished her oral presentation about her argumentative essay on the one-child policy in China. The problem here is that Lifen does not clearly understand Teacher M’s question (non-understanding), namely “why
the people in China cannot change the law although many people are against it.” In the sequence below, Teacher M is trying to explain his question mainly through verbal speech.

**Excerpt 1a:** “why can’t they, change the law,”

1. L: (L has just finished her presentation) any questions?
2. (1.8)
3. TM: (raises right arm while looking at PowerPoint screen)
4. L: yeah!
5. TM: =((clicks tongue, drops right arm, and rests RH on head for a while))
6. (1.5) "kay," {some people might argue that,}
7. (shifts gazes from PowerPoint to L)
8. why {do only blame the government.}
9. (raises BH in parallel in front at chest, with palms facing up and slightly cupped)
10. L: right
11. TM: because, >if there are so many people< are there?
12. they are not, (1.2)
13. {forcing the government,}
14. (raises BH in parallel in front at chest, similar to lines 10-11 and holds}
15. or that they are not acting for changing the law,
16. {I don’t know how Chinese government’s system works,}
17. (raises BH in parallel @ chest, with palms facing in front and holds till line 25}
18. because I’m not from there,
19. L: huh-huh,
20. TM: so::, from {from my perspective,}
21. (touches chest in center with RH, lifts both shoulders and holds}
22. are you saying,
23. (what are these people doing? >I mean,<)
30.➔ {raises BH in parallel @ chest, with palms facing up and 
31.➔ half-cupped and holds until line 32; body leans forward} 
32. why don’t, why can’t they change the law? 
33. (0.8) 
34. L: {why can’t they,}= 
35. {gazes at TM} 
36. TM: ={"yea:h, '} 
37. {nods once} 
38. L: change the law, 
39. TM: [huh-huh. 
40. L: [((shifts gaze from TM to PowerPoint slide)) 
41. (2.0) 
42. {u:::n,} 
43. {gazes at PowerPoint slide} 
44. (2.2) 
45. {because, they (0.5) just, because} 
46. {gazes at TM, and shifts to PowerPoint when saying "they," 
47. and returns gaze to TM} 
48. {population (. ) in China is (. ) too large, 
49. {thrusts BH out to left or right side in parallel, 
51. with palms facing up @ stomach, circulates 
52. BH once while saying "in China," and holds} 
53. {for,} 
55. {moves RH closer to her LH @ stomach, BH pointing 
56. at left side twice, with palms facing up} 
57. {u:n,} 
58. {smiles while looking at PowerPoint slide} 

In the sequence above, although Teacher M employs gestures, most of his gestures function as merely adding emphasis to the speech, as observed at lines 10-11, 17-18, and 21-22. In addition, at lines 25-27, Teacher M employs a pointing gesture by touching his chest with his right hand while saying, “from my perspective.” This deictic gesture highlights his own perspective by touching his chest. Furthermore, at lines 29-31, when he says, “what are these people doing? I
mean.” Teacher M raises his hands in parallel, with the palms facing up and his body leans forward. This gesture demonstrates his questioning or challenging stance toward people who do not take any actions against a disliked government although they do not like the one-child policy. In general, it is observed that the gestures Teacher M employs in Excerpt 1a mostly function as adding an emphatic tone or affective stance, and do not greatly contribute to clarifying meaning related to speech or add any extra information.

In fact, after Teacher M completes his question, Lifen’s turn from line 34 onwards displays her non-understanding in a number of ways. For instance, at lines 34 and 38, Lifen literally repeats Teacher M’s question. Also, at lines 41 and 44, long gaps of silence ensue, which signals her difficulty in coming up with her responses, similar to her use of non-verbal vocalization, “u:::n,” at line 42. Furthermore, her verbal response at lines 45-48 (“because population in China is too large.”) does not directly answer Teacher M’s original question, which also signals her non-understanding. The possible reason why Teacher M’s gestures above do not successfully prevent Lifen’s non-understanding is that his use of gestures does not well contribute to the “ensemble” of meaning making through multiple modes, especially with verbal speech. In contrast, in the next sequence of talk that followed 10 seconds later of Excerpt 1a, Teacher M employs different types of gestures that contribute to raising explicitness related to speech and clarifying meaning for resolving Lifen’s non-understanding.

**Excerpt 1b:** “people **over**throw it.”

68. TM:   >no, no,<
69.        my question is,
70.      {(.).so you’re,(.) you’re trying to}
71.    {points at PowerPoint direction with RH index}
72.             finger twice}
73.      {convince the government.}
74.    {points at PowerPoint direction with RH all fingers}
75. twice with palm facing in front

76. L: {huh-huh,}

77. {nods a few times}

78. TM: {like this policy is not good, right?}

79. {keeps RH @ face with palm facing in front,}

80. {slightly shakes it}

81. {so what I am saying is, (1.2)}

82. {clenches with RH @ face and holds}

83. {there are too many people,}

84. {opens RH’s fist and stretches all fingers}

85. {forward with palm facing up}

86.➔ {we, should, we should be already in the strong position}

87.➔ {clenches fists again with RH @ face and holds}

88. {to say, to say to the government.}

89. {stretches RH’s all fingers forward with palm facing}

90. {up and holds till line 95}

91. L: {huh-huh,}

92. {nods a few times}

93. TM: {we do not like this policy,}

94. {shakes head}

95. so why is not the government following people’s

96. {intentions,}

97. {quickly flips RH to its palm facing his face}

98. and all fingers slightly curled}

99. like,

100. (0.5)

101. {>for example, in Nepal?< (0.8)}

102. {moves BH to center of chest in parallel, indicating self}

103. {if (. ) the government is, (0.5)}

104. {extends LH out to front with palm facing}

105. {up @ neck}

106.➔ {holding like the law,}

107.➔ {clenches a fist with LH strongly @ face}

108.➔ {people do not like it,
{holds the fist}

{people overthrow it.}

{moves LH away from his body @ face, palm open, as if throwing something, and holds}

{they kick the government out.}

{does the similar motion with LH twice to lines 111-112, and holds}

{maybe it’s difficult in China, I don’t know,}

(1.5) because,

{extends LH out to front with palm facing up @ neck}

(0.5)

L: I,

W: because Chinese [government]

L: [I,]

W: is so strong.

TM: [Hahaha

Ss: [hahahaha=

L: =I don’t know either, because people around me,}

(0.8) uh, seems, almost similar,

(uh, to my, to my thoughts, to my opinions.)

{raises BH up to upper chest level with palms facing body, and taps on chest a few times,}

{possibly indicating herself}

‘uh,’ my friends

say, also think, we can have a

{second child.}

{clenches fists with BH in front @ stomach level}

they won’t (0.5) be a big problem for China,

but, the Chinese government (0.5)

{just}

{shakes head}
140. stick to this policy.

Figure 4.1. Lines 86-87: “we, should, we should be already in the strong position”

Figure 4.2. Lines 106-107: “holding like the law,”

Figure 4.3. Lines 110-112: “people overthrow it,”

Figure 4.4. Lines 113-115: “they kick the government out.”

This sequence of talk above reveals that in addition to gesture, Teacher M simultaneously makes use of various communicative strategies to raise explicitness through verbal means, having realized that Lifen does not understand his question. First, Teacher M employs “signposts” or metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987) in order to signal something important to come next to Lifen: “my question is,” at line 69 and “so what I am saying is,” at line 81. Both of them are considered metadiscourse makers in that they can function as preparing the interlocutor for listening to upcoming information carefully and raising explicitness.

Another communicative strategy through verbal speech is that Teacher M uses a self-initiated comprehension check (Björkman, 2014), or a tag marker, “right?” at line 78 in order to attempt a confirmation with Lifen whether his current understanding is correct. This comprehension check is considered as the questions that speakers ask to see “if the partner can
follow the speaker” (Jamsidnejad, 2011, p. 3762) and treated as an active attempt to make sure of mutual understanding. Also, with this tag marker (“right?”), Teacher M positions the recipient as likely knowing the answer (Heritage & Raymond, 2012). At the same time, his utterance, “like this policy is not good,” is also interpreted as rephrasing. Lastly, from line 101 onwards, he provides an example from his country to explicate further about his original question.

Besides such a variety of attempts to raise explicitness through verbal speech, Teacher M effectively utilizes a series of gestures as well and coordinates them with speech, which greatly contributes to clarifying meaning and resolving miscommunication. More specifically, at lines 86-87, Teacher M states, “we, should, we should be already in the strong position” while clenching a fist with his right hand at his face level and holding it (see Figure 4.1). This metaphoric gesture seems to illustrate the image of Chinese people’s strong stance toward the one-child policy. In other words, it provides a visual demonstration of the people’s stance. In fact, gesture is effective in terms of adding an affective tone onto verbal speech. Here, it can be interpreted that with clenching a fist and holding it at the face level, which is visible to Lifen, Teacher M is metaphorically demonstrating Chinese people’s powerful and affective reactions to the one-child policy that she is discussing verbally.

So far, it is observed that Teacher M attempts to enhance explicitness (e.g., Mauranen, 2012; Kaur, 2009a, 2011b, 2011c) through verbal and non-verbal means, especially by use of gesture (clenching a fist at lines 86-87) and metadiscourse markers (“my question is” and “what I am saying.”). His strategy of enhanced explicitness is further demonstrated in the later sequence of talk. Subsequent to a short gap of silence (0.5 seconds) at line 100, which shows no uptake from Lifen, from line 101, Teacher M appears to make a decision to introduce an example from his own country, which is considered another communicative strategy for making his question
comprehensible. He says, “for example, in Nepal?” accentuating its second syllable prosodically. At the same time, he moves both hands to the center of his chest and inserts a short pause, which indicates himself and prepares Lifen for what is to come next. Here, he coordinates verbal and gestural modes together effectively. Then, from line 103, he starts to contextualize with an example prefaced by “if,” and continues, “the government is, holding like the law.” Simultaneously, he extends his left hand out to the front, with its palm facing up, and then clenches a fist strongly at his face level with a gestural stroke and a prosodic emphasis on “holding” (see Figure 4.2). This gesture can be interpreted as metaphoric, symbolizing the power of the government. This gesture imaginistically similar to the gesture at lines 86-87. It is also worth noting that his fist at face level is clearly visible to Lifen, whose gesture might have communicative intents. Then, at lines 108-109, Teacher M continues, “people do not like it,” while holding the fist with his left hand, which maintains the image of metaphoric power.

It is noteworthy that from line 110, Teacher M now initiates using a series of action-related, iconic gestures. More specifically, while saying, “people overthrow it,” he moves his left hand away from his body at the face level, with its palm open, as if throwing something, and holds (see Figure 4.3). By this gesture, Teacher M physically shows the motion of flapping with its gestural stroke on “over.” This can be interpreted as a performative act through the employment of iconic gesture. It seems that Teacher M demonstrates the action of the people who initiate violent reactions toward the government (namely, “overthrowing”) against the policy in Nepal in a dramatic manner. This demonstration through both verbal and gestural modes can contribute to Lifen’s understanding of his question by providing a specific example of people’s reactions to the government policy. At lines 113-115, Teacher M continues, “they kick the government out.” while employing the similar iconic gesture at lines 111-112, namely
illustrating the people’s action of kicking out the government (see Figure 4.4). Here, he repeats
the similar motions with his left hand twice, and then holds it. This constitutes the gestural
catchment (recurrent gestures with similar features). According to McNeill (2005), catchments
are a way of creating discursive cohesion through repeating similar types of gesture. The series
of repeated iconic gestures in the sequence of talk here provide a visual demonstration or
animation of the semantic meaning expressed through his speech, which contributes to
enhancing explicitness associated to his verbal explication and adding performative effect.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Teacher M uses different phrases (“people
overthrow it” and “they kick the government out”) with the same gestural catchments that
maintain the same visual image. In other words, by constructing these gestural catchments and
holding the gestures, it is possible that he tries to highlight the visual image of people’s actions.
Therefore, the series of iconic gestures used by Teacher M might be considered as a strategy of
enhanced explicitness (Mauranen, 2012). “Enhanced or raised explicitness” refers to making
meaning clear in anticipation of possible miscommunication among linguistically and culturally
diverse speakers, and is achieved through various forms, including metadiscourse, repetition, and
rephrasing and syntactic simplification. In particular, Teacher M’s series of iconic gestures here
can become an effective visual cue in addition to co-occurring speech, which complements
verbal speech and makes its meaning of speech clearer and facilitates comprehensibility for
Lifen. In fact, from lines 125-140, Lifen’s response demonstrates her better understanding of
Teacher M’s question although it seems that she does not completely get his question yet.

In summary, Excerpt 1b demonstrates the process in which Teacher M attempts to
rephrase his question more clearly and vividly by using metaphoric, iconic, and action-related
gestures, which may contribute to enhancing explicitness for his explication of his original
question. This is rather contrastive with Excerpt 1a, in which Teacher M mostly relies on verbal speech along with emphatic gestures only and does not employ such metaphoric and action-related gestures. This contrast can be explained because Teacher M was probably aware of Lifen’s non-understanding and because he made attempts to make his meanings clearer and more comprehensible for her in the later sequences of talk. It can be argued that Teacher M’s use of such gesture is a potentially effective visual cue besides co-occurring speech, which also increases comprehensibility and effectively resolves Lifen’s non-understanding. Furthermore, Teacher M’s use of gesture can offer a more “colorful” or 3D rendition to his verbal explication (Waring, Credier, & Box, 2013, p. 251), which enables the speaker to add some emotional tone.

The following excerpt shows another multilingual teacher’s use of gesture for clarifying meaning for her student after miscommunication resolves. While Teacher M mostly employs action-related, iconic and metaphoric gestures for explicating his question in the previous excerpt, Teacher L uses a metaphoric gesture specifically related to writing in the following excerpt. This sequence of talk occurred right after Teacher L’s explanation about the general guidelines for analytic essays. After Teacher L asked her students whether they have any questions, Gupta (from India) raised a question regarding whether quotes and comments are included in the word limits for the essay, which caused Teacher L’s non-understanding. During the process of resolving non-understanding, Gupta’s repetition did not successfully clarify it, and so Anna (from Kazakhstan) who sits right next to him, tried to help by representing his meaning. After Teacher L displays understanding, she appears to confirm the main point again by employing a unique metaphoric gesture.

**Excerpt 2:** “it’s within the text.”

31. TL:  {u:h, what do you mean,}
32. {points at G with RH, with palm facing body;}
33. with confused face
34. AN: that is, ((quickly turns head to G))
35. {[I think,]}
36. {turns back to TL}
37. G: {[nods once while making eye contact with AN]}
38. AN: he means that, does these quote:s, uh:n, (1.5) will count, >in this like,<
39. [uh, twelve hundred words?]
40. G: {[nods a few times looking at TL’s direction]}
41. AN: for the present essay? (1.2)
42. [like (. ) he means,]
43. ➔TL: {[both eyes gaze shifts upward]}
44. ➔ whether, it’s- (. ) uhn,=
45. AN: =yeah! are they [part,}
46. TL: {[in the part?]}
47. {both eyes gaze shifts upward}
48. {yeah!}
49. {nods}
50. {[((thrusts out BH in parallel @ chest with palms up))]
51. AN: {[faces to G and directly gazes at him)}
52. G: {[smiles at AN and nods several times]}
53. ➔TL: {[0.8]}
54. ➔ {raises BH @ chest, with palms facing each other in parallel, all fingers stretched and opened up, and bounces them at the same time, which seemingly visualizes boundary of text; looks at G and AN’s direction}
55. ➔G: {‘I see.’=}
56. ➔ {gazes at TL}
57. ➔TL: =[(it’s within the text.)}
58. ➔ {does same bouncing gestures with BH at lines 55-58}
As mentioned above, Anna takes over the sequence by representing Gupta’s point of view from line 34 and tries to help resolve Teacher L’s non-understanding (the detailed discussion about such third-party participant’s assistance for resolving miscommunication in Chapter 7). In particular, by negotiating meanings between Anna and Teacher L at lines 45-47, Teacher L appears to achieve clear understanding about Gupta’s question, observed by her use of a token (“yeah!”) and nodding at lines 49-50. Yet, it should be noted that at lines 44-45 Teacher L’s employment of non-verbal resources, namely a combination of eye gaze shift upward, cut-off (“it’s-“), and nonverbal vocalization (“uhn,”), exhibits her thinking process, or more specifically the emerging process of her spontaneous pedagogical decision. In fact, from line 54 onwards, even after showing understanding about Gupta’s question, Teacher L still makes pedagogical efforts to make her explanation comprehensible. Smotrova (2014) calls this kind of teacher’s thinking process as “thinking for teaching.” Through making use of non-verbal interactional resources effectively, Teacher L was probably able to afford a little space to think about better pedagogical strategies to proceed on the spot while maintaining her own interactional floor simultaneously. In Vygotsky’s (1978) words, it can be called teacher’s thinking process “in flight” (p. 68). At lines 52-53, Anna quickly shifts her gaze to Gupta while he smiles back to Anna and nods several times. The sequences here seem to function as a confirmation check between Gupta
and Anna. In particular, Anna appears to double-check with Gupta whether he is satisfied with how she represented his viewpoint and what she received as a response from Teacher L.

Followed by Gupta and Anna’s mutual confirmation check, as discussed above, Teacher L still makes efforts to make her explanation about Gupta’s question comprehensible by using a metaphoric gesture along with speech from line 54 onwards. Namely, during a gap of silence (0.8 seconds), she raises both hands up to her chest level, with the palms facing each other in parallel and all fingers stretched and opened up, and then bounces them at the same time (see Figure 4.5). This metaphoric gesture appears to visualize the physical boundary of the written text (i.e., the word limit of the essay), or the container gesture (McNeill, 1992). While employing this metaphoric gesture, Teacher L looks at Gupta’s and Anna’s direction, which shows her intended audience. Overlapping with Teacher L’s turn, Gupta says, “I see.” with a quieter voice while also gazing at Teacher L. This turn indicates that he is closely paying attention and also showing understanding toward Teacher L’s metaphoric gestural explanation even without any speech. In other words, it seems that gesture itself clarified Teacher L’s meaning before her verbal explanation that follows. It is important to note here that although some might argue that verbal speech plays more important roles than gestures (i.e., gestures are ‘subsidiary’), this study envisions that both speech and gestures are equally important and that at times gestures can have more significant roles in constructing meaning than speech.

Latched with Gupta, at lines 61-62, Teacher L says, “it’s within the text.” while using the same metaphoric gesture with the emphasis on the word, “within,” and gestural stroke on it. It is very intriguing that the metaphoric gesture precedes the verbal part of her explanation (“it’s within the text.”). In other words, gestural explanation comes first and then a verbal one follows in order to make a double confirmation that Gupta clearly understands her intended meaning by
gesture. It can be interpreted that with this container gesture, Teacher L’s hands symbolically depict and maintain the boundary or limit for essays that is rather elusive in an embodied way. The space between Teacher L’s hands metaphorically turns into a “written” essay, which has a beginning and end. It can be argued that through her metaphoric gesture, Teacher L makes the abstract, invisible essay limit “visible” and concretized for Gupta. Zhao (2007) similarly argues that gesture is effective in terms of concretizing abstract concepts in a visual mode. Similarly, according to Mittelberg and Waugh (2009), gestures can be pedagogical attempts at “making fairly abstract… concepts more understandable for the listener/viewer, by turning them into the visual and the embodied” (p. 4). Furthermore, while enacting this gesture, Teacher L directly looks at Gupta and Anna’s direction, which shows her clear orientation to them. In other words, her metaphoric gesture has “recipient design” (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) in which she orients to her listeners and assumes that they can interpret her intended meaning by the gesture.

As for this metaphoric gestural use, Teacher L commented at the stimulated recall interview: “See, this is the text. This is the container for the text. HAHAHAHA! …. I’m showing that, ‘yes, in the container. in the text’ I’m showing. But I was not thinking what I was doing with my hands” (Interview on October, 31, 2013). As recognized by Teacher L through watching the video clip, this gesture is used for visualizing the text for Gupta in order to explicate that quotes and comments are within the container, which represents the essay. Tellier (2005) and Hudson (2011) similarly argue that teachers’ use of gesture in pedagogical activity is different from what is observed in ordinary conversation and that such teacher’s gesture can make their classroom talk in L2 more comprehensible and therefore more learnable. The metaphoric gesture used by Teacher L might be considered as a strategy of enhanced explicitness (Mauranen, 2012) to accentuate the meaning of “within the text.” and to facilitate Gupta’s clearer
understanding although she was not probably aware of her gestural usage at that time. Thus, it might be better to create a new terminology instead of using a “strategy,” which has a connotation of the speaker’s intentionality or awareness. Finally, during Teacher L’s explication with this metaphoric gesture, Gupta keeps nodding while looking at her direction at line 63, which demonstrates his attention to her gesture and his agreeing stance.

To summarize, Excerpts 1 and 2 illustrate different types of the teachers’ gestural usage for resolving miscommunication and making a confirmation for understanding. It is revealed that both of their gestures in general function as enhancing explicitness along with speech or without speech, making a confirmation check, and also possibly increasing comprehensibility for their students. As for the first excerpt, Teacher M’s iconic gesture appears to add some performative, emotional effect for demonstrating actions and highlights the same visual image of the action of “overthrowing” through constructing gestural catchments. On the other hand, the second excerpt shows that Teacher L’s metaphoric gesture puts the abstract entity of writing text into some concrete, visible forms. Noticeably, the teacher’s gesture even without speech can gain her student’s attention and contribute to his understanding. It can be argued that these teachers effectively employ gestures along with speech for specific effects when dealing with miscommunication regardless of being aware of their own gestural usage, which is considered as important part of communicative or pedagogical strategies for the teachers.

4.3 Enhancing explicitness by students’ gesture for resolving miscommunication

The previous section has illustrated how two multilingual teachers use iconic and metaphoric gestures for enhancing explicitness related to speech and resolving their students’ non-understanding. This section zooms in on multilingual students’ use of gestures in miscommunication-related sequences in two excerpts. The first excerpt arises during the class
activity called devil’s advocate, in which Jacob (from China) and Mohamed (from Egypt) are playing roles for arguing against each other related to argumentative essay topics. Jacob is a leader of a group (the main argument for his group is “People should consume less and save more.”) and in charge of a role of arguing against Mohamed in the other group. All groups’ thesis and supporting arguments were written on the blackboard prior to this debate activity.

**Excerpt 3a: “you’re just harming your own pocket.”**

1. J:  so:, {I mean, we should consume}
2. {points at blackboard twice with RH’s index finger stretched @ neck level,}
3. {less,}
4. {makes U-shape with index finger and thumb, and other fingers curled}
5. but not, (.) do not consume.
6. {((8))}
7. M:  {((shifts gaze to blackboard in front))}
8. J:   you know, what I mean? uh,=
9. L:   ={uh[uhuhuh}
10.  {nods several times}
11. J:   [just like, my mobile phone,
12. and, if I throw it, broken, {and,}=
13. {looks down}
14. M:   =you shouldn’t buy a new [one. (can) fix it.
15. J:   [yeah, I don’t
16. buy a new one.
17. (0.5)
18. M:   okay, {yeah!}
19. {quickly raises RH with its thumb up @ chest}
20. J:   [okay, yeah. ((nods))
21. (0.8) so that’s what I mean.
22. (2.0)
27. M: but that- is that,
28. {affecting you,}
29.➔ {raises RH @ upper chest with thumb up
30.➔ and other fingers curled}
31. {or you’re affecting like community,}
32.➔ {points at J’s direction with RH thumb up}
33.➔ {or you are just affecting like community, your own pocket, hh,}=
34.➔ {points at J’s direction with RH thumb up and holds it}
35. J: ={hahaha,
36. Ss: ={HaHaHaHaha,
37. M: ={if you getta go and buy a new phone,<}
38.➔ {points at J’s direction three times with RH @ upper chest,
39.➔ with thumb up and other fingers curled}
40. just because you broke your screen,
41. >I mean,< (.)
42. {you are not (.)}
43.➔ {moves RH forward @ chest}
44. {harming >anyone,<}
45.➔ {clenches fist with RH}
46.➔ {you’re just}
47.➔ {holds fist with RH and points at J’s direction}
48.➔ harming your own pocket.=
49. X: ={’yeah’ ( . )
50. (1.5)
51. M: {right?}
52. {tilts neck to right while gazing at J, smiling with
53. all fingers on his chin}
54. S?: {huh-huh-huh,
55.➔ J: {sorry,}
56.➔ {shakes head}
57.➔ I didn’t get it. uh:,}
In the end of the sequence above, from lines 55-57, Jacob overtly signals non-understanding to Mohamed by saying “sorry, I didn’t get it. uh;,” and shaking his head. From the sequential context, the trouble-source for Jacob here seems to be Mohamed’s rather idiosyncratic phrase involving an idiom, “you’re just harming your own pocket.” at lines 46 and 48. Note that this idiomatic phrase, “harming one’s own pocket” might contribute to Jacob’s difficulty of understanding. Prior to Jacob’s signal of non-understanding, at lines 27-48, Mohamed is actively playing a role of arguing against Jacob by providing a counter-argument toward what Jacob claimed. During the sequence, Mohamed mostly employs gestures with his right hand only, either pointing or clenching his fist, as observed at lines 29-30, 32, 34, 38-39, 43, 45, and 47. In other words, he has mainly relied on verbal speech while arguing against Jacob. In contrast, in Excerpt 3b that follows right after Excerpt 3a, subsequent to Jacob’s signal of non-understanding, it seems that Mohamed starts explaining more explicitly by using various iconic and metaphoric gestures with both hands and rephrasing verbally, as seen below.

**Excerpt 3b:** “just, (1.2) harming your money,”

58. M: ‘alight,’ okay.)
59. {>I mean,<} 
60.→ {looks at blackboard in front and brings BH @ neck,  
61. with palms rounded and all finger tips in contact}
62. {I am saying}
63. {looks back to J’s direction while keeping  
64. the same shape of BH at line 61}
65.→ {if you broke your phone,}
66.→ {drops BH with all finger tips in contact,  
67. to downward to chest level either left or right side,  
68. which seemingly exhibits motion of tearing something}
69. {or like, you lost something,  
70.→ {or >you broke your phone,<}
(keeps LH @ chest with palm facing up and flat;)

drops RH with all fingers straight up onto LH’s palm, touching it perpendicularly

J: =yeah,=

M: =if you broke your phone,

>instead of< fixing the screen, (.)

(you buy a new one,)

(extends RH to front space, with palm facing body slightly cupped and all fingers stuck)

J: uh-huh,

M: {not really harming (0.5) a community.}

(does similar front-forward motion with RH as lines 78-79 with smaller amplitude)

you’re

{just, (1.2) harming your money,}

{very slowly moves RH away from body in front to closer to body in sweeping motion and also drops from neck to chest level, with palm facing body}

; gazes at J

I mean,(your,)

{raises RH @ chest, with palm facing outward, and turns it to J’s direction while smiling}

{(0.5)}

Ss: {ha[hahahahaha}

X: [[ ( )

M: your pocket,=
As discussed above, right after Jacob’s overt signal of non-understanding, Mohamed clearly shifts his strategy of explanation by skillfully coordinating available interactional resources, especially gestures. Probably because the idiom can be challenging for Jacob’s understanding, Mohamed puts extra efforts into making that meaning explicit and transparent through using other modalities such as gestures. At line 59, Mohamed starts with a discourse marker, “I mean,” which is a precursor to his upcoming explanation. The discourse marker “I mean” here, which serves various functions in talk (e.g., Schiffrin, 1987), is often used in repair sequences “to explicitly forewarn [the recipient of] upcoming adjustments to what has just been said” (Fox Tree & Schrock, 2002, p. 731). This function of the discourse marker is indeed important in ELF interaction in particular wherein segments of disfluent or fragmented speech can obscure the message that the speaker is trying to convey. By flagging the upcoming modification of the speaker’s utterance with “I mean”, he or she can make it clear that what follows is “what I
actually want to say or am trying to say.’ This can contribute towards enhancing ‘clarity and explicitness in discourse organisation’ (Mauranen, 2007, p. 258). Simultaneously, Mohamed looks at the blackboard and brings both hands at his neck level with his palms rounded and all finger tips in contact, which seemingly prepares the upcoming gesture.

It is worth noting here that instead of using only one hand like Excerpt 3a, now Mohamed starts to employ both hands. Then, at line 62, he uses another metadiscourse marker, “I am saying” for signaling his rephrasing. And then at lines 65-68, he says, “if you broke your phone,” along with an iconic gesture. Note that Mohamed builds up a hypothetical scenario starting with the subordinate conjunction, “if.” It appears that he embarks on an explanation by contextualizing it in their lived experiences. In terms of gesture, Mohamed drops both hands with all finger tips in contact to downward to chest level, either left or right side while putting a gestural stroke on “phone” (see Figure 4.6). This hand gesture seemingly exhibits the motion of tearing something apart. Here it seems that gesture and verbal speech present the similar images through dual mode channels and that gesture rather adds redundancy to the semantics of speech that it accompanies. However, Mohamed’s gesture that demonstrates the physical action of breaking can contribute to engaging Jacob in imagining the action and making the meaning of his utterance more explicit. Furthermore, Mohamed’s action is considered as beyond iconic gesture or pantomime since it involves the physical motion that mimics while working with an imaginary object that is not actually present. Besides, as already mentioned, Mohamed is actively using both hands for this iconic gesture rather than one hand. This spontaneous shift from one to two hand use might demonstrate his conscious effort to make his explanation clearer to Jacob, which illustrates communicative intent for gesture (Kendon, 2004).
Furthermore, from lines 70-73, Mohamed employs a different type of gesture for emphasizing the key words again. More specifically, while he is saying, “or you broke your phone,” Mohamed drops his right hand with all fingers straight up onto his left hand palm, touching it perpendicularly (see Figure 4.7), when he puts a prosodic emphasis on “broke.” It can be interpreted as a type of beats that add emphatic tone and get a special attention from the interlocutor. It seems that Mohamed is highlighting the utterance (“you broke your phone,”) by combining verbal repetition and beat together.

In addition to his iconic and emphatic gestural (i.e., beat) use, from lines 77-89, Mohamed employs a series of metaphoric gestures for explaining the difference between the phrases, “harm your money” and “harm the community” by assigning different spaces for each. More specifically, at lines 77-79, Mohamed first states, “you buy a new one,” while extending his right hand out to the front space with its palm facing his body slightly cupped and all fingers stuck (see Figure 4.8). The gestural stroke is on a stressed word, “new.” Similarly, at lines 81-83, Mohamed adds, “not really harming (0.5) a community.” while moving his right hand forward in a similar manner to his previous turn with a smaller amplitude (see Figure 4.9). He puts a gestural stroke on the stressed word, “harming,” which constitutes a gestural catchment. Then, at lines 84-89, he says, “you’re just, (1.2) harming your money,” Here, Mohamed rephrases his previous utterance, “harming your own pocket” in Excerpt 3a to “harming your money. Besides his verbal rephrasing, Mohamed simultaneously employs a metaphoric gesture. That is, he has his right hand’s palm facing his body, which first locates away from his body. And then during 1.2 second silence between “just,” and “harming,” he moves his right hand closer to his body very slowly in a sweeping motion and drops it from the neck to chest level while gazing at Jacob (see Figure 4.10). Based on his eye gaze to Jacob, it seems that Mohamed tries to demonstrate
this gesture for Jacob without accompanying speech. In other words, his metaphoric gesture also
has “recipient design” (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) in which he orients to Jacob and assumes that
he can interpret his intended meaning by the gesture. It should be noted here that there is an
alternative interpretation that verbal rephrasing helps resolve this non-understanding more than
the metaphoric gestures discussed here. Yet, I would argue that both equally contribute to
resolving miscommunication, and in particular gesture happened during the silence indicates
some important meaning potentials, which requires special attention for analysis.

It can be interpreted that Mohamed’s series of metaphoric gestures from lines 77-89
connect meanings of two phrases with two spaces in a contrastive way: namely assigning the
space away from his body for “the community” (at lines 78-79 and lines 82-83) and the space
closer to his body for “your money” (at lines 86-89) on the sagittal plane (i.e., front-back). Such
spatial proximity seems to signify that “the community” should locate away from the self and
that “your money” (or “your pocket” in Mohamed’s original idiom) is near to the self. Such
contrast is depicted through reference to the same spatial location by creating the distance
between “community” and “your money” with his hand movements.

In particular, his metaphoric gestural behaviors seem to be strategic since his movement
is done very slowly (at lines 86-89) and he is gazing at Jacob. Furthermore, it should be noted
that the gestural size that Mohamed employs here is larger than one in Excerpt 3a, which
demonstrates the “visibility” of his gesture to Jacob. In short, with a series of metaphoric
gestures that assign different phrases and meanings into two spaces on a sagittal plane (front-
back) and that are performed in the larger size, Mohamed visually explains the situated meaning
of “harming your pocket (money),” in contrast to “harming a community”, which can be more
comprehensible to Jacob by combing verbal and gestural explication. Namely, the use of gesture
along with metaphoric space might enhance the referential meaning beyond what would have been accomplished through a simple verbal repetition in this repair sequence of talk (Olsher, 2008). Especially in this interactional context, such metaphoric gestures that use contrastive spaces might be useful since Mohamed and Jacob are negotiating the verbal meaning of a difficult idiomatic phrase. Similarly, Smotrova (2014) mentions that the advantages of gestures are their capacity to portray spatial arrangement, assign meaning to specific locations in space, and produce dynamic movement through space, which enables the speaker to embody the relationship between several concepts through the referential space. In short, such advantages of gesture can enhance explicitness of verbal utterances, increase comprehensibility, and resolve non-understanding.

In summary, Excerpt 3b illustrates the process of “other-initiated paraphrasing” (Björkman, 2014, p. 132), prompted by Jacob’s overt repair initiation by his utterance, “sorry, I didn’t get it.” In this process, besides verbal rephrasing, Mohamed actively employs iconic gesture with both hands and metaphoric gestures with a larger gesture box in order to enhance explicitness of his meaning associated with an idiosyncratic idiom for resolving Jacob’s non-understanding. In particular, his metaphoric gestures that incorporate two spaces make a clear contrast between each phrase’s meaning (“harms your own money” in contrast with “harms the community”). In other words, gesture seems to function as making speech visible, concrete, and tangible. It can be argued that such Mohamed’s gesture as interactional resources for clarifying meaning demonstrates part of his communicative competence or more precisely, his spontaneous, flexible decision when encountering his interlocutor’s non-understanding.

In the following excerpt, another multilingual student effectively utilizes a number of gestures especially for arguing his opinion about the thesis statement to his teacher. In
comparison to other miscommunication instances where one interlocutor overtly signals non-understanding to the other(s) and s/he resolves it rather easily, this case illustrates a type of more complex misunderstanding or global miscommunication. This is because the issue here seems to be that Andy (from Hong Kong) and Teacher M have mismatches with regards to conceptualizations of what “thesis statement” should include. Therefore, they need the longer stretch of sequences in order to understand each other’s perspectives and negotiate about concepts of “thesis statement.” This sequence of talk happened after the whole class discussion about Lifen’s thesis statement written on the blackboard (see Figure 4.11). Just prior to this sequence, Teacher M was trying to wrap up his explanation that a thesis statement should include the main argument and the major points specifying it. Then, he added three underlines of specifying points (see a red circle in Figure 4.11) that he thinks the necessary component for the thesis statement. This explanation triggers the long sequence of talk, in which Andy attempts to negotiate with Teacher M about the concept of thesis statement by employing a number of gestures along with speech.

**Figure 4.11.** Blackboard writing of Lifen’s thesis and three arguments

**Excerpt 4a:** “that should be a **thesis**.”

1. TM:  {yes,}
2. {stretches out right arm in front @ upper chest}
3. and points at A’s direction)
4. A: uh:n, (0.5) actually? (0.5) okay, I have learned this, before? but like, the thesis statement.
5. is a point of like,
6. {main ideas}
7. {raises BH in parallel @ chest, with palms facing
8. in front and half cupped and fingers opened up}
9. {of this essay.}
10. {shakes BH front and back at each word while keeping
11. same hand shapes at lines 8-9}
12. ➔ {her essay}
13. ➔ {shakes LH toward his left side, which seems to
14. indicate Lifen while glimpsing her direction}
15. ➔ should be talking about,
16. {{(0.4)}}
17. ➔ {raises LH @ chest, with palm facing up and half-cupped;
18. raises RH right in front of his face, with palm
19. facing his left side and all fingers straight up}
20. ➔ {Chinese uhn,}
21. ➔ {drops RH perpendicularly onto LH’s palm and holds}
22. ➔ one child {policy is (.)}
23. ➔ {raises RH @ neck}
24. ➔ {bad.}
25. ➔ {drops RH perpendicularly onto LH’s palm, which is
26. similar at line 22}
27. ➔ okay, {that is the}
28. ➔ {raises BH in parallel @ lower chest, with
29. palms cupped and all fingers curled, which
30. looks like holding something inside BH}
31. ➔ {main idea.}
32. ➔ {makes a beat downward with BH twice @ chest}
33. ➔ that should be a {thesis.}
makes a beat with BH once @ chest

{but the examples,}

quickly moves RH only to his right space, with palm half-cupped and all fingers curled, which looks like holding something inside}

(.) should be {like?}

{brings BH @ face, with both palms facing front and fingers slightly curled}

{the thesis}

{makes a square @ face with thumbs and index fingers of BH while saying “thesis”}

{is only one sentence, I think,}

{holds up BH’s index fingers @ face, which demonstrates number one and holds}

{that, what you are going to say is,}

{brings BH in parallel @ upper chest, with palms facing inward each other and all fingers straighten, and holds them until line 54}

you are talking, we need to {see the}

{moves RH half-cupped down, closer to his body; keeps LH @ upper chest with palm facing his right side}

{examples,}

{makes a U shape with thumb and other fingers of RH @ upper chest, which seems to visualize examples}

like {what arguments}

{raises BH in parallel @ chest, with palms facing each other, and makes a beat with BH while saying “arguments”}

{would you use,}

{suddenly drops BH to level of stomach}
67.➔ {(. in the thesis, right?}
68.➔ {raises BH again to chest with palms facing each other,
69.➔ while gazing at TM, and holds}
70. TM: uh-huh,=

As clearly observed in the excerpt above, Andy maintains his conversational floor throughout this sequence of talk after Teacher M gives him the floor at lines 1-3. Focusing on Andy’s gestural usage, after he briefly introduces his major point that the thesis statement should be the main ideas of the essay, at lines 13-15, he utters “her essay” while shaking his left hand toward his left. In fact, Lifen sits at Andy’s left side, and Andy briefly looks at her direction. It can be interpreted that Andy’s quick left hand’s movement coordinated with verbal speech functions as demonstrative or deictic, which specifies that “her essay” means Lifen’s. Also, Andy’s hand gesture here has pragmatic functions of indicating the addressee of his utterance (Kendon, 2004).
Besides such gestural functions of being deictic, there is another function that Andy seems to employ by gesture. More specifically, at lines 21-22, Andy swiftly drops his right hand perpendicularly onto his left hand’s palm while putting a gestural stroke on “Chinese.” In the similar manner, at lines 25-27, during his utterance of “bad.”, Andy drops his right hand perpendicularly onto his left hand’s palm again. He puts the gestural stroke on the stressed word, “bad.” This constitutes a gestural catchment (recurrent gestures with similar features). The turns at lines 21-22 and 25-27 seem to function as adding extra emphasis on verbal speech and gaining attention from the interlocutor, Teacher M, which can be interpreted as a type of beats. In comparison to Teacher M’s emphatic gesture use in Excerpt 1a, Andy’s emphatic gestures here are considered as more effective because they contribute to emphasizing the key information of the verbal speech (the content of thesis statement here) and clarifying meaning rather than merely adding emphatic tone or rather regulating his own speaking. In other words, the manner of “ensemble” of multiple modes is more effective.

Besides the emphatic functions of such beats, Andy begins employing a series of metaphoric gestures from line 28 onwards in order to explain his conceptualization about what the thesis statement is. From lines 28-31, he states, “that is the” while raising both hands in parallel at his lower chest level, with both palms cupped and all fingers curled (see Figure 4.12). This hand gesture seems to visualize that he is holding something inside of both hands or container gesture (McNeill, 1992). It can be interpreted that this metaphoric gesture illustrates the main idea (i.e., “Chinese one child policy is bad” in Lifen’s essay), which was just explained. Then, at lines 32-33, while saying “main idea,” Andy makes a beat with both hands twice, which still maintains the same metaphoric, container gesture. This beat can function as the highlighting of the verbal speech, “main idea.” Similarly, at lines 34-35, when he explains that the main idea
should be a “thesis” with its prosodic emphasis, Andy keeps visualizing the thesis with the same metaphorical, container gesture while making a beat with both hands once (see Figure 4.13). This constitutes a gestural catchment. It can be interpreted that Andy employs those metaphorical gestures with beats in order to highlight his conceptualization that the main idea equals a thesis statement.

Andy’s powerful explanation by gestures coordinated with speech still continues from line 36 onward, in which Andy starts to contrast the main idea or thesis statement with examples for supporting it, clearly framed with his use of the conjunction, “but.” From lines 36-39, while he is uttering, “but the examples,” he metaphorically uses the space in order to differentiate “examples” from the thesis statement. More specifically, he quickly moves his right hand to his right space, with his palm half-cupped and all fingers curled, which looks like he is holding something inside his hand (see Figure 4.14). In particular, the allocation of his right hand to his right space for the verbal speech, “examples” along with its gestural stroke is effective in clearly making the contrast between examples and the thesis statement. This is because the container gestures associated with the thesis statement have been enacted in the center space as observed. As Smotrova (2014) discusses, metaphorical gestures seem to be useful in highlighting contrasts between related categories and meanings. From lines 44-49, Andy’s explanation is getting more specific with gestures related to “the thesis.” Namely, at lines 44-45, he swiftly makes a square with thumbs and index fingers of both hands in front of his face and puts gestural stroke on “thesis.” This hand gesture is interpreted as a type of “container gesture,” which is similar to lines 28-31, 32-33, and 35, but it is imagistically different because of its square shape (see Figure 4.15). This square-shape gesture appears to be more suitable and targeted to the visualization of “thesis statement” that he thinks should include only a main idea. Furthermore, at lines 47-49,
while he is saying, “is only one sentence, I think,” he holds up both hands’ index fingers at his face level in parallel and holds them, which appears to demonstrate the number “one” (see Figure 4.16). This gesture that visualizes “one” iconically seems to emphasize the verbal speech, “one sentence.” At the same time, the space between two hands still keeps the metaphoric image of the container of “thesis statement” that Andy claims that it should be “one sentence.” In short, Andy’s gesture here is employed as a useful means for persuasively demonstrating his conceptualization of the thesis statement, which complements and supports his verbal speech.

From line 50 onwards, Andy tries to reconnect his argument with Teacher M’s point of view for making a confirmation check. During that process, Andy uses another type of gesture that seems to visualize “examples” based on his own interpretation. In particular, at lines 58-60, during his utterance, “examples,” he makes a U-shape with the thumb and other fingers of his right hand at his upper chest level in the small amplitude while keeping his left hand with its palm facing his right side (see Figure 4.17). Note that he consistently allocates his right space for “examples” in contrast to “the thesis statement,” which is similar to lines 36-39. However, Andy’s visualization of examples here seems to reflect Teacher M’s conceptualization in that examples summed up in short forms, which is visualized in Andy’s smaller-size gesture box, should be “in the thesis statement.” This is probably because Andy is now making a confirmation check about Teacher M’s conceptualization. At lines 61-64, Andy first brings both hands in parallel at his chest level, with palms facing each other, and makes a beat while saying “arguments,” which appears to add emphatic tone. Subsequent to that, while saying, “would you use,” he suddenly drops hands to the level of his stomach, and then at lines 67-69, he raises both hands back to the chest level with palms facing each other inward (see Figure 4.18) while saying, “in the thesis, right?” Here, Andy clearly shows his attention to Teacher M with his direct gaze.
It seems that Andy’s series of gestures performed in the center here illustrates the thesis statement that includes examples besides the main idea, which he interprets Teacher M means by the thesis statement. In other words, Andy effectively coordinates gesture with speech for demonstrating his understanding about Teacher M’s conceptualization of thesis statement and making a confirmation check. At line 70, Teacher M’s minimal token, “uh-huh” shows his uptake of Andy’s confirmation check.

To sum up so far, Andy employs a range of gestures that function as deictic, emphatic, and metaphoric effectively depending on specific purposes at each interactional moment. In particular, Andy’s metaphoric gestures that allocate different spaces for “the thesis statement” (in the center) and “examples” (at his right) seem to be quite effective for arguing his conceptualization about the thesis statement and making a confirmation about Teacher M’s different point of view. Thus, it can be argued that Andy’s employment of gesture is integral part of his communicative competence. The following sequence of talk arises right after the end of Excerpt 4a. Similar to the previous sequence, Andy keeps negotiating about the conceptualization of “thesis statement” with Teacher M by employing a variety of gestures. In addition to gesture, Andy brings out other type of support by employing his previous teacher’s quotes.

**Excerpt 4b:** “put examples in the **intro**, not in the **thesis,**”

71. A: =but like, when I learned it?
72. my teacher just say,
73.➔ you need to {put the **examples**}
74.➔ {moves RH a little to his upper right side}
75.➔ {in the **intro,**}
76.➔ {drops and returns RH to center space, which parallels}
77.➔ with LH, which creates small container of introduction}
78.➔ {but not (.) in the **thesis,**}
79. ➔ {raises BH @ upper chest in center of his body,
80. ➔ palms facing each other and all fingers straight up,
81. ➔ which creates space between BH and visualizes
82. ➔ one sentence container}
83. {(1.5)}
84. TM: {((looks back toward blackboard))}
85. ➔ A: {because the thesis should be the (.)}
86. ➔ {keeps similar one sentence container gesture with BH
87. ➔ @ neck at lines 79-82}
88. ➔ {idea,}
89. ➔ {makes a beat with BH in front of face}
90. like the real,
91. ➔ {center,}
92. ➔ {tightly clenches fist with RH}
93. ➔ {one sentence.}
94. ➔ {uses similar one sentence container gesture with BH at
95. ➔ lines 86-87 and makes a beat twice}
96. {okay! what I’m going to do,}
97. {lets RH perpendicularly touch on LH index finger,
98. and shows the action of counting what to write about}
99. TM: right,
100. A: {like my thing is,}
101. {brings out RH @ stomach, with palm facing up
102. and all fingers straight, and holds until line 103}
103. okay, manga, comic is
104. {a form of art,}= 105. {brings RH with its palm up over LH while smiling}
106. Ss: =haha[hahahahahahahahahahahahaha,
107. A: [then I just say, this is a form of art.
108. and then I will
109. ➔ {use these arguments,}
110. ➔ {moves RH gradually from center to his right at
horizontal axis, with palm facing his left, which
seems to visualize three different entities or arguments
{that is not the thesis, right?}
{raises RH and moves to his upper right
@ head}
(0.8)
{I think,}
{holds RH in the same position at line 114 and smiles
while gazing at TM}
(0.5)
okay,
{(3.0)}
{sighs loudly}
I don’t think this is the examples,
As mentioned above, from line 72, Andy begins using the back-up for his conceptualization about the thesis statement, namely, quoting his previous teacher. In other words, Andy claims his epistemic authority with reference to his previous teacher in Hong Kong. According to Hall (2011), teachers usually claim privileged epistemic status over course content derived from “pedagogical knowledge and expertise” (p. 7). However, here Andy appears to argue against Teacher M’s epistemic stance. Grounding his claims based on an external source of authority probably allows Andy to challenge Teacher M while attending to face wants by placing responsibility for the information from the other rather than on each other. In short, Andy’s behavior here rather demonstrates an inversion of traditional teacher-student interaction in the classroom, which can be the challenging moment for Teacher M.

Not only using his previous teacher’s quotes, from lines 73-82, Andy also coordinates a series of gestures along with speech effectively for supporting his argument. First, at lines 73-74, when he says, “put the examples,” he moves his right hand to the upper right side, allocating “examples” into his right space again (see Figure 4.19). This is consistent, as observed at lines 36-39 in Excerpt 4a. Then, at lines 75-77, he drops and returns his right hand to the center space, thus paralleling it with his left hand, and creates the container gesture for “intro” (see Figure 4.20). Subsequent to that, at lines 78-82, while uttering, “but not in the thesis,” he employs another container gesture for “thesis” with the gestural stroke on it. More specifically, Andy
raises both hands to the upper chest level in the center of his body, with palms facing each other and all fingers stretched out (see Figure 4.21). In particular, this container gesture for the thesis statement is imagistically distinctive from the one for “intro” because of the fingers’ shape (i.e., stretched and extended up). This is more similar to the container gesture at lines 44-46 in Excerpt 4a, which is square-shape and seems to visualize “one-sentence” as the thesis statement. In other words, it can be interpreted that Andy’s gesture synchronized with speech, “but not in the thesis,” makes a clear contrast with the one for “intro.”

At lines 83-84, a 1.5 second pause occurs, in which Teacher M looks back to the blackboard, but he does not take up the conversational floor. At lines 85-87, while saying, “because the thesis should be the,” Andy keeps the container gesture with both hands, holding the wide space between them. Furthermore, at lines 88-89, Andy slightly makes a beat with both hands in front of his face while saying “idea,” and putting a gestural stroke on it (see Figure 4.22). This beat can add extra emphasis on its stressed word. Then, at lines 91-92, while he is saying, “center,” he tightly clenches a fist with his right hand and puts the gestural stroke on it (see Figure 4.23). This gesture can be interpreted as metaphoric in exhibiting the power of “governing” that comes from the central idea of the essay. Furthermore, it can be also treated as iconic in visualizing the “core” idea of the essay. Subsequent to that, at lines 93-95, Andy continues, “one sentence.” Simultaneously, he employs the similar container gesture with both hands to the one at lines 86-87, which constitutes a catchment, and makes a beat twice (see Figure 4.24). Note that Andy uses a series of metaphoric gestures related to the thesis statement in the very consistent manner. In particular, this is clear based on his cohesive creation of monologic gestural catchments (i.e., his own repetitive use of similar gesture rather than use with his interlocutor), which rather indicate consistency or a degree of intentionality. According to
McNeill (2005), catchments seem to play an important role in “achieving alignment between interlocutors by helping to establish a common ground” through its cohesive linkage of discourse (p. 164). Here, gestural catchments can be effective means for Andy in terms of demonstrating and explaining about his viewpoint about the thesis statement to Teacher M in the consistent and persuasive manner. It can be argued that the complex ensemble of gesture and speech use by Andy is part of his successful argument and persuasive explanation about his conceptualization.

Subsequent to that, from lines 96-107, Andy suddenly shifts his topic to his own essay and its thesis statement (“manga comic is a form of art.”). In the process, he also sends a humorous tone by his smiling at line 105. Such attempt of making humorous is successfully taken up by his classmates’ laughter at line 106. It can be interpreted that Andy’s turn at lines 100-105 functions as contextualizing his argument by introducing his own essay topic and also subtly mitigating his challenging stance toward Teacher M’s epistemic authority by smiling and achieving laughter. From line 108 onward, building upon his essay topic, Andy continues arguing his conceptualization about the thesis statement. More specifically, at lines 109-112, while he is saying, “use these arguments,” Andy moves his right hand gradually from the center to his right side while doing a chopping motion three times with its palm facing his left side (see Figure 4.25). This hand gesture appears to visualize three different arguments lined up horizontally. Andy’s hand gesture here is unique since it adds some extra information beyond speech. Namely, his chopping motions visualize the essay organization or structure, which consists of three argumentative parts. Andy probably envisions three different kinds of arguments to support his main idea in his mind. In fact, as McNeill (2005) argues, “Speech and gesture are co-expressive but nonredundant in that each has its own means of packaging meanings” (p. 91). Gesture can add a missing property to verbal components and provides an affordance for
visualizing objects. In short, McNeill suggests that gesture can be enriching, adding additional dimensions of meaning. Here, it may be true that gestures are an effective means for visualizing the structure or organization of writing in comparison to speech.

Finally, at lines 113-115, Andy overtly makes a confirmation check with Teacher M by saying, “that is not the thesis, right?” while putting prosodic emphasis on “not” and “thesis.” At the same time, he raises his right hand and moves it to his upper right side at his head level (see Figure 4.26). The movement of his right hand to the upper right side visually demonstrates that those arguments are “outside” of the boundary of the thesis statement that should locate in the center. It seems that Andy is confirming this with gesture skillfully coordinated with speech.

Right after that, there is a 0.8 second pause in which Teacher M does not take up the turn, and then Andy adds “I think,” which appears to aim for softening his argumentative tone by emphasizing his viewpoint. At line 121, Teacher M finally takes up the next turn with “okay,” which shows his acknowledgement, but after that, he shows his disagreement by sighing loudly during a long gap of silence and saying, “I don’t think this is the examples.” Teacher M’s turn here suggests that there are still unsettled points that they do not mutually understand. In other words, different understandings about “examples” in relation to the thesis statement exist between them.

As for the outcome of this miscommunication phenomenon, it can be said that Andy and Teacher M did not achieve mutual understanding, especially regarding what “examples” mean, even in the end of this sequence. The main reason for that is the problem here is at a more complex level in comparison to non-hearing or lack of understanding about specific words or phrases. Rather, they have to negotiate different conceptualizations about the thesis statement in relation to “examples.” More specifically, while Teacher M thinks that specifying points should
be in the thesis statement, Andy interprets that those specifying points are “examples” and claims that they should be not included in the thesis statement. In fact, based on my classroom observation, even after the class finished, Andy and Teacher M kept discussing this same issue. Furthermore, I observed that Andy started the conversation with Teacher M after class by first expressing his apology regarding whether his behavior did not offend him. It appears based on this observation that Andy was very aware of his potential risk in explicitly arguing against Teacher M in the classroom. In the stimulated recall interview, Andy also said:

He [Teacher M] looks at me, and like, uh:::, my eyes are falling down. And he says, “Are you okay? You wanna fight me?” So I came back after class, and said I am not trying to fight with you. That is why I talked to him after class….Because he asked me, are you not happy? I’m like, you are a teacher. I won’t be happy, so I’m sorry if what I said hurts you. Like disturbed the class (Interview on September 16, 2013).

It is clear that Andy was concerned with whether his argument in this class discussion affected Teacher M’s feeling negatively.

In short, such global miscommunication instances involving different interpretations about academic writing concepts probably need a longer sequence for negotiating and resolving compared with local miscommunication and more severely affect face-concerns and politeness among interlocutors. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that the global miscommunication among Andy and Teacher M here is not about everything about conceptualization of thesis statement (e.g., needs of including major arguments) but more specific, detailed level (distinction about “arguments” and “examples”), which might require more detailed negotiation sequences.

To summarize, Excerpts 3 and 4 in this section illustrate multilingual students’ gesture usage for clarifying the meaning, resolving miscommunication, or arguing against the teacher
persuasively. It is revealed that their gestures function as enhancing explicitness in relation to speech and at times conveying an additional layer of meaning that is not encoded in verbal speech. In Excerpt 3b, Mohamed actively employs iconic gestures in order to enhance explicitness of his intended meaning for resolving his interlocutor’s non-understanding after he recognizes the necessity of making the meaning more comprehensible. Furthermore, it also demonstrates that Mohamed effectively employs metaphoric gestures that can make a clear contrast between two related phrases in order to clarify the meaning of his idiosyncratic usage of idiom. Furthermore, because the context is situated in an academic writing classroom, it appears that metaphoric gestures are often used among students as well for expressing their opinions about academic writing concepts.

Excerpt 4 is a good example in which Andy visualizes abstract thesis statements and examples into some concrete, visible forms by using a series of metaphoric gestures. Andy also makes use of other interactional resources, or a back-up from his previous teacher’s knowledge. It is notable that Andy’s usage of metaphoric gestures that visualize “thesis statement” as one sentence and put aside “examples” in his right space is consistent and it makes his abstract conceptualizations in his mind “visible” to his teacher. In particular, it appears that such non-verbal elements are powerfully used and coordinated with verbal speech in the context in which Andy tries to challenge his teacher’s epistemic stance and persuade him. In other words, it can be argued that gesture becomes less face-threatening and empowering interactional resources for students in order to maintain the conversational floor and powerfully argue against teachers.

4.4 Disagreement between the teacher and student exhibited by gestures

The previous two sections have analyzed the multilingual instructors’ and students’ use of gestures separately. In contrast, in this section we consider whether or not instructor’s and
student’s gesture might affect each other depending on how they understand writing concepts (i.e., thesis statement, specifying points, and examples to support the thesis statement) by examining their gestural usage together. The first excerpt happened a little after the end of Excerpt 4b in the previous section. In the sequence of talk below, Teacher M clearly displays disagreement with Andy in that what he means by “arguments” that specify the main idea (illustrated in the three underlined parts: see Figure 4.11) are not “examples” to which Andy has been referring. In short, the meanings of “arguments” and “examples” are the point of disagreement among them. Even though Teacher M accepts Andy’s point of view as legitimate to some extent, he tries to emphasize the importance of “specifying” in the thesis statement by including “arguments” in the thesis statement through using a series of gestures along with speech.

**Excerpt 5a:** “get the whole preview,”

1. TM: but it’s, (.) I would not say, it’s
2. those are examples.
3. (0.6)
4. but, if
5. (you look at different thesis statements?)
6. (walks toward center in front of desk)
7. (. all the thesis statements (0.8) are not
8. {that much specific.}
9. {points at blackboard on his back with LH’s thumb up
10. and other fingers curled; maintains body orientation
11. and gazes to students in front}
12. {that’s true.}
13. {holds pointing gesture with LH at lines 9-11}
14. (0.3){so you, just, get a}
15. {brings BH in front of face; LH @ nose, with palm
16. flat and facing down and RH @ shoulder, with palm
17.➔  flat facing up, which creates space between BH
18.➔  \{major\}
19.➔  \{raises LH to forehead level and keeps RH @ shoulder while
20.➔  keeping BH in parallel and maintaining space in-between,
21.➔  and then makes a beat with BH\}
22.➔  (0.6)
23.➔  \{arguments.\}
24.➔  \{makes a beat with BH in same manner like lines 19-21\}
25.➔  (this is what the person is going to say,)
26.➔  \{opens up both arms to either left or right side,
27.➔  @ shoulder, with palms flat and facing up and holds
28.➔  same posture\}
29.➔  and then, you cannot, (1.5)
30.➔  \{get\}
31.➔  \{raises LH to his head level, with its palm facing down
32.➔  ;raises RH @ shoulder, with its palm flat facing up\}
33.➔  \{the whole\}
34.➔  \{moves BH closer to his right side @ chest; LH above RH
35.➔  with palms facing each other inward and all fingers
36.➔  stretched\}
37.➔  \{preview,\}
38.➔  \{holds BH in his right side @ chest in same manner at
39.➔  lines 34-36\}
40.➔  \{in all\}
41.➔  \{moves BH to either left or right side with LH’s palm
42.➔  facing front and RH’s facing up\}
43.➔  \{the essays.\}
44.➔  \{brings BH to center space and then clasps BH
45.➔  together in front of chest\}
46.➔  \{((0.5))\}
47.➔  \{clicks his tongue\}
48.➔  but, let’s say for this class?
49. let’s try to make (.) the preview
50. really really good.
51. (1.8)
52. {so let’s say that’s a rule}
53. {smiles}
54. {for this class hah}
55. {walks from center toward left side while smiling}
56. (0.8)
57. {is that okay with you?}
58. {gazes at A’s direction with smile}

Figure 4.27. Lines 8-11: “that much specific.”
Figure 4.28. Lines 14-17: “so you, just, get a”
Figure 4.29. Lines 33-36: “the whole”

In the sequence above, Teacher M coordinates gestures along with speech for emphasizing the importance of making the thesis statement “specific” and confirming with Andy that it is a rule for this course, in particular at lines 49-59. As for his unique use of gestures, at lines 8-11, while saying, “that much specific,” Teacher M points at the blackboard at his back (see Figure 4.27). And then, during his utterance of “that’s true,” he still holds the same deictic gesture. It is considered that pointing gestures are generally used to direct attention to an object or person in the immediate physical environment of the interaction and to achieve a particular interventional meaning associated with a recent, mutually experienced event. Here Teacher M’s deictic gesture refers back to the already-shared information on the blackboard, namely Lifen’s thesis statement including arguments that specify the main point.
In addition to the deictic gesture, Teacher M employs metaphoric gestures as well. Specifically, at lines 14-17, he says “so you, just, get a” while he brings both hands in front of his face, with his left hand at his nose level whose palm facing down and his right hand at shoulder level whose palm facing up (see Figure 4.28). With this gesture that creates space between two hands, Teacher M seems to visualize the structure of major arguments in essays on a vertical axis. Similarly, from lines 18-21, while uttering “major” with its prosodic emphasis, he further raises his left hand to his forehead level, keeps his right hand at his shoulder level, and makes a beat with both hands. The word, “major” has a gestural stroke on it, which exhibits focused energy. Furthermore, at lines 23-24, during his utterance of “arguments,” Teacher M makes another beat and puts the gestural stroke on it. In short, throughout lines 14-24, he appears to keep visualizing the structure of major arguments in essays by maintaining the space between both hands vertically. It should be noted that the vertical structure of essays is not expressed in Teacher M’s verbal speech, but only through gestural modality. As McNeill (2005) persuasively argues, gesture can add a missing property to verbal components and provides an affordance for visualizing objects. It is also noted that Teacher M’s vertical structure is distinctive from Andy’s horizontal structure of essays observed in Excerpt 4b in the previous section.

Besides the metaphoric gestures related to, “major arguments,” Teacher M utilizes another metaphoric gesture, which involves a more powerful movement, with the speech, “get the whole preview.” At lines 30-32, when saying, “get,” he raises his left hand to his head level, with its palm facing down, and his right hand to his shoulder level, with its palm facing up. Then, while he is saying, “the whole”, he moves both hands inward at his chest level in his right side, with his left hand above his right hand and the palms facing each other and all fingers stretched (see Figure 4.29). Finally, during the stressed word of “preview,” he holds both hands in his right
side at his chest level. It can be argued that at lines 30-39, Teacher M demonstrates the sense or process of “digest” or “condense” of major arguments through powerfully moving both hands closer to each other on a vertical axis and using an alternative phrase, “get a whole preview.” It can be argued that Teacher M’s squishing gesture here highlights its difference with “major arguments” (at lines 18-24) by adding the inward movement by both hands. According to McNeill (2005), gesture coordinated with speech not only plays a communicative role but also reflects on-going thinking processes. Thus, here it can be interpreted that Teacher M visualizes his own concept related to thesis statement in his mind by use of gestures and tries to make it clear about the importance of giving the preview (i.e., condensed versions of major arguments) in the thesis statement.

In summary, similar to Excerpt 4a and 4b in which Andy explains his own conceptualization about the thesis statement, Teacher M also coordinates metaphoric gestures that visualize his own version of the concept of the thesis statement with verbal speech. However, their gestures are distinctive in that while Andy mostly gestures on the horizontal axis, Teacher M employs gestures vertically. Teacher M’s gesture on the vertical axis might reflect his holistic view on argumentative essays that envisions the whole essay structure (i.e., introduction, bodies, and conclusion) while Andy is mostly concerned with highlighting the contrast between the thesis and examples without taking much into consideration the whole structure of argumentative essays. The following excerpt occurs approximately 1 minute and 10 seconds after the end of Excerpt 5a. In this sequence of talk, Teacher M still explains the importance of making the thesis statement “specific” based on the class rule already established in Excerpt 5a. In the sequence below, he particularly discusses the technique regarding how to adapt the thesis statement after
writing all arguments in the body paragraphs by using unique metaphoric gestures coordinated with speech.

**Excerpt 5b:** “you can (. ) tip them up”

1.➔TM: {but if you, (1.2) if you do not know?}
2.➔ {keeps pointing at thesis statement on blackboard}
3.➔ with LH while orienting to students in front}
4.➔ {what are different points?}
5.➔ {gradually lowers LH while pointing at first argument sentence on blackboard}
6.➔ {>I mean, if you’re<}
7.➔ {raises LH to thesis statement on blackboard and points at it}
8.➔ {simply writing down,}
9.➔ {quickly moves LH down over three points of arguments while pointing at each point}
10.➔ (0.8)
11.➔ {for the first draft,}
12.➔ {stretches out LH in front @ chest}
13.➔ {okay,}
14.➔ {flexes LH’s wrist left and right, with stretched fingers while walking from blackboard closer to students}
15.➔ {by}
16.➔ {bends LH’s wrist toward body}
17.➔ the final draft, you should be able to specify it.
18.➔ because
19.➔ {you already wrote it}
20.➔ {raises BH in center space; LH @ chest with palm flat facing down; RH @ stomach with palm facing up, which creates a container vertically)
21.➔ {you can tip them up,}
29. ➔ {swiftly raises RH far above head level while
30. ➔ clenching hand and makes a beat; keeps LH @ chest,
31. ➔ with palm facing down and all fingers slightly
32. ➔ curled}
33. {and say,}
34. {keeps same posture; RH above head and LH @ chest}
35. ➔ {okay,}
36. ➔ {raises BH in parallel in front; LH @ face and
37. ➔ RH @ head while reorienting both palms inward}
38. ➔ {I have,}
39. ➔ {keeps LH @ face with palm facing down and lowers RH to
40. ➔ chest level in center space with palm facing up, with
41. ➔ both palms orienting each other, which creates
42. ➔ a container vertically}
43. ➔ {four points,}
44. ➔ {brings BH a little closer each other and makes a beat
45. ➔ while opening up all fingers of BH}
46. ➔ {which are this, this, this.}
47. ➔ {moves RH as if physically writing in front space
48. ➔ @ chest, with thumb and index finger tips touched;
49. ➔ keeps LH with all fingers curled @ lower chest}

Figure 4.30. Lines 24-27: “you already wrote it”
Figure 4.31. Lines 28-32: “you can tip them up,”
Figure 4.32. Lines 38-42: “I have,”
Figure 4.33. Lines 46-49:
“which are this, this, this.”
In the beginning of this sequence (at lines 1-12), Teacher M combines a series of pointing gestures that integrate the information on the blackboard (see Figure 4.11) with verbal speech. For instance, at lines 1-3, when he says, “but if you, if you do not know?”, he keeps pointing at Lifen’s thesis statement about the one-child policy on the blackboard while maintaining bodily orientation to his students. Then, at lines 4-6, while saying “what are different points?” he gradually lowers his left hand while pointing at the first argument on the blackboard. Finally, at lines 7-9, while saying “I mean, if you’re” with a quicker tempo, he raises his left hand to the level of thesis statement on the blackboard and then during his utterance of “simply writing down,” he quickly moves his hand down over three points of arguments while pointing at each sentence. Here, at lines 1-12, Teacher M integrates the information on the blackboard for his explanation by using the deictic gestures. Considering such deictic gestures in alignment with writing on the blackboard, Teacher M’s gestures on the vertical axis, discussed in the previous and current excerpts, are probably influenced by the blackboard writing and representative of his holistic view on the structure of argumentative essays, which is rather contrastive to Andy’s use of horizontal axis in Excerpt 4b.

From lines 13-22, Teacher M makes explicit the class rule regarding making the thesis statement more specific by the final draft of the essays. In particular, at lines 21-22, he flatly says, “final draft, you should be able to specify it.” while putting a prosodic emphasis on “specify.” It
is notable that now Teacher M treats specifying the thesis statement as an “ability” that students “should be able to” rather than as a “choice” for them. Subsequent to that, from line 23 onward, Teacher M provides a reason why students should specify the thesis statement, as prefaced by a conjunction, “because.” During the process of explaining the reason, he employs a series of unique metaphoric gestures. More specifically, from lines 24-27, while saying, “you already wrote it”, he raises both hands in the center space, with his left hand at the chest level and its palm facing down and his right hand at the stomach level with its palm facing up. His hands create a container vertically (see Figure 4.30). This container gesture at a vertical axis is rather similar to the ones at lines 14-25 in the Excerpt 5a (see Figure 4.28), which constitutes a catchment. Catchment is considered as a way of creating discursive cohesion through repetitive gesture (McNeill, 2005). It can be argued that Teacher M’s monologic catchment (i.e., catchment constructed by a single speaker) contributes to making his instructional talk consistent and understandable for his students. In fact, Zhao’s (2007) findings indicate that the gestural catchments might have an instructional function of maintaining coherence of teacher-student discourse.

Subsequent to the gestural catchment, Teacher M continues, “you can tip them up,” During this utterance, he swiftly raises his right hand far above his head level while clenching it and then makes a beat while putting a gestural stroke on “tip” with holding his left hand at his chest level (see Figure 4.31). With this gesture, Teacher M seemingly illustrates the actual process in which his students physically move up the arguments developed in the main body paragraphs into the thesis statement. In particular, his gesture vividly demonstrates both the structure of the argumentative essay and process of writing the thesis statement. In other words, along with his verbal speech, Teacher M’s gesture illustrates the clear relationship between the
thesis and major arguments, which might be effective in facilitating his students’ development of the understandings of academic writing concepts.

From line 35 onwards, an interesting shift in footing can be observed. It is generally considered that footing is constantly shifting in the process of social interaction. Here, beginning with a minimal token, “okay,” at line 35, Teacher M appears to embody a writer self and starts performing another character. According to Goffman (1981), footing is considered as something “[e]xpressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance” (p. 128). The shifts of footing are often marked by changes in prosody and body orientation. In the sequence of embodying a writer, Teacher M appears to employ a variety of gestures that show the evidence of becoming the other. For instance, at lines 38-42, while saying, “I have,” he keeps his left hand at his face level with its palm facing down and lowers his right hand to his chest level with its palm facing up (see Figure 4.32). With the gesture by both hands, he creates a container gesture vertically, which turns into a catchment again. It is clear based on his monologic catchment that Teacher M consistently utilizes this vertical container gesture for visualizing the structure of major arguments in the essay. Note that he uses the pronoun, “I” as a subject, which indicates his enacting a character of a writer. Also, it should be acknowledged that the gesture synchronized with “I have,” which visualizes major points in the essay, foreshadows his forthcoming utterance, “four points,” at line 43.

At lines 43-45, during the utterance of “four points,” he brings both hands a little closer to each other and makes a beat with each word while opening up all fingers of both hands. Here it seems that Teacher M’s gesture adds an emphatic tone on his utterance. Then, at lines 46-49, he continues, “which are this, this, this.” while putting an prosodic emphasis on “this” for each. At the same time, he moves his right hand as if he is physically writing something in his front
space, with his thumb and index finger tips in contact. Teacher M’s gesture here can be interpreted as an iconic since he is physically demonstrating the action of writing down major arguments for essays. It can be argued that Teacher M becomes a writer himself and literally shows the action in front of his students for explaining academic concepts. Such animated, lively demonstration and explanation by Teacher M through coordinating speech and gesture can offer a more “colorful” or 3D version, which might be effective to attract his students’ attention and help their understanding.

In summary, Excerpt 5b demonstrates that Teacher M exploits various gestures and integrates blackboard writing for explaining and confirming with his students, especially Andy, that thesis statement should include specifying points. Teacher M’s gestures have various functions, including providing concrete visualizations of abstract concepts (e.g., container gesture on vertical axis), illustrating processes that his students should follow (e.g., tipping up arguments in the thesis statement), and demonstrating animated actions by “becoming” a writer. It seems that gesture also has close relationships to shifts in footing and being embodied others. Until now the focal analysis has been on Teacher M’s gestural use for explaining about the importance of making the thesis statement “specific.” From now the focus shifts to Andy’s direct response to Teacher M’s explanation that has been analyzed so far. The following excerpt immediately follows Excerpt 5b. In the very beginning (at lines 53-59), Teacher M pays special attention to Andy’s negative facial expression and directly asks Andy whether he is okay with the class rule. In Excerpt 6a, Andy explicitly repairs and exhibits his disagreement to Teacher M by saying, “nonono,” and also effectively employs gestures, whose characteristics are distinctive from his teacher’s.

Excerpt 6a: “thesis and uh, and satisfying, is like, two things.”
51. TM:  {holds BH @ chest in parallel; RH looks like holding a pen and LH with all fingers curled}
52. (Alan is not happy with it, hehe}=
53. {gazes at A’s direction while smiling}
54. A:  =’what?’ {why?}
55. (touches right eye with RH while smiling)
56. (0.5)
57. TM:  {are you okay?}=
58. (raises LH @ shoulder with its palm facing front)
59. A:  ={yeah yeah,}=
60. {still touches eye while smiling}
61. TM:  ={okay,}
62. {swiftly raises LH @ chest and points at A’s direction}
63. I thought (. ) you are, huh?
64. so, I mean like? I will give,
65. I, (. )if you are not really liking
66. to:, (0.3)
67. specifying it, (. ) then, (0.3)
68. I do not force you to, (. ) just!=
69. A:  =nonono,<
70. TM:  (.) [specific, {Hah}
71. (smiles}
72. A:  [{my point is}
73. {raises BH in parallel @ chest with palms facing front while smiling}
74. (not that, uhn,}]
75. {raises BH to face level with palms facing front}
76. {we should not}
77. {gradually brings LH closer to RH on his right @ chest while saying each word, with palms facing each other inward, which makes a small space between BH)
78. ➔
79. {put the}
(raises BH with the similar shape with lines 80-83 straight up to neck level)

{arguments (0.2)}

(holds BH @ shoulder and moves upward to face and then to the left, forming an arch, with palms facing each other and all fingers extended and opened up)

(in (. ) this.)

(holds BH in front of face and makes a beat)

{my point is like that,}

(gradually raises BH in parallel to face level with palms half-cupped and facing front, all fingers extended)

{thesis}

(moves RH closer to LH @ face with palm facing front and all fingers extended and opened up; holds LH with palm facing front @ face in parallel with RH)

(and uh,)

(moves RH back to his right @ face with palm facing front and all fingers extended; holds LH in his left side with its palm facing front @ face)

(and satisfying,)

(moves RH in the alternate manner and then to further right @ neck, with palm facing front; holds LH @ neck in parallel with RH, which creates a wide space between BH)

(is)

(swiftly moves BH back in center in front of face with thumbs touched each other, with palms facing front)

(like,)

(quickly moves BH to either left or right @ face, with palms facing front, which creates wide space again)
As mentioned above, Andy overtly signals his disagreeing stance at line 70, latched with Teacher M’s utterance that he does not want to force Andy to follow the rule if he does not want to do so. Subsequent to that, Andy initiates clarifying his main point with a metadiscourse marker, “my point is” at line 73, which clearly signals verbally that what to come next needs special attention. From lines 76-92, Andy attempts to make it clear that his point is not whether we should not put arguments or specifying points in the introduction by combing gestures along with speech. In particular, he visually illustrates the action of “putting the arguments.” More specifically, at lines 84-86, while saying “put the,” he raises both hands straight up to his neck level, with palms facing each other. Then, when he says, “arguments,” he moves both hands upward to the face level and then to the left, forming an arch (see Figure 3.34). Finally, he makes a slight beat while
saying, “in this.”, which appears to visualize placing arguments into something. A series of
Andy’s gestures here seemingly creates extra explicitness of his verbal explanation and
complements it. In other words, gesture functions as a clarification strategy by raising the level
of explicitness of verbal speech. However, it should be noted that his speech element, “in this.” is
rather vague because the pronoun, “this” does not specify what he exactly means (either thesis
statement or introduction).

From line 93, prefaced by another discourse marker, “my point is like that,” Andy now
moves on to clarify his major point to Teacher M: “thesis and specifying are two different things.”
In this process, he effectively coordinates a series of metaphoric gestures and beats with speech.
More specifically, at lines 96-99, during his utterance of “thesis,” Andy moves his right hand
closer to his left hand at the face level, which seems to point at and allocate the space to his left
for the concept of “thesis” (see Figure 4.35). Then, at lines 100-103, when he says, “and uh,” he
moves his right hand back to his right space. Right after that, Andy moves his right hand in the
alternate manner and then to his further right hand side while saying, “and satisfying”(see Figure
4.36). Note that he says “satisfying” rather than uttering “specifying,” which rather shows
inconsistency in his verbal explanation. However, Andy’s gestural mode appears to rightly
signify that his right-side space is for another concept. Also, his right and left hands create a
wide space in between, which exhibits a contrast by allocating two different spaces for the two
abstract concepts, which are namely the thesis and specifying points.

Furthermore, from lines 109-116, the similar contrast between the two concepts is
exhibited by Andy’s gestures combined with his speech. Namely, at lines 109-111, during his
utterance of “is,” Andy swiftly moves his hands back in the center in front of his face, with both
thumbs touched each other (see Figure 4.37). Then, when he says “like,” he quickly moves both
hands to either left or right side, with palms facing front, which creates a wide space between them (see Figure 4.38). It also has a gestural stroke, which exhibits a focused energy. Then, at lines 115-116, Andy makes a beat with both hands twice while saying “two things,” which maintains the wide space between hands. Here, Andy’s gesture, which entails his outward movements, adds emphatic tone and demonstrates his major point that these concepts are different entities, demarcated in two spaces. In short, with use of metaphoric gestures, Andy visualizes the abstract and invisible entities related to writing concepts and explains his points powerfully by manipulating them like objects with his hands. According to Cienki and Müller (2008), metaphoric gesture reflects the metaphor where abstract entities are treated as “objects.” Andy’s gesture is probably intended to highlight a clear contrast between the thesis that he envisions and “specifying” that Teacher M has explained.

It should be noted at this point that Teacher M’s gestures in Excerpts 5a and b and Andy’s in this excerpt are distinctive. Namely, Teacher M gestures on the vertical axis while Andy does on the horizontal axis although they both discuss the same concepts (the thesis statement and examples). One possible explanation about such differences in their gesture use, more specifically exhibiting the relationship between the thesis statement and examples (Teacher M conceives it vertically while Andy displays it horizontally) is that they have different conceptualizations in mind. In other words, their different gestures reflect their different perspectives or disagreeing stances, which might contribute to extra difficulty in negotiating differences at the level of conceptual thinking. This phenomenon is quite contrastive to what was observed in Smotrova’s (2014) study. Smotrova finds out that students in an ESL classroom actively imitate their teacher’s gestures and construct gestural catchments in order to show their understanding about concepts to their teacher. In the case involved with Teacher M and Andy
here, their gestures exhibit dis-alignment between them instead, which implies that their different stances might influence their gestural usage. In other words, it can be argued that because they have disagreeing stances, they might use gestures in the distinctive ways and might not create dialogic catchments with intent.

In the Excerpt 6b, which immediately follows the previous excerpt, Andy continues to confront Teacher M. Besides his use of metaphoric gestures observed above, Andy now employs beats and change of tempo together for shifting footing and enacts his previous ESL teachers to powerfully support his arguments, which can be considered interactional resources.

Excerpt 6b: “like, I need to see:, what you are going to say”
117. A: it’s, (.) like?
118.➔ (when I learned it,}
119.➔ {lowers BH to chest level and makes a beat with BH, with palms facing front and all fingers extended}
120.➔ {>twelve years, my teacher always taught<}
121.➔ {continues making beats a few times @ chest with BH}
122.➔ {>me.<}
123.➔ {>me.<}
124.➔ {raises LH in front of face, with its palm facing front; holds RH @ chest with its palm facing front}
125.➔ {keeps LH and RH in the same positions at lines 124-126}
126.➔ {but you need your,}
127.➔ {brings RH closer to LH @ upper chest, with palm facing front; keeps LH in center space with palm facing in front}
128.➔ {keeps LH and RH in center space with palm facing in front}
129.➔ {like, I need to see:,}
130.➔ {what you are going to}
131.➔ {raises BH in parallel in front of face with palms
facing each other and all fingers straight up,

and suddenly drops straight down to chest level}

{say}

drops BH straight further down to lower chest,

with palms facing each other and all

fingers stretched)

{in your intro.}

raises BH in parallel @ upper chest, with palms facing

each other and all fingers straighten, and pauses)

{that is}

brings BH closer in center space, with palms facing

outward and thumbs almost touching each other)

kind of

{separate thing?}=

brings BH in center space; LH in front of

face, with palm facing front and RH just

below LH, with palm facing front, and quickly

moves apart BH in different directions; LH up

to left side @ face and RH to right side down

@ chest}

TM: =uh-huh?= 150.

A: ={so,(.) you (.) like, you}

brings BH to same upper chest level, with palms facing

front}

kind of mixing it)

brings BH closer each other @ upper chest, with

both palms facing front, LH’s thumb almost touching

RH’s palm}

together? so like,}

quickly moves BH to shoulder level, with palms facing
front while both eyes look above, which possibly shows sense of frustration}

I’m kind of like, [u:::h, (0.8) not sure if you,

More specifically, at lines 118-120, he seems to use beats for signaling the change of the interactional frame into the narrative mode. When Andy says, “when I learned it,” he lowers both hands to his chest level and makes a beat in the rhythmic manner (see Figure 4.39). Similarly at lines 121-122, while saying, “twelve years, my teacher always taught,” he continues beats and makes rhythms with both hands in the similar manner. It can be interpreted that a series of beats here function as a self-regulatory, mediational manner in which Andy can produce a verbal explanation spontaneously, but at the same time signaling the upcoming sequence of talk in
which Andy will change footing to his previous ESL teacher and enacts that role. In fact, McNeill (1992) discusses the functions of beats that can connect and move into two different levels of discourses. In other words, it can be considered that before Andy embodies his ESL teacher, he appears to use such beats as a signal to change the mode of his talk from his explanation about academic writing concepts to the discourse of narrative. Another piece of evidence for such footing shift is observed in Andy’s use of quicker tempo when he utters, “twelve years, my teacher always taught me.” at lines 121 and 123. As Hall and Smotrova (2013) found out, shift of footing is often accomplished via specific prosodic cues or changed tempo, especially by a faster tempo than the surrounding talk.

Furthermore, the change of Andy’s footing is clearly exhibited from lines 127-155. Andy begins with a token, “kay,” which can signal the shift into his teacher’s talk or the beginning of his quoted speech. Then, he starts explaining as a teacher that the thesis statement is only one sentence by assigning his left-side space for “the thesis” (see Figure 4.40), which is the consistent manner that he has explained in Excerpt 6a, which constitutes a catchment. His utterance, “like, I need to see;” at line 133 clearly suggests that Andy embodies his teacher by using the pronoun, “I.” Furthermore, Andy keeps explaining as a teacher while performing with gestures. More specifically, while saying, “what you are going to” at lines 134-137, he raises both hands in parallel in front of his face and gradually drops straight down to his chest level. And then during his utterance of “say” with its prosodic emphasis, he further drops both hands down to his lower chest. Finally, at lines 142-144, he raises both hands in parallel to his upper chest level, with palms facing each other inward and all fingers stretched and holds while saying, “in your intro.” and putting an emphasis on “intro” (see Figure 4.41).
Note here that Andy seems to visually demonstrate the structure of argumentative essays by these series of gestures. Namely, he assigns the space of his lower chest level for “what you are going to say” (“specific arguments”) and the space of upper chest level for the “introduction.” This is visualized on a vertical axis rather than on the horizontal axis that Andy has consistently employed so far, and it is rather aligned with Teacher M’s visualization of the essay structure in Excerpt 5b despite the fact that ideas regarding what should be in the thesis statement are distinctive. It should be also noted that the information about the structure of essays is only available in Andy’s gestural mode. This sequence of talk in particular demonstrates that Andy meshes his previous teacher’s words and also enacts his teacher in order to negotiate with Teacher M regarding his own conceptualization of a thesis statement (namely, the thesis should one sentence without supporting arguments that can be included in the introduction). Such embodiment and becoming other person through gestures in classrooms is also observed in Smotrova’s (2014) study. It can be argued that gesture is part of interactional means for explaining academic concepts in the language classroom. Furthermore, similar to Excerpt 4b, through grounding his claims based on an external source of authority and even embodying a teacher, Andy strategically and powerfully argues against Teacher M’s epistemic stance.

From line 145 onwards, Andy appears to return to his academic discourse about the thesis statement from the narrative mode. Specifically, at lines 145-155, he states, “that is kind of separate thing?” Simultaneously, when he utters, “separate thing?”, he quickly moves his hands apart in the different directions: his left hand up to his left side at the face level and his right hand down to his right side at the chest level (see Figure 4.42). Andy also puts the gestural stroke on “separate”. Here, the metaphoric gestures by both hands illustrate the meaning of the speech, “separate,” especially by allocating the different spaces for each hand. It is notable that Andy
consistently employs similar metaphoric gestures constructing gestural catchment, and clearly shows the contrastive relations between two interrelated concepts (namely, “thesis statement” that only contains a main idea and “introduction” that can include supporting arguments). Furthermore, Andy uses a rising intonation contour (i.e., “thing?”) in order to make a confirmation check with Teacher M.

Andy’s confirmation check is successfully taken up by Teacher M’s minimal response, “uh-huh?” at line 156. Then, Andy seemingly sums up his argument by saying, “so, you like, you,” prefaced by “so,” At lines 160-163, while he is saying, “kind of mixing it”, he seems to visually illustrate the meaning of his utterance, “mixing” through the gestural mode. Namely, he brings both hands closer to each other at his upper chest level, with both palms facing front and his left hand thumb almost touching his right hand palm (see Figure 4.43). Right after that, at lines 164-167, Andy employs the unique gesture that reflects his affective reaction to Teacher M. More specifically, while saying, “together? so like,” he quickly moves both hands to his shoulders, with palms facing front. At the same time, both of his eyes look above while holding both hands up, which may demonstrate the sense of frustration (see Figure 4.44). It can be argued that Andy’s gesture here shows that he feels rather frustrated about Teacher M who does not seem to understand his point of view about the thesis statement despite his multiple efforts. Right after that, Andy adds, “I’m kind of like,” with a quicker tempo and utters, “u:::h,” It seems that this nonverbal vocalization (i.e., “u:::h,”) also shows the sense of his tiredness and frustration, which is simultaneously coordinated with Andy’s hands-up gesture at lines 165-167. It might be true that gesture and embodied action have close association with the speaker’s emotions, which can be more easily conveyed through gestural modes rather than verbal speech. Finally, from lines 169-170, Teacher M takes up the turn, overlapped with Andy’s non-verbal
vocalization, and states, “hu:n, not sure if you,” which still signals his non-understanding state even after Andy has explained his conceptualization about the thesis statement extensively.

It should be noted here that this miscommunication sequence between Teacher M and Andy probably continued this long probably because of reasons other than Teacher M and Andy’s different cultural or linguistic backgrounds. One possible cause might be Teacher M’s lack of experience in dealing with such difficult interactional moments in which students overtly demonstrate disagreements and confront his authority as a teacher. It might be true that Teacher M was feeling lost during these sequences of talk owing to his relative lack of previous experience in dealing with such instructional moments despite the fact that he had already taught this course several times. The stimulated recall interview with Teacher M rather supports such an interpretation related to his sense of loss and control.

I was not quite sure what he was intending to mean by “examples.” So even today I don’t know what he meant, because even though we resolved by the end of the class, but I do not remember how we like, reached to the resolution. Because he was saying, my teachers throughout twelve years, they never taught him to put examples there, but I did not understand what that was. Even now, I am not clear what he means by examples. Then, we, even more confusing is to remember because we reached to the resolution at the end of the class. He came to me and then, oh, we are now in the same point. I said, but I do not remember what was the same point. Haha (Interview on September 10, 2013).

As clearly seen above, Teacher M’s comment demonstrates the sense of confusion and sustained non-understanding about Andy’s intended meaning of “examples” in particular.
On the other hand, at the stimulated recall interview, Andy also shared his opinion regarding the reason why he initially started this discussion with Teacher M and what he found confusing:

Actually, what I wanted to know is, uh, *it’s because I wanted my score, right?* And then, some of my teachers really liked that you put your thesis and your examples together. So I’m like, do you like to, I am just asking, do you mind if I separate it? If you do not like it, I will change my essay, because I always separate the thesis and my examples….What I said examples is argument points. But he thinks, *I don’t know what he thinks*, but he says examples is, it is not examples in what it is in the arguments.

*Different understanding about the word, examples.* I still don’t know what he thinks (Interview on September 16, 2013).

Based on the stimulated recall interviews from both sides, it is clear that both were having difficulty in understanding the other’s meanings during the sequence and even after that. Also, the interview data display multiple realities related to this miscommunication phenomenon from each interlocutor’s perspective.

In summary, this section illustrates well by examining teacher’s and student’s gestural usage together that their different conceptualizations (e.g., thesis statement, specifying points, and examples to support the thesis statement) might reflect their distinctive usage of gestures, which can indicate the relationship between gesture and conceptual thinking. Even though both of them consistently employ gestural catchments themselves (i.e., constructing monologic catchment) in order to achieve discourse cohesion, they do not construct dialogic gestural catchments between them especially because they have disagreements or different understandings with regards to the conceptualization of thesis statement and meanings of
“examples.” This is an interesting point that needs further investigation so that we can find out how interactional contexts and interlocutors’ stances influence on their gestural usage. In addition, it should be addressed that despite both Teacher M’s and Andy’s effective and powerful use of gestures analyzed above, it turns out that the mutual understanding was not achieved even after the long sequence of talk. I argue that this does not necessarily mean that their gesture usage was ineffective, but gestures here were probably employed for the purposes of persuading their own stance rather than negotiating understanding. In other words, gestures were used for an argumentative or debate purpose for Andy and for dealing with a difficult instructional moment for Teacher M, which ended up with lack of constructing mutual understanding among them. Furthermore, this section also demonstrates that gestures have various functions at this kind of disagreeing moment among student and instructor, including changing footing and showing affective reactions, which appear to be important and unique pragmatic functions of gesture.

4.5 The functions of embodied action for resolving non-understanding

So far this chapter has examined a range of effective hand and arm-related gestures coordinated with verbal speech by teachers and students in miscommunication sequences. Now this final section shifts the focus to the roles of embodied action, namely other bodily actions that contribute to meaning making and resolving miscommunication. The following excerpt involves Ji Min’s (from Korea) non-understanding about Teacher L’s question. At this moment, the whole class is learning about how to paraphrase from the original source while using the examples in the textbook. Teacher L nominates Ji Min to compare the following two sentences in terms of their syntactic structures, “Explore most prejudices and you will find a cruel stereotype at the core of each one.” and “If you were to dissect most human prejudices, you would likely discover
an ugly stereotype lurking somewhere inside them.” In particular, Teacher L asks her to explain the differences, namely directive (Explore…) and conditional (If…). Since Ji Min says that the first sentence is an general opinion (lines 4-5) and does not seemingly get “directive,” Teacher L spontaneously makes a decision to use a directive to Shan (from China) in the classroom in order to show its meaning through his embodied, physical action.

**Excerpt 7:** “Shan, could you stand up?”

1. TL: and, what about the sentence in the original
2. uh, source paragraph,
3. explore most prejudices =
4. JM: =just like, general
5. {opinion?}
6. {looks up toward TL while resting left elbow on desk and placing curled fingers near left ear}
7. TL: no, it’s not.
8. JM: =((looks at Seo-jun who sits next to her right))
9. TL: does it tell you,
10. ([what to do?]
11. {brings LH forward @ chest}
12. JM: [((smiles at Seo-jun and then looks back to TL))
13. (2.0)
14. yeah! hah [((smiles))]
15. TL: [if I tell you,
16. {[please stand up,}
17. {swiftly raises LH up from waist to lower chest level, with palm facing up and slightly cupped}
18. JM: [((looks down while still smiling and covering mouth with LH))
19. TL: {and uh:,
20. {raises LH up to upper chest level, with palm facing up, and then moves down to chest, and glimpses at students at her left}
21. [go to the board,]
quickly moves LH to her right side, which seemingly points at blackboard while gazing at JM
{ (0.8) }
(JM: { (gazes down at textbook on desk) })
(TL: {[what would you do,]}
JM: { (brings LH forward @ chest) }
JM: { (body leans forward to textbook while gazing it) }
(4.0)
yeah, { (it is.} }
gazes up to TL
(0.4)
TL: { (will you?) }
raises LH to neck level with all fingers curled
and thumb up while gazing at JM
{(1.2) }
several look down and seem dis-engaged)
TL: { (it-, (0.5) okay,) }
holds LH @ chest and shifts gaze to SH
let’s,}=
looks down at textbook
JM: { (hah) }
gazes at Seo-jun
(ah:n, (2.2) )
looks downward at list of students’ names on desk
{Shan?}
looks at Shan’s direction
(JM: {(looks at two Korean students at her left side
while smiling) }
(TL: >could you stand up?<
(0.8)
stand up!
(2.0) )
60.➔JM: {((looks at Shan’s direction))}
61.➔Ss: {((turns their heads toward SH))}
62.➔SH: ((slowly stands up from his chair))
63. TL: {thank you very}
64. {smiles at SH}
65. {much.}
66. {beckons with LH, which appears to imply that}
67. Shan can sit
68. [have a seat.=
69. SH: [((sits down while glimpsing at JM’s direction))
70.➔TL: ={what does he do,}
71.➔ {points at SH’s direction with LH while
72.➔ gazing at JM}
73.➔ (1.8)
74.➔ {what does he do,}
75.➔ {does similar pointing at lines 70-71 while gazing at JM}
76. (1.8)
77. TL: did he stand, (0.5) stand up?= 
78. JM: =yeah.
79. TL: why?
80. JM: (0.5) {<you (.) told 'him'>}
81. {gazes at TL while resting right elbow on
82. desk and putting curled fingers near right ear}
83. TL: [I asked]
84. {touches chest with LH}
85. ➔ {him to do, right?}
86. ➔ {points at Shan’s direction with LH and holds}
87. so I use,
88. {stand up!}
89. {raises LH upward with palm flat facing up @ chest}
90. (0.5) first I was polite to say, could you,
91. but then, I changed it,
92. {stand up, right?}
93.  {looks at JM}
94.  I:   uh-huh,
95.  TL:  so {it’s a request, (0.8) right?}
96.      {brings LH forward with palm facing up @ chest
97.      and holds}
98.  (do we have a request here?)
99.  {looks down at textbook while points down at
100.   page with LH}
101.  explore (0.5)
102.  JM:  yeah. ((looks up to TL))
103.  TL:  {kind of,}          right?
104.  {nods several times}
105.  (and we do not have}
106.  {shakes head several times while looking at JM}
107.  {the request, right?}
108.  (turns to next page of textbook)
109.  JM:  (’yeah.’)
110.  {nods while looking down}
111.  TL:  so, {is it uh, syntactic differences between the two?}
112.  {raises LH @ upper chest, with index fingers up and
113.     other fingers curled, and moves to left and right
114.     side several times}
115.    (2.5)
116.  JM:  (’nods silently while looking at TL)=
117.  TL:  ={right?}
118.  (nods once while bringing LH on head and touching hair)
In the earlier sequence of talk, in response to Ji Min’s answer, “just like, general opinion?” at lines 4-5, Teacher L overtly repairs by saying, “no, >it’s not.<” at line 8. From lines 10-11, Teacher L begins providing overt clues in order to elicit a correct response from Ji Min and let her recognize “directive” by saying, “does it tell you, what to do?” Even after Ji Min seems to show understanding by saying “yeah!” at line 15, Teacher L keeps providing more clues by contextualizing or providing her a specific situation for making it comprehensible, or “if I tell you, please stand up, and uh:, go to the board, what would you do,” from lines 16-32. After a very long silence (4.0 seconds) at line 35, Ji Min provides a minimal response again, “yeah, it is.”, which does not clearly answer Teacher L’s question, or “what would you do.” In other words, Ji Min’s turn here can be interpreted as a signal of her non-understanding. In fact, this turn is sequentially treated as such by Teacher L, and from line 44 onwards, Teacher L attempts
to resolve it by using a different strategy, namely showing another students’ embodied action to Ji Min for clarifying meaning related to a “directive” rather than explaining verbally.

Right before Teacher L’s shift to a different strategy, at line 39, she seems to refer back to the previous question, “if I tell you, please stand up, and uh:, go to the board, what would you do,” by just saying “will you?” Then, at lines 44-47, she utters, “it-, okay, let’s,” which appears to exhibit her shift of actions. In particular, “okay,” can mark a topic closing or shift (Beach, 1993; West & Garcia, 1988) along with a cut-off (“it-). It can be argued that Teacher L’s turn at lines 44-47 demonstrates the emergent process of her “in flight” pedagogical decision, which can be similar to what Smotrova (2014) calls “thinking for teaching.” This phenomenon has been already discussed in relation to Excerpt 2 where Teacher L effectively employed non-verbal interactional resources (e.g., cut-off, eye gazes, and nonverbal vocalizations) in order to equip her with better pedagogical decision through having a little time. Similar to the previous example, it can be interpreted here that once Teacher L found out something not working well, she immediately made a decision on the spot to resolve the situation through making use of a cut-off and a token of change of signal, which probably enabled her to provide a small space for thinking about alternative teaching strategies on the spot.

From line 50 onwards, Teacher L’s “in-flight,” spontaneous decision is clearly observed in action. Namely, at lines 50-51, Teacher L says, “ah:n,” and makes a pause while she is looking down at the list of students’ names on the desk. Then, at lines 52-53, she calls out Shan with a rising intonation while looking at his direction. Right after that, Teacher L tells Shan, “could you stand up?” with a quicker pace. After a brief gap of silence, she restates her question in a more direct manner “stand up!” at line 58. During a 2.0 second pause, Ji Min shifts her gaze from the Korean students in her left side to Shan’s direction, and then other several students in the
classroom also turn their heads towards Shan, which demonstrates their attention to him (see Figure 4.45). In fact, as seen at line 43, those students had looked disengaged in the class interaction before Teacher L called out Shan to stand up (see Figure 4.46). In other words, it can be said that Teacher L’s “in-flight” pedagogical decision is working effectively in terms of making several students reengage in the class interaction. At line 62, responding to Teacher L’s request, Shan slowly stands up from his chair (see Figure 4.47).

Here, it can be interpreted that Teacher L employs the two kinds of sentences, first “could you stand up?” (polite form) and then “stand up!” (more direct form) to Shan in order to explicitly show the meaning of the directive and its consequence (i.e., Shan stood up) to Ji Min. In other words, it can be argued that Teacher L instantly creates an imaginary dialogue with Shan in which she directs him to stand up and makes the abstract meaning of a “directive” clearer and visible through Shan’s embodied action. In order to resolve Ji Min’s non-understanding, such “lively,” animated demonstration about the meaning of “directive” through Shan’s embodied action can be more effective than just verbally explaining the definition of directive, which has been done in the previous sequence of talk (from lines 10-41). Also, this embodied demonstration can be meaningful not only for Ji Min but also for other class members who might be not following Teacher L’s talk.

From line 70, Teacher L tries to connect Shan’s embodied action to Ji Min’s point of non-understanding. Prior to that, from lines 63-69, Teacher L shows her appreciation to Shan by saying “thank you very much.” and smiling, and then asks him to sit down non-verbally (beckoning with her left hand) and verbally (“have a seat.”). In response to that, Shan sits down while glimpsing at Ji Min’s direction. Then, at lines 70-72, Teacher L directly asks to Ji Min, “what does he do.” Simultaneously, she points at Shan’s direction with her left hand while
gazing at Ji Min (see Figure 4.48). Subsequent to that, there is a 1.8 second pause, and then Teacher L repeats the question, “what does he do,” combined with the similar pointing gesture at Shan while gazing at Ji Min (see Figure 4.49). This constitutes a gestural catchment. Teacher L’s pointing at lines 71-75 can be interpreted as “body quotes” (Keevallik, 2010). Namely, this is done by pointing to the visible conduct of another student. This body quote might be quite effective in that Ji Min and other students in the classroom can actually see the meaning of a “directive” designed by Teacher L through Shan’s bodily action. In fact, it is clear at lines 60-61 that Ji Min and other classmates orient to Shan’s embodied action when Teacher L asks him to stand up (see Figure 4.45). There is a vivid contrast between the condition at lines 60-61 and the previous one at line 43 where most students looked down and seemed disengaged in the class discussion (see Figure 4.46). It is worth noting here that Teacher L’s skillful designing of various semiotic modes, including her deictic gesture and Shan’s embodied action along with speech leads to making her meaning richer and fuller than relying on one single mode only.

Probably because Ji Min does not respond to Teacher L’s question (“what does he do,”), evidenced by another gap of silence (1.8 seconds) at line 76, Teacher L reframes her question into a more direct one, or “did he stand, stand up?” Latched with this question, Ji Min provided a minimal, affirmative response, “yeah.” And then at line 79, Teacher L provides another question, “why?” with a prosodic emphasis. Responding to this question, Ji Min answers, “you told "him"” at the slower pace at lines 80. Subsequent to that, Teacher L seems to make a confirmation with Ji Min by saying, “I asked him to do, right?” with an emphasis on “asked” and also pointing at Shan’s direction. Note that Teacher L still refers back to Shan’s embodied action by her pointing gesture to provide the shared evidence. Right after she explains the process in which she first used the polite form and then changed it into the direct one, Teacher L says, “so it’s a request,
right?” at line 95. With this utterance, Teacher L further confirms that Ji Min clearly understands that “stand up” is a form of request or directive. Then, at lines 98-101, she connects it back with the problem in the textbook by saying “do we have a request here? explore”, looking down the textbook, and pointing down at the page. In response to that, Ji Min gives a minimal agreeing token, “yeah.” and then looks up to Teacher L. In the end of the sequence, it is observed that Teacher L constantly uses confirmation check tokens (“right?”) at lines 103, 107, 117, and 119 in order to make sure that Ji Min’s non-understanding is successfully resolved. This phenomenon probably arises because Ji Min’s verbal response is mostly minimal (e.g., “yeah”) and her response is at times given only non-verbally, such as nodding silently at line 116.

As for the outcome of this negotiation sequence related to Ji Min’s non-understanding, it can be said that mutual understanding is achieved somehow among Teacher L and Ji Min, as evidenced by Ji Min’s verbal response, “yeah.” and non-verbal response. Right after Ji Min’s nodding at line 116, Teacher L tries to shift her talk by saying, “right? right? okay? okay? great.” at lines 117 and 119. It is clear that even in the end Teacher L actively makes a confirmation with Ji Min and other students whether they surely understand the main point before changing into the new topic. This can be interpreted as an important interactional strategy among ELF speakers for preventing further miscommunication or pre-empt strategies (Cogo, 2009; Kaur 2009a, 2011b, 2011c). Furthermore, it is worth noting in the end that this sequence is rather unique in that Teacher L is mostly making efforts to negotiate understanding while Ji Min is rather passive and does not actively get involved in this interaction, which is quite different from other excerpts analyzed in this chapter.

In the summary, Excerpt 7 demonstrates that Teacher L skillfully employs an embodied action with the assistance of another student and coordinates multiple modes for resolving Ji
Min’s non-understanding. In particular, since the notion of “directive” is rather abstract and invisible, demonstrating the actual action of a student in the classroom by creating an imaginative dialogue related to a directive becomes effective in terms of clarifying its meaning. It can be also true that the students in the classroom generally pay attention to such embodied actions, as observed in several students’ re-engagement by paying attention to Shan’s action. Furthermore, Teacher L effectively *quotes* her student’s embodied action for instructional purposes through pointing gestures so that students can visually see and connect with the abstract meaning of the directive, which is considered as her “in-flight” pedagogical decision. Therefore, it can be argued that embodied actions along with gestures are a powerful resource for constructing meaning and resolving miscommunication among instructors and students in the multilingual writing classroom, which needs more attention.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the unique functions of gesture and embodied action employed by ELF speakers (both multilingual instructors and students) in multilingual writing classroom interactions when they deal with various types of miscommunication. In general, gestures seem to function as “raising explicitness” related to verbal speech and also sometimes adding additional layers of meaning beyond speech, for instance visualizing the structure of essays that the speaker envisions in his or her mind. In particular, metaphoric gestures are often employed among the teachers and students probably because of the nature of writing classroom interactions, in which they often discuss academic writing concepts such as thesis statements. Such metaphoric gestures can be quite effective interactional devices for making abstract entities concrete, visible and actionable to the interlocutor, especially for students so that they can physically manipulate abstract concepts with both hands and persuasively argue against their
teacher. Also, it can be interpreted that gesture facilitates the thinking process (e.g., Furuyama, 2000; Lantolf, 2010; McCafferty, 1998, 2004; McNeill & Duncan, 2000; van Compernolle and Williams, 2011) and enables multilingual students to think conceptually and express such conceptual understandings in mind. Besides, with the use of gestures, ELF speakers can maintain conversational floor, clarify meaning, resolve confusion, and make a confirmation check. Metaphoric gestures also serve well as highlighting contrasts between related categories and meanings while using two spaces in a consistent manner.

In addition to metaphoric gestures, ELF speakers in the multilingual writing classrooms also use iconic, motion-related gestures to make their verbal explanation vivid, colorful, and transparent through integrating visible actions. In the analysis above, iconic gestures work well, especially when they explain about physical actions. In short, iconic gestures are effective in enhancing explicitness related to speech through concretizing action-related events. Also, ELF speakers employ other types of gestures to demonstrate their affective or emotional reactions (e.g., frustration) and beats to signal the change of footing. Although beats tend to be considered as merely adding emphasis, getting attention from the interlocutor, or self-regulating talk, they nevertheless have such unique functions as shifting the speaker’s footing and signaling of enacting someone else, which is related to sophisticated pragmatic functions of gesture. Furthermore, the final excerpt in particular illustrates how the teacher effectively exploits another student’s embodied action in the classroom as “body quotes,” which enables the abstract meaning of a directive to be visible to everyone in the classroom.

In short, ELF speakers employ a wide range of gestures and embodied actions meaningfully for different purposes and functions, and they skillfully design the composition of meanings through multiple semiotic modes. Based on such observations, it can be argued that
writing instruction does not only involve mental and text-based learning but also includes the elements of embodied and gestural learning. In other words, it is revealed from the multimodal analysis that such bodily engagement is an indispensable part of learning and language use in the classroom ecology.

Finally, Section 4.4 reveals that different conceptualizations about the thesis statement or more specifically, different understandings about the meaning of “examples” influence the ways a multilingual instructor and student employ gesture. It seems that the multilingual student was able to sustain his talk extensively and made his argument persuasively against his teacher by using gesture that reflects his different viewpoints from his teacher’s. This finding is distinctive from other gesture research in the language classroom setting, where an instructor and students try to make efforts to achieve mutual understanding through actively constructing gestural catchments (e.g., Smotrova, 2014). In fact, gesture can exhibit how speakers think about abstract concepts in their mind, which at times are not well expressed in verbal speech. Therefore, it can be argued that gesture and embodied action should be considered as an important element of resources that reflect ELF speakers’ inner thinking process, which are used for negotiating and achieving mutual understanding in ELF academic interactions.

Also, it is important to note in the end that not all miscommunication sequences can be successfully resolved among ELF speakers, observed in the rather ‘failed’ case of Andy and Teacher M’s interaction. Yet, it should be made clear that the use of ‘failed’ does not necessarily mean that these ELF speakers’ employment of gestures were ineffective. Rather this is the unique interactional situation in which both of them cannot agree with the other’s conceptual understanding owing to their own beliefs and evidence to support their own ideas. Also, possibly because of the teacher’s inexperience in terms of dealing with difficult instructional moments,
non-understanding might sustain and need a longer sequence of talk to negotiate. However, in general it seems that instructors and students in these multilingual writing classrooms make efforts to achieve understanding and continue their conversation without topic abandonment even after class (e.g. Andy and Teacher M’s instance), which demonstrates their collaborative attitude toward negotiating differences and also indicates the high-stake nature of classroom discourse, where they need to be in agreement as to the requirement of course assignments and maintain a good relationship in order to successfully complete their course.
Chapter 5

Miscommunication and Non-verbal Vocalization:

The Functions of Laughter and Silence

5.1 Introduction

This chapter illuminates multiple, unique functions of non-verbal vocalization. The primary focus is the functions of laughter in ELF speaker interactions when dealing with miscommunication triggered by a variety of causes. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, laughter can serve multiple purposes depending on the interactional contexts and interactants’ purposes. Glenn and Holt (2013) provide three reasons why laughter is a powerful device for communication. First, laughter can modify or mitigate potentially problematic behaviors or actions. Second, the action of laughter involves ambiguity and implicitness (Vöge, 2010), thus such laughter can provide subtle and delicate ways in which interlocutors can maintain social concordance. Third, there is a close association between laughter and affiliation or alignment. Glenn and Holt (2013) argue that through the sequence of laughing which involves joint actions, interlocutors can display alignment, affiliation, intimacy, or resistance. Therefore, laughter is an inherently powerful pragmatic means for communication, but has hitherto been less investigated in ELF pragmatic research.

The present chapter mainly examines the multifarious functions of laughter in ELF academic discourse. For instance, it can be argued that laughter serves as signaling non-understanding, which might lead to repair, displaying the speaker’s recognition of his or her own idiosyncratic usage to the listener, diffusing or lightening tensions resulting from conflicts among interlocutors, sweet coating disagreements and challenges, saving face for one another, mitigating directness or assertiveness, signaling non-seriousness about preceding utterances,
constructing humor and building solidarity among all interlocutors or in-group members only, and displaying (dis)affiliation to name a few. It appears that some functions are closely related to negotiating understanding and resolving miscommunication while others do not directly associate with meaning negotiation but involve developing relationships and relational identities such as English users, which will affect future interactional encounters in the classroom.

Furthermore, besides laughter, there is another important type of non-verbal vocalization – silence (no sound) – which can greatly influence ELF speaker interactions in academic contexts. Despite the fact that laughter and silence are two very different interactional phenomena, this chapter examines silence together as the secondary foci in the final section. The reason behind it is that as the data excerpts will illustrate, there is some interrelationship between the occurrence of laughter and that of silence in general.

It is important to note, however, that the functions that will be illustrated in the analysis below are probably not unique in ELF interactions only but also appear in so-called native speaker interactions as well. In other words, the distinction between ELF and non-ELF interactions might be rather arbitrary. As extensively discussed in Chapter 2, the recent, alternative definition of ELF underscores language “practice” of negotiating differences and constructing shared-ness through interactions rather than positing it as a distinct language system, which parallels with this study. Thus, its aim is not an attempt to show the unique functions of laughter and silence in ELF interactions different from other types of interactions. This chapter consists of the following 6 sections, which illustrate various functions of laughter or silence: 1) laughter as signaling non-understanding; 2) laughter as avoiding controversial topics and signaling something idiosyncratic; 3) laughter as reducing tension and saving face; 4) laughter as
teasing others and building in-group solidarity; 5) laughter as letting it pass and constructing humor; and 6) long silence as signaling challenge and pedagogical consideration.

5.2 Laughter as signaling non-understanding

The following excerpt illustrates the function of laughter as a sign of non-understanding, which has been quite often observed in existing ELF research. This sequence of talk occurred during Mei San’s (from Malaysia) Q and A session after her oral presentation about her argumentative essay. Her position in the essay is against banning nuclear power in the United States. Hong (from China) asked her a question about the relationship between developing countries and nuclear power, which triggered her non-understanding. The important contextual information is that Teacher L told the whole class beforehand that students who ask questions would get extra points, which probably motivated Hong to ask questions. This is because from the regular class observation, he was silent during most of class sessions.

Excerpt 1: “ya:h? Sorry?”
1. TL:  {Oh!}
2. {points at Hong with LH}
3. please,=
4. H: =so, u:h, do you personally
5. believe uh, that, uh, more and more
6. developing (.) countries, are gonna use of
7. nuclear power ‘in the future?’=
8.➔MS: =yeah.
9.➔ (1.2)
10.➔MS: {ya:h? Sorry?}
11.➔ {moves a step forward while showing smile on face}
12.➔ (0.8)
13.➔MS: {Ke[hehehe!} ((swiftly covers her mouth with LH))
14.➔ {suddenly bends body forward close to podium}
15.➔H: [{hah,}
16. ➔ {smiles and looks downward}
17. MS: {what?}
18. {moves back to straight position while smiles}
19. H: uh, I mean, u:h, do you personally
20. [believe that uh, more and more developing countries
21. MS: {((nods several times while gazing at H))}
22. H: uh, are gonna use of nuclear power in the (. ) future?
23. ➔ MS:={yeah,}
24. ➔ {nods}
25. ➔ [(3.0)
26. ➔ MS: {((nods three times without any utterance))}
27. H: {¨ah!¨}
28. {shifts gaze to his left side}
29. ➔ (2.0)

Figure 5.1. Lines 10-11: “yea:h? Sorry?”
Figure 5.2. Lines 13-14: “Kehehehe!”
Figure 5.3. Lines 15-16: “hah,”

As mentioned above, it is found from a number of studies (e.g., Deterding, 2013; Schegloff, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Pitzl, 2010; Kaur, 2009b) that laughter can be designed to convey lack of understanding, which is a type of strategy for repair. Prior to the moment when Mei San’s laughter arises, from lines 1-3, Teacher L recognizes Hong and says, “Oh!” which displays a sense of surprise. She then officially gives the floor to him by saying, “please.” Selected as a person to ask a question, at lines 4-7, Hong issues a question to Mei San and frames it in a lengthy manner. He states, “so, u:h, do you personally believe uh, that, uh, more and more
developing countries, are gonna use of nuclear power in the future?” Besides its lengthiness, his turn displays hesitation, as exhibited by a number of fillers (e.g., “uh,”). Both lengthiness and hesitation is construed as possible causes of Mei San’s non-understanding, which is signaled in the later sequence of talk.

Hong’s turn at lines 4-7 is treated as a ‘trouble-source’ by Mei San, exhibited from line 8 onwards. At line 8, Mei-San only provides a minimal response, “yeah.” with a falling intonation, which signals that she completes her turn. After that, there is a 1.2 second silence. From the sequential structure, Hong is expected to take up the next turn in order to follow up Mei San’s minimal response. Since Mei San probably recognizes that something is wrong with this gap of silence, she initiates repair by saying “yea:h? Sorry?” (e.g., open-class repair initiator) while moving one step forward and smiling at the same time (see Figure 5.1). The most likely analysis related to this turn coordinated her embodied actions along with speech is an indication of communicative trouble and a use of negative politeness, “Sorry” (Brown & Levinson, 1987), for asking for clarification. According to Deterding (2013), the usage of “sorry” with rising intonation is one of most common ways of seeking clarification. After a short pause, at line 13 Mei San initiates laughing in a unique manner (“Kehehehe!”). According to Glenn (2003), this is classified as a solo laughter. While laughing, she also bends her body forward closer to the podium (see Figure 5.2) and then covers her mouth with her hand. It can be argued that her laughter here functions as signaling non-understanding in a non-threatening way. Glenn suggests that laughter is regularly associated with some interactional problems. Here, the issue seems to be non-understanding about Hong’s question. Furthermore, this laughter might reflect her embarrassment (Pullin Stark, 2009). This is because asking for clarification is perceived as a possible threat to Hong since it highlights the fact that his utterance is not easily understood.
In addition, from the stimulated recall interview, Mei San shared her perspective on the role of laughter: “When I cannot hear or understand someone asking questions, I just unconsciously laugh. I think it is usual” (Interview, December 10, 2013). This implies that she treats laughter as something common for dealing with non-hearing and non-understanding situations. In other words, laughter is used for making non-hearing and non-understanding normal. After this unique laughter, Mei San returns to the normal posture when saying, “what?” with rising intonation, and smiles. This “what?” is construed as her second indication of communicative trouble or repair initiation. Moreover, her utterance is still framed as non-threatening since she designs the coordination of the speech with smiling.

Overlapped with Mei San’s laughter, Hong also co-laughs in a brief and weak manner while smiling at lines 15-16 (see Figure 5.3). His laughing and smiling indicate interactional alignment. In other words, by laughing and smiling together, Hong tries to achieve alignment with her. This demonstrates his ability to align semiotic resources, including laughter and smiling, in order to adapt to interactional contexts (Atkinson et al., 2007). In fact, laughter is a distinctive interactional resource from talk since interlocutors can do it together in contrast to talk in which participants usually strive for one party taking a turn at a time (Sacks, 2004). After Hong’s interactional alignment, at lines 19-22, he repeats his question in response to Mei San’s clarification requests. Although he starts with a discourse marker, “I mean,” which signals that he starts to rephrase, his utterance is almost the same as the original one in terms of grammatical structure, word/phrase, and hesitation. This is interpreted as a strategy of “other-initiated repetition” (Björkman, 2014, p. 132), specifically, “exact repetition” (Lichtkoppler, 2007). Hong’s decision for this repetition is probably oriented to Mei San’s use of “what?” as a repair initiation that does not specify the trouble-source. During Hong’s repetition, Mei San clearly
shows her collaboration by gazing at him and nodding several times. This behavior might reflect her face consideration and collaborative attitude, especially after requesting a clarification.

Latched with Hong’s repetition, Mei San just provides minimal feedback (“yeah,”) again. After that, there is a 3.0 second pause where she is nodding three times without any utterance, which keeps demonstrating her response non-verbally. Right after that, Hong says, “ah!” in quieter voice and quickly shifts his gaze to his left. Then, another long silence ensues. The most likely analysis related to gaps of silence at lines 25 and 29 is that they become non-verbal signs that subtly seek assistance regarding Mei San’s communicative problem. According to Kaur (2009a), the request for help may be signaled by means of pause rather than a direct request. It should be noted that using pause as a request for assistance from the speaker requires more subtle, complex interpretation from the interlocutor side than a direct one. In fact, this sign by silence is taken up by Teacher L immediately after this sequence of talk (see detailed discussion in Excerpt 5 in Chapter 6).

As regards to the possible factors causing Mei San’s non-understanding, it can be interpreted that she did not understand Hong’s utterances because she was not sure “why” he asked the question, or level of interpretability (Smith, 1992). From the sequential analysis, Mei San perhaps achieved intelligibility and comprehensibility, as exhibited by her answer, “yeah.” twice. This interpretation is also supported by Teacher L’s clarification request to Hong that will happen right after this sequence. Furthermore, it is corroborated by the stimulated recall interview. Teacher L explained her intention behind asking for clarification:

I was trying to show what the logic between his question and the content of Mei San’s presentation is, why he asked about developing countries although she didn’t mention about developed or developing countries in her presentation. To
me, they are related indirectly, but not directly. So that’s why I asked Hong why he asked that question (Interview, December 20, 2013).

Based on this, it can be interpreted that Hong’s ambiguous question in relation to Mei San’s presentation caused non-understanding at the level of interpretability. Lastly, Mei San shared her perspective at the stimulated recall interview, “Hong’s questions were kind of long” (Interview, December 10, 2013). Taking it into account, as indicated earlier, Hong’s lengthy utterance itself might lead to her confusion and non-understanding.

In summary, Excerpt 1 demonstrates an instance of non-understanding overtly signaled by Mei San with a combination of non-verbal interactional resources, namely laughter, smiling, and silence with speech. In particular, it shows the function of laughter as signaling non-understanding. Also, it highlights the important function of laughing, which is often accompanied with smiling and seemingly contributes to mitigating face-threat related to repair and making non-understanding normal. In addition, laughter was employed in order to construct interactional alignment between students involved in the miscommunication. Lastly, the excerpt shows that miscommunication can arise at various levels. In other words, Hong’s verbal repetition did not resolve Mei San’s non-understanding at the level of interpretability although repetition at times helps sort out miscommunication that arises because of pronunciation or the level of intelligibility (Deterding, 2013).

5.3 Laughter as avoiding controversial topics and signaling something idiosyncratic

This section illustrates other functions of laughter, namely avoiding sensitive topics to discuss in the classroom and signaling something idiosyncratic to come next. The following sequence of talk involves Lifen (from China) and Teacher M during her Q & A session after her oral presentation about her argumentative essay, which has been already discussed in Excerpt 1
in Chapter 4. Prior to this sequence, Teacher M issued the question regarding why the people in 
China cannot change the law although many people are against it. This question triggered Lifen’s 
non-understanding. The following excerpt entails the brief humor sequence attempted by 
Weimin (from China) and appreciated by the class with co-laughter.

**Excerpt 2a:** “because Chinese government is so strong.”

68. TM:    >no, no,<
69. my question is,
70. {(.).so you’re,(.) you’re trying to}
71. {points at PowerPoint direction with RH index 
72. finger twice}
73. [convince the government.]
74. {points at PowerPoint direction with RH all fingers 
75. twice with palm facing in front}
76. L:     {huh-huh,}
77. {nods a few times}
78. TM:    {like this policy is not good, right?}
79. {keeps RH @ face with palm facing in front, 
80. slightly shakes it}
81. {so what I am saying is, (1.2)}
82. {clenches with RH @ face and holds}
83. {there are too many people,}
84. {opens RH’s fist and stretches all fingers 
85. forward with palm facing up}
86. {we, should, we should be already in the strong position}
87. {clenches fists again with RH @ face and holds}
88. {to say, to say to the government.}
89. {stretches RH’s all fingers forward with palm facing 
90. up and holds till line 95}
91. L:     {huh-huh,}
92. {nods a few times}
93. TM:    {we do not like this policy,}
94. {shakes head}
95. so why is not the government following people’s
{intentions,}

quickly flips RH to its palm facing his face and all fingers slightly curled

like,

(0.5)

>for example, in Nepal? (0.8)

moves BH to center of chest in parallel, indicating self

(if .) the government is, (0.5)

extends LH out to front with palm facing

up @ neck

holding like the law,

clenches a fist with LH strongly @ face

people do not like it,

holds the fist

people over throw it.

moves LH away from his body @ face, palm open, as if throwing something, and holds

they kick the government out.

does the similar motion with lh twice to lines 111-112, and holds

maybe it’s difficult in China, I don’t know,

(1.5) because,

extends LH out to front with palm facing up @ neck

(0.5)

L: I,

because chinese [government]

looks back to TM

[I,

is so strong.

[Hahaha

hahahaha
Figure 5.4. Lines 121-124:
“because chinese government is so strong.”
As discussed in the previous chapter, the lines 68-118 illustrate the process in which Teacher M
is rephrasing his original question and clarifying its meaning for Lifen by a variety of
communicative strategies, including use of discourse markers, enhancing explicitness by using
various gestures, comprehension checks, and generating an example from his own country,
Nepal for illustration, after non-understanding being signaled by her. After Teacher M’s long-
turn taking, there is a brief pause at line 119, and then Lifen tries to initiate her response. Yet,
she just says, “I,” and the next turn is taken up by Weimin’s rather abrupt statement, “because
Chinese government is so strong.” While saying this, Weimin even looks back to Teacher M,
whose body shows his direct orientation (see Figure 5.4). Here, he is unexpectedly sharing his
personal opinion while responding to Teacher M’s question (“why the people in China cannot
change the law”). Perhaps because of Weimin’s quite direct answer and its abruptness, it
contributes to adding a humorous tone, which is taken up by Teacher M and other students
through their joint laughter at lines 125-126. In fact, Rogerson-Revell (2007) observes abrupt
shifts from formal to informal style as one of resources for producing humorous effect.

Furthermore, Weimin’s candid answer and laughter among the class members might
function as an icebreaker for Lifen to discuss this rather controversial, political topic in the later
sequence of talk, which will be examined in Excerpt 2b. In fact, in the following excerpt, Lifen
begins responding to Teacher M’s question in a more direct manner. Regarding his behavior, Weimin said:

I am just trying to answer Teacher M’s question. It’s like, for some people, some Chinese people, they may think that it is a sensitive topic. It’s like, everybody knows it. But they are not so willing to talk about it (Interview, April, 4, 2014).

Taking Weimin’s view into consideration, his utterance at lines 121 and 124 is treated as laughable since his classmates especially from China, who are the majority of this class, probably know his utterance as shared knowledge, but they think that the topic is not appropriate to be discussed in the class in the open manner and that they probably choose not to respond to this topic through verbal speech. In other words, laughter and humor can serve as subtly avoiding controversy related to the nature of this topic. Especially since there are other students and instructors from various cultural backgrounds and familiarities with such a political topic as the Chinese government, laughter can function as substituting possible verbal responses to the controversial topic. That is, laughter has a pragmatic function here.

To sum up so far, Excerpt 2a includes Weimin’s attempt at humor, which gains uptake from Teacher M and the class’s laughter. It seems that laughter in this interactional context serves as a pragmatic means for skillfully avoiding a sensitive topic to discuss in the classroom. Also, it demonstrates that Weimin was closely monitoring the turn-in-progress to be able to deliver the zinger on the spot and create humor. The following excerpt entails the moment where Lifen employs laughter as signaling something idiosyncratic to come in her utterance to others in the classroom. This sequence of talk arises right after the previous excerpt.

**Excerpt 2b:** “because it’s, hah, its, $\text{anarchy},$”

127. L: =I don’t know either, because people
128. (0.8) people around me,
129. (. ) uh, seems, almost similar,
130 {uh, to my, to my thoughts, to my opinions.}
131 {raises BH up to upper chest level with palms
132 facing body, and taps on chest a few times,
133 possibly indicating herself}
134 "uh, my friends
135 say, also think, we can have a
136 {second child.}
137 {clenches fists with BH in front @ stomach level}
138 they won’t (0.5) be a big problem for China,
139 but, the Chinese government (0.5)
140 {just}
141 {shakes head}
142 stick to this policy.
143 ➔ (2.2)
144.TM: {that was my question.}
145 {puts LH’s all fingers under his chin and elbow rested on desk}
146 so why are the people just (. ) staying peacefully,
147 while the government is not following their:.,
148 (0.8) what they want,=
149 ➔ L: =because it’s, hah? it’s, $atanarchy,$
150 ➔ {hah hahah?}
151 ➔ {swings both arms while smiling and moves around
152 ➔ to left side}
153 ➔ {(1.0)}
154 ➔ TM: {((smiles while covers mouth with RH))}
155 ➔ so, that! (. ) maybe, that’s the problem,
156 ➔ that’s the problem, yeah.=
157 ➔ L: =yeah! political things,
158 ➔ (1.0)
159 ➔ TM: {if this, if there is an anarchy, then,}
160 ➔ {raises BH @ shoulder and stretches out to left or
161 ➔ right side with palms facing up, possibly showing the
As observed, Lifen begins answering Teacher M’s question by first displaying agreement with her statement of “I don’t know either,”. Then she starts to provide the reason why the people in China cannot change the law at lines 127-133. In particular, Lifen emphasizes her point of view through combining non-verbal means along with verbal speech. Namely, she says “uh, to my, to my thoughts, to my opinions.” while tapping on her chest with both hands a few times at lines 130-133. After that, from lines 134-137, Lifen goes on to explain, “‘uh,’ my friends say, also think, we can have a second child.” As she says, “second child,” she clenches fists with both hands in front, which is rather similar to Teacher M’s use of metaphoric gestures that exhibit the power of the government or strong stance of the people in China. It appears that she is highlighting the key information, “second child” with this gesture. Then, she further continues, “they won’t be a big problem for China.”

Finally, she completes her turn with “but, the Chinese government just stick to this policy.”, signaled by a falling intonation. As she utters “just,” she slightly shakes her head, which illustrates Lifen’s negative reaction that she does not understand why the Chinese government does not change this policy. After Lifen’s turn completion, there is a long silence (2.2. seconds) in which Teacher M does not take up the following turn. This gap of silence seems to function as
a sign of something wrong with the previous turn, as discussed in the previous section. The problem becomes obvious at Teacher M’s following turn, namely by his utterance, “that was my question.” With this utterance, Teacher M indicates that Lifen was not answering his question, but just ‘explicating’ it. After his overt signal, Teacher M reframes his question once again at lines 146-148. Note that Teacher M’s question here is more briefly framed than the previous one at lines 69-98 in Excerpt 2a, which might contribute to Lifen’s clearer understanding about his question.

Latched with Teacher M’s briefly rephrased question, Lifen now seems to understand his question clearly and responds to it, “because it’s hah? it’s, $atanarchy,$” and adds laughing afterward. It is worth noting that before her idiosyncratic word, “atanarchy” (her most likely intended meaning is “anarchy”), she briefly laughs (“hah?”) and also repeats “it’s.” It can be interpreted that Lifen’s laughter and repetition together seemingly function as signaling something idiosyncratic to come and letting her audience anticipate something unique for raising intelligibility. Furthermore, while saying, “atanarchy”, she even employs smile voice as well. In other words, her laughter and smile voice display some recognition of her ‘marked’ usage and head off possible miscommunication, which can be considered as a type of “pre-empting strategies” (Cogo, 2009; Kaur, 2009a, 2011b, 2011c).

As Glenn and Holt (2013) and Potter and Helburn (2010) similarly claim, laughter can mark an insufficiency or problem with a word or phrase. In addition, after she says, “atanarchy,” she further adds laughter while swinging both arms, smiling and moving around (see Figure 5.5). The coordination of laughing and other embodied actions here may also indicate that Lifen is trying to hide some uncomfortable feeling, specifically embarrassment (Pullin Stark, 2009) in terms of not being able to find an appropriate word. Through a stimulated recall interview,
another reality in terms of Lifen’s choice of this lexical item was emerged. She shared her perspective at the moment:

I remember that I didn’t know how to say at first, so I was stuck. I used a wrong word, ‘anarchy’ because I tried to find a word, but I got an opposite meaning. I was trying to say, ‘dictatorship’ but I used a word, ‘anarchy’ instead (Interview, August 7, 2013).

Taking this into account, it appears that Lifen’s laughter, smile, and bodily actions before, during, and after “atanarchy,” conceal a sense of her embarrassment in not being able to come up with a ‘right’ word, or “dictatorship.” This function might be similar to Mei San’s laughter, observed in the previous section.

After Lifen’s laughter, there is a gap of silence. During this silence, Teacher M smiles while covering his mouth with his hand, seemingly aligning with Lifen. At lines 155-156, he shows his agreement and provides an evaluative comment, “so, that! maybe, that’s the problem, that’s the problem, yeah.” This utterance shows mutual understanding achieved at this point, given his repetition, an acknowledgement token, “yeah.” and use of a pronoun (“that”), which evidences the shared knowledge among them. Latched with his utterance, Lifen also displays agreement by saying, “yeah! political things,” In particular, “political things” functions as a precise confirmation check with Teacher M. It is noticeable and intriguing as well that although Lifen utilizes an idiosyncratic word, “atanarchy,” Teacher M’s turn displays his clear understanding. In fact, it is normal that such an idiosyncratic word should immediately get repaired. According to Schegloff et al. (1977), the initiation of repair generally occurs adjacent to the trouble source turn in such forms as “huh?” or “what?” It seems here that this idiosyncratic word does not lead to repair sequences at all and that he does not orient it as such. Perhaps the reason behind it is that the word that she pronounced is similar to the original word, “anarchy”
and that Teacher M was able to interpret it easily. Another possibility is that Lifen signals her idiosyncratic usage with laughter and smile voice before, during, and after this word, which enables him to pay close attention to her unique linguistic feature. Regardless of possible reasons, this exhibits Teacher M’s leniency toward linguistic variation.

After a gap of silence at line 158, Teacher M provides his comment, “if this, if there is an anarchy, then,” while raising his hands at shoulder level and stretches them to left or right side with palms facing up, seemingly embodying his stance, “I don’t know” (see Figure 5.6). During this utterance, he even accentuates “anarchy” prosodically, which he might intend to confirm his understanding about “atanarchy” through enhancing explicitness. In other words, Teacher M repaired and ratified the word at the same time. Furthermore, he holds this gesture and shakes his head a few times while saying, “nobody is going to listen.” His embodied action here seems to increase further explicitness of his utterance, affiliated with his hand gesture.

As for the possible outcome of Lifen’s non-understanding about Teacher M’s question, through the sequential analysis, Teacher M and Lifen were able to achieve mutual understanding, exhibited at lines 156-157, however tentative it is. Nevertheless, based on the stimulated recall interview with Lifen, it is found that the sequence of talk entails Teacher M’s covert misunderstanding about “anarchy” in relation to Chinese government, which is not brought up and renegotiated in the sequence of talk. While Teacher M correctly gets Lifen’s idiosyncratic word, what Lifen actually wanted to express is that because of the “dictatorship,” everyone must listen to the government. That was her intended meaning. However, she did not find a right word, and she did not know how to organize the words at that time according to her interview introduced above. In other words, misunderstanding exists, but there is no repair initiation by Lifen, or she probably chooses to “let it pass” (Firth, 1996). One possible reason is that she might
have hesitated to do repair since she was not able to find a right word. Another reason is that similar to Weimin’s opinion at his stimulated recall interview, Lifen was rather reluctant to bring up this controversial issue, or the Chinese government’s “dictatorship” in the classroom. In other words, it is possible that she subtly resisted bringing out the controversial topic and chose making it ambiguous by making use of laughter.

Although Teacher M misunderstands the Chinese government in relation to “anarchy,” it is evident from the sequential analysis that the conversation moves forward without communication breakdown. It can be said that accurate words at times do not matter much. This is because Teacher M does understand Lifen’s idiosyncratic word. What is more important is how meaning is collaboratively negotiated among Teacher M and Lifen. If we privilege indeterminacy and emergence over stasis and determination, it can open up new possibilities that cannot be determined in advance (Leander & Bold, 2013). Especially this indeterminacy and emergence are relevant in the context of ELF interactions because it is often the case that we cannot predetermine what kinds of communicative norms exist and what kinds of meanings are emerged and negotiated in ELF interactions. Here, at least Lifen and Teacher M reached to their mutual understanding in that some political issue (anarchy, dictatorship or whatever) is involved with difficulty in changing the one-child policy.

In regard to factors that might cause Lifen’s non-understanding about Teacher M’s question, it can be interpreted that his question (at lines 69-98 in Excerpt 2a) was lengthy and less-focused, which might contribute to Lifen’s difficulty in understanding. In comparison, his rephrased question at lines 146-148 became clearer and more concise, which might be easier for her to respond to it. These points were also mentioned in the stimulated recall interview from Lifen. Another possibility is its controversy regarding the nature of Teacher M’s question (i.e.,
Chinese government’s dictatorship) as discussed above. Prior to the moment that Weimin openly discussed and made humor in Excerpt 2a, it is possible that Lifen was rather reluctant to respond to Teacher M’s question verbally. The last possible interpretation also comes from Lifen’s stimulated recall:

I didn’t catch Teacher M’s point in the beginning, but later I realized his question did not directly focus on the content of what I was talking about. His question is not directly related to the policy, but related to why the people don’t change. Political things” (Interview, August 7, 2013).

It seems that she thinks Teacher M’s question regarding political issues, which is unrelated to her argument on the policy, caused her initial non-understanding.

In summary, Excerpt 2b demonstrates the function of laughter employed by Lifen in relation to her idiosyncratic lexical item. It signals to her teacher and classmates that her utterance needs special attention for comprehension. For this purpose, Lifen skillfully designs a combination of semiotic modes, including laughter, smile, body movement, and speech. Although Lifen did not articulate her real intended meaning (“dictatorship”) and Teacher M did not recognize it, the conversation still moved forward without facing communicative breakdown. It seems that “let it pass” was employed and Lifen probably prioritized more on relational work with Teacher M and her classmates without disturbing the flow of conversation. Lastly, laughter employed by Weimin and Lifen in this section may demonstrate the pragmatic functions of avoiding or resisting the controversial topic shared among members from the same ethnic background in a non-threatening way.

5.4 Laughter as reducing tension and saving face
So far the previous two sections have demonstrated the roles of laughter as signaling non-understanding, avoiding controversial topics to discuss verbally and making them ambiguous, and signaling something idiosyncratic for raising explicitness. This section mainly illustrates the function of laughter as a face-saving device and as politeness work. What preceded the next sequence of talk was Teacher M’s explanation about a three-day in-class workshop for argumentative essays. After his explanation about its purposes and procedures, Teacher M tried to find volunteers. Despite the fact that volunteers would not need extra work except for posting drafts online, only a few students agreed to be volunteers. From the classroom observation, one possible reason is that most students did not pay much attention to Teacher M’s explanation. After waiting for a while, Teacher M suddenly called out Mohamed to ask if he is interested in being a volunteer for Monday (the first day for the workshop) perhaps because he was one of the active students who often participated in class discussions. The class is looking at the screen that projects the document listing the dates and volunteers’ names for the workshop.

Excerpt 3a: “go where?”
1. TM: okay, {Mohamed?}
2. {shifts gazes to M’s direction}
3. (0.8)
4. M: {yeah?}=
5. {quickly shift gazes from Qasem to TM}
6. TM: =you wanna go?
7. (0.5)
8.➔M: {go where?}
9.➔ {gazes at TM with serious look}
10.➔Ss [Hahahahaha[hahahahahahaha
11.➔TM: [haHaHa{(shakes head several times})
12.➔W: [{go outside,}
13. {looks back over shoulder at M}
14.➔Ss: hahaha[haha
15. TM:        [okay,
16.➔Ss: hahahahaha
17.➔W:        [{go for a cigarette!}
18.        {looks back over shoulder at M and then
19.        looks in front}
20.➔Ss: hahahahahaha
21. TM:        >okay, uh:,<=
22.➔M:        ={let’s go,}
23.➔         {smiles}
24. TM:        {so for the workshop, can I put you (.) for the, monday?}
25.         {raises LH @ head level and points at PS
26.         with index finger}
27.     (0.8)
28.➔M:        {ma, MONDAY?}
29.➔         {shifts gazes from PS to TM}
30.➔TM:        ((nods))yes!
31.➔         [[(1.5)
32.➔Ss: [hahahahaha,
33.TM:        I think, [did you get,
34.M:        [yeah,
35.TM:        [did you get
36.M:        [yeah,
37.TM:        {(. ) what we’re [doing}
38.         {stands up from chair in front of podium and walks
39.         toward the center in front of students}
40.M:        [uh,
41.➔         sorry, I was {just uh:::, (1.2)}
42.➔         {gazes downward}
43.➔         I was not really ‘focused’
44.➔         {{$what are we supposed to do,$}
45.➔         {smiles and looks at TM}
This sequence of talk entails Mohamed’s miscommunication, as signaled by his utterances, “go
where?” (line 8), “ma, MONDAY?” (line 28), and “what are we supposed to do,” (line 44) in
particular. Prior to that, from lines 1-2, Teacher M suddenly calls out Mohamed who was talking
with Qasem (from Saudi Arabia) sitting next to him. After a short pause, Mohamed responds
with a minimal token, “yeah?” while quickly orienting to Teacher M by his gaze shift. Latched
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with Mohamed, Teacher M asks, “you wanna go?” After another gap of silence, Mohamed 
abruptly says, “go where?” while gazing at Teacher M with a serious look (see Figure 5.7). The 
sequence at lines 6-9 exhibits that there is misunderstanding between Teacher M and Mohamed 
because “go where?” seems to be Mohamed’s direct clarification request for Teacher M’s 
utterance. However, from the contextual information, with this utterance, Teacher M is asking if 
Mohamed wants to be a volunteer, which Teacher M assumes is the shared knowledge through 
his preceding explanation. Mohamed’s serious look indicates that he tries to clarify the meaning 
in regard to “where” he should go. The stimulated recall interview with him reinforces this 
interpretation. Mohamed expressed about the reason why he said “go where?”: “In the beginning, 
I didn’t get what Teacher M said. ‘Go something…’ and I assumed somewhere. So I asked, ‘Go 
where?’ means ‘Where should I go?’” (Interview, September 20, 2013). It can be interpreted that 
Mohamed misunderstands what his teacher said as literally “going somewhere.”

Right after Mohamed’s clarification request, many students initiate laughing and even 
Teacher M joins it in (see Figure 5.8), which leads to shared laughter (Glenn, 2003). Seemingly, 
this laughter spread in the classroom shows that they treat preceding Mohamed’s utterance as 
something funny. The sense of directness and abruptness of Mohamed’s utterance seemingly 
contributes to making it sound funny. Lehtimaja (2011) and Reddington and Waring (2015) 
similarly observe that teachers in the classroom often respond to student humor by playing along, 
thus affiliating with students. Interestingly from line 12, Mohamed’s close friend, Weimin tries 
to extend this humorous frame by saying, “go outside,” while looking back to Mohamed (see 
Figure 5.9). By doing this, Weimin seems to construct humor based on Mohamed’s 
misunderstanding. It appears that Weimin sets this up as the punchline. According to Reddington 
& Waring (2015), this type of humor intitiaon in the language classroom is characterized by
“sequence pivots” (p. 8). In a sequence pivot, the speaker uses a syntactically fitted extension to the prior speaker’s turn, but at the same time he or she projects a new playful course of action by defying expectations.

Weimin’s utterance here might also be interpreted as teasing. According to Boxer and Cortes-Conde (1997), a teasing frame usually occurs only among intimates who have shared conversational history, because such teasing has a high risk in creating conflict and losing face. Furthermore, Attardo (1994) argues that teasing contains an element of criticism toward interlocutors, which might be possible that Weimin is blaming Mohamed’s misunderstanding in a light hearted manner. At line 14, several students join in Weimin’s humorous frame by laughing as a response. Teacher M overlaps with this laughter and says, “okay,” which seemingly attempts to return to the business from the side sequence initiated by Mohamed’s misunderstanding and extended by Weimin’s humor. Nevertheless, students’ laughter still continues, and Weimin further playfully extends a humor sequence to an off-task by saying, “go for a cigarette!” This provides a next relevant laughable. Responding to Weimin’s utterance, the class uptakes his humorous cue by laughing at line 20.

In relation to Weimin’s playful behaviors from lines 12-19, he expressed himself at a stimulated recall interview: “I am just making fun of Mohamed. Because we usually go out for a cigarette after class or during the break” (Interview, April, 4, 2014). Apparently, shared knowledge between Weimin and Momaned is invoked in this humor. It is possible that by sharing knowledge and common ground about this play frame and thus working on an inside joke, they can avoid possible misunderstanding and create a sense of belonging. Weimin even states, “Saying ‘go for a cigarette’, I probably intended to further drag the conversation from the workshop to something more fun. In fact, I was not also participating in the class discussion
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actually. Just a joke” (Interview, April, 4, 2014). Taking these into account, Weimin’s behaviors here are interpreted as strategic humor which seemingly intends to tease Mohamed in order to strengthen solidarity and also to enter into the interaction with playful spirit rather than resolving Mohamed’s miscommunication regarding the workshop. Boxer and Cortes-Conde (1997) argue that teasing creates a bond of solidarity among intimate relations after its successful negotiations, especially through taking the risk of teasing that can weaken relationships and cause a face threat. Also, as Reddington and Waring (2015) rightly claim, subversion of routine and serious tasks by a sequence pivot seems to be a key contributor to humor.

After the laughter by the class, it seems that Teacher M tries to resume discussion about the workshop by saying, “okay, uh:;” This elongation signals that he is going to take over the turn. Yet, it is latched with Mohamed’s uptake of Weimin’s humorous utterance, or “let’s go,” along with smile. This turn clearly exhibits that Mohamed recognizes Weimin’s humorous intention and shows his agreement in humorous construction. It can be argued that the sequences of joking between Weimin and Mohamed from lines 12-23 demonstrate a complex interaction between multiple elements of the classroom ecology: interpersonal relationships among them and use of laughter and smile along with speech. Also, it is evident that Weimin and Mohamed jointly construct humor through “a complex interaction between the person intending a humorous remark and those with the potential of responding” (Holmes & Hay 1997, p. 131).

From line 24 onward, Teacher M finally takes up the conversational floor and restarts the main topic by saying “for the workshop, can I put you (.) for the, monday?” with the emphasis on “workshop” and “monday,” At the same time, Teacher M makes use of another ecological resource in the environment for enhancing explicitness, namely, the projected screen (the information about the workshop) incorporated with his deictic gesture, which equips
Mohamed with visual information beside speech for clarifying his miscommunication (see Figure 5.10). After a very short pause, Mohamed now indicates non-understanding by his utterance, “ma, MONDAY?” produced in a loud voice. This is interpreted as selective repetition that signals only the problematic part to Teacher M. In addition, Mohamed’s gaze shifts from the projected screen to Teacher M, which well links his trouble-source to Teacher M’s utterance. Responding to Mohamed’s repetition, Teacher M minimally answers, “yes!” while nodding, which reveals his agreement. Subsequent to that, there is a 1.5 second silence in which there is no uptake from Mohamed. This gap of silence subtly signals that there is something wrong even after being confirmed by Teacher M. In other words, Teacher M’s situated judgment, namely providing a minimal response, is not adequate enough for Mohamed to resolve his communicative problem. During this silence, many students laugh, which might non-verbally signal that they recognize Mohamed’s unresolved problem.

Subsequent to that, Teacher M uptakes and starts to clarify Mohamed. He starts, “I think, did you get, did you get what we’re doing” During this utterance, Mohamed shows acknowledgement by minimal tokens, “yeah,” overlapped at lines 34 and 36. In particular, at the moment that Teacher M says, “what we’re doing”, he stands up from the chair in front of the podium and walks toward the center of the classroom (see Figure 5.11). Teacher M’s movement here produces a change in the interactional flow and signals that now he is going to get involved in resolving Mohamed’s trouble-source as the activity for the whole class. In other words, the change of his physical location signals that Teacher M puts Mohamed’s miscommunication at center stage.

After that, Mohamed seemingly decides to make his non-understanding more explicit. He starts, “uh, sorry, I was just uh:::,” while gazing downward. This turn demonstrates his negative
politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and hesitation by elongation, looking down, and a gap of silence followed. Here he coordinates such interactional resources in the complex manner to be polite to his teacher. From line 43, he further continues, “I was not really ‘focused’” with a small voice at “focused,” which also implies his hesitation to indicate his inappropriate behavior, namely, that he was not really focused on Teacher M’s talk. Yet, from lines 44-45, he abruptly shifts his frame into something humorous by saying, “what are we supposed to do,” with a smile voice (see Figure 5.12). It seems that after apologizing, Mohamed is now framing his non-understanding into humorous talk especially by using a smile voice, more direct clarification and eye gaze at Teacher M, turning to him for assistance. His smiley-voiced utterance displays a playful stance well. More specifically, by shifting to the humorous frame, Mohamed appears to skillfully enforce the face threat with a lighthearted and playful tone and even sense of amusement for the purpose of making direct clarification about the instructions of the task. Right after that, the class reacts to Mohamed’s humorous intention by laughing. It seems that from the sequential analysis, Mohamed’s turn at lines 44-45 illustrates his strategic use of humor, as signaled by abruptness, smile voice, directness, and eye gaze, which might involve work on protecting face concerns for Teacher M.

The stimulated recall interview with Mohamed supports this interpretation. He reported, “I intentionally did make it humorous since I knew that not being focused is not good and if people laugh, the atmosphere will become less intense and save me.” (Interview, September 20, 2013). Based on this, it can be interpreted that Mohamed was strategically employing laughter, humor, and smile voice for face work and that a lighter atmosphere constructed as the result of achieving laughter and humor enables him to make his non-understanding more explicit for the purpose of meaning negotiation and resolving miscommunication.
As for the possible cause of Mohamed’s miscommunication, it is obvious from the analysis that Mohamed was less attentive to Teacher M’s explanation. Line 5 shows that Mohamed quickly shifts his gaze from his friend to Teacher M, which indicates what he was focusing before (see Figure 5.13). Furthermore, Mohamed honestly said at a stimulated recall interview: “I wasn’t focused at all because I was talking with Quasem when Teacher M asked a question. When he asked a question, I did not realize what he was asking about” (interview, September 20, 2013). In short, based on both sequential analysis and interview, being less focused mainly caused Mohamed’s miscommunication in this case.

To sum up so far, the excerpt above demonstrates that Mohamed overtly signals his misunderstanding and non-understanding verbally, such as “go where?” (line 8) “ma, MONDAY? “ (line 28) and “$what are we supposed to do?$” (line 44). Furthermore, in this excerpt, laughter seemingly contributes to reducing tension and saving face related to Mohamed’s miscommunication, and creating the interactional space to make his non-understanding explicit in a non-face-threatening way for Teacher M. In particular, Weimin’s attempt at humor construction based on Mohamed’s misunderstanding (i.e., teasing) contributes to building a friendly atmosphere and intimacy and rapport among class members through collaborating by laughing. In fact, one of the major functions of humor is constructing friendliness, solidarity, or “positive politeness” (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Lastly, the rather exaggerated nature of Mohamed’s utterance (“what are we supposed to do?”) with a smile voice, which can be strategic, makes his humorous cues explicit and seems to soften its impact on his negative evaluation as a student owing to not paying attention to Teacher M’s talk and instead constructing a positive identity who actively negotiates about unclear points with his teacher.
The next excerpt arises after two students voluntarily explained about the procedures of the workshop, prompted by Teacher M’s request (“somebody explain what we are going to do?”) that happened right after Excerpt 3a. After their explanations, Mohamed responded, “okay, I don’t mind.” to Teacher M, which demonstrates that Mohamed’s non-understanding is now resolved. The excerpt below especially entails the concerns of face-work and politeness between Teacher M and Mohamed.

Excerpt 3b: “it’s not your fault,”

99. ➔ TM: maybe, I am not making it clear, people uh don’t
100. ➔ understand it, >I don’t know.<
101. ➔M: =it’s not your fault,
102. ➔ yea:h, what was not, I thought that, (.)
103. ➔ everyone tries not wanna do,
104. ➔ because that’s like >a lot of work,<
105. ➔Ss: HaH[ahahahaha
106. ➔TM: [{you don’t have to do [any work, right?}
107. ➔ {raises both hands @ chest with
108. ➔ palms facing up and extending all fingers
109. ➔ to right or left side, which possibly
110. ➔ indicates, “I don’t know,” and holds}
111. ➔M: [yea:h,
112. ➔ >I don’t need to do:,< actually, I want it.
113. ➔ because it helps me (take) my essay, so,=
114. TM: =yeah, {that’s the idea.}
115. ➔ {raises RH @ chest with palm facing up
116. ➔ and slightly cupped as if holding something
117. ➔ on palm and holds}
118. ➔ that’s [the point!
119. M: [{{(yeah)}}
120. ➔ {looks at TM}
Figure 5.14. Lines 106-110:
“you don’t have to do any work, right?”
From lines 99-100, after Teacher M returns to the podium from the center of the classroom, he begins, “maybe, I am not making it clear, people uh don’t understand it, >I don’t know.<” This turn shows Teacher M’s politeness through putting the responsibility of Mohamed’s non-understanding on himself. Latched with Teacher M, Mohamed swiftly responds, “it is not your fault.” with prosodic emphasis on “your”, which negates Teacher M’s responsibility for his non-understanding. This turn also shows Mohamed’s politeness as a response to Teacher M. In other words, they align with each other in terms of politeness practice and actively engage on relational work after miscommunication is resolved. Subsequent to that, Mohamed explains the reason why he misunderstood about being a volunteer for the workshop. In particular, “because that’s like a lot of work” at line 104 appears to be an exaggerated remark regarding what to do as a volunteer. It sounds exaggerated because what Mohamed is saying is contradictory from the reality that volunteers do not need any additional work and because he already knew that fact at this point. This utterance can be interpreted as the “nonverdicality” (Kreuz, 1996; Kreuz & Robets, 1995). That is, there is a clear discrepancy between the reality and the utterance. In other words, Mohamed’s remark expresses exaggeration and intends to send his humorous tone. Furthermore, “a lot of work,” is uttered at a quicker tempo, whose signal is that he shifts his
frame into something humorous. Such humorous intentions are taken up by the laughter from the whole class at line 105.

Responding to Mohamed’s exaggerated utterance, Teacher M further makes a confirmation check although he probably assumes that Mohamed already understood. He says, “you don’t have to do any work, right?” while raising both hands at chest level with palms facing up and extending to his right or left (see Figure 5.14). Especially, his use of “right” in a rising intonation signals his intention of making a confirmation check with Mohamed. Reacting to Teacher M, Mohamed first displays agreement by a minimal token, “yea:h,” and then goes on, “I don’t need to do:, actually, I want it.” In particular, “actually, I want it.” displays Mohamed’s change of attitude towards being a volunteer from something to be avoided (his first response, “I don’t mind”) to something “desirable” after going through this sequence of miscommunication. Subsequent to that, Mohamed further explains the reason why he realizes that the workshop is “helpful” by saying, “because it helps me my essay, so,” while accentuating “me” prosodically. Finally, Teacher M emphatically affirms Mohamed’s newer understanding by saying, “yeah, that’s the idea, that’s the point!” while putting an emphasis on “idea” and an animated tone in the end. In response, Mohamed provides a back-channelling. It is observed that even after Mohamed appears to achieve understanding, both interlocutors try to confirm their understanding further in order to avoid possible miscommunication, which exhibits these ELF speakers’ careful attitudes for preventing more miscommunication.

To sum up, Teacher M, Mohamed, and the whole class ended up with achieving clear understanding about the workshop particularly because Teacher M decided to make Mohamed’s non-understanding open to discuss in the whole class, especially exhibited by his physical movement to the center of the classroom. This might be related to his spontaneous pedagogical
decision with regard to checking if other students understand about the workshop. In particular, laughter and humor seemingly serve as preventing a face threatening act related to Mohamed’s miscommunication and creating a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, in which he can comfortably make his misunderstanding and non-understanding explicit and directly ask for clarification. Such direct clarification seemingly contributed to successful negotiation of meaning related to the contents of the workshop. In fact, the collaborative humorous sequence, observed through the uptake of Mohamed and Weimin’s humorous intentions by laughter, might be seen as a sort of “relational practice” (Holmes & Marra, 2004, p. 377) that helps to maintain the interactants’ face and to negotiate consensus. In short, Excerpts 3a and 3b illustrate a point that making miscommunication explicit through use of laughter and humor and actively working towards resolving it led up to beyond achieving mutual understanding; that is, building good relationships between interlocutors in and through the negotiation process.

5.5 Laughter as teasing others and building in-group solidarity

In the present section, we closely examine the sequence of talk that entails laughter that occurred only among a certain group of students in the classroom, which is contrastive to the laughter among the whole class in the previous section. This laughter arises among Singh’s (from India) friends with the same national background when Teacher L shows misunderstanding about his response. In this sequence of talk, the class was learning about four types of claims related to argumentative essays from the teacher-prepared worksheets on the third page. On its first page, there are 12 example statements, each of which is numbered. Teacher L asks the class to choose one statement and to link it with which types of claims are suitable for the chosen topic. After Teacher L nominates Singh, she displays confusion in regard to his response.
**Excerpt 4:** “eight and, uhn, (0.8) second?”

1. **TL:** {uhn,}
2. {points at Singh’s direction with RH}
3. {(1.2)}
4. {looks down at list of students’ names on desk}
5. **S:** {uhn,}
6. {looks down at handout on lap under the desk}
7. **TL:** {Singh?}
8. {shifts gaze to S}
9. (1.0)
10. **S:** {eight}
11. {gazes at first page of handout on lap}
12. {and,}
13. {flips pages}
14. {uhn, (0.8) second?}
15. {looks at third page}
16. (0.5)
17. **TL:** [{second one?}
18. {gazes at first page of handout holding with RH}
19. **S:** [{(quickly looks up to TL)}
20. (0.4)
21. [{eight.}
22. {gazes at TL while widening eyes}
23. **TL:** [{okay,}
24. {gazes at handout}
25. **S:** {“no,” eight and second.}=
26. {body leans toward chair back while gazing at TL}
27. **TL:** ={okay,}
28. {nods once while looking at handout}
29. (0.4)
30. {probably choose one.}
31. {quickly raises RH to the chest level with index finger up, which possibly shows the image of number 1 and holds it}
34. (0.7)
35. → S: {No!}
36. → {quickly looks down at handout on lap while smiling}
37. → {($I’m saying,$)
38. → {looks down at handout while leaning forward}
39. → SH: {haha[ha}
40. → {smirks}
41. → G: {Hahaha, ↑Hahaha}
42. → {body orients back to SH’s direction}
43. → TL: {((smiles and looks down at handout))
44. → S: {(on the first page,
45. → {gazes at TL while smiling}
46. → I chose eight,
47. → G: {khhuhhhhhh,
48. → {covers face with LH while laughing hard; looks in front}
49. S: {and it is, u:h,}
50. → {looks down, flips pages, and looks at third page}
51. → [claims {of cause and effect.}
52. → {gazes back to TL}
53. TL: {O:h!}
54. → {opens mouth widely)
55. → {you >want me to match,<}=
56. → {flips pages of handout, shifts gaze to third
57. → page, and nods head}
58. G: ={{ye:s, ‘yes.’}
59. → {body orients to TL}
60. TL: {{okay,}
61. → {nods}
62. → {okay, I see.}
63. → {looking at third page}
This sequence of talk entails Teacher L’s misunderstanding of Singh’s response, as clearly surfaced in her utterance, “probably choose one.” at line 30. Prior to that, from lines 1-8, Teacher L selects Singh as a person who shares his opinion. Before she calls out his name, Singh already initiates a response through non-verbal vocalization (“u:hn,”) while looking down at the worksheet on his lap. This is probably because Singh recognized Teacher L was pointing at him. From line 10, he provides a response, “eight and, uhn, second?” which will be eventually treated
by Teacher L as a ‘trouble-source.’ Reacting to Singh, Teacher L repeats, “second one?” with rising intonation while gazing at the handout. This is a repetition of part of Singh’s utterance, in which Teacher L probably makes a confirmation about her understanding and brings it into focus. Her repetition of “second” might be also triggered by Singh’s prosodic emphasis on this word. Overlapped with Teacher L’s utterance, Singh quickly looks up and says, “eight.” with its emphasis, which adds what was missing in her repetition. Simultaneously, he directly gazes at Teacher L while widening his eyes. This turn can be interpreted as his repair attempt after he recognizes something not clearly understood by her.

Overlapped with Singh’s “eight,” Teacher L acknowledges him by “okay.” Immediately after that, Singh overtly repairs by saying, “no, eight and second.” with a smaller voice at “no,” Here, he appears to consider politeness by use of smaller voice for negation and also clarifies his answer to Teacher L by connecting two numbers instead of saying them separately. Latched with Singh’s repair, Teacher L displays acknowledgement again by “okay,” and head nods while looking at the handout. Then, she continues, “probably choose one.” During this utterance, she quickly raises her right hand to the chest level with her index finger extended, which imagistically shows the number 1. It becomes clear that Teacher L misunderstands Singh. Namely, she misinterprets that Singh chose two examples from the first page, and she is now requesting him to choose one example and one claim instead. From line 34 onwards, Teacher L’s turn is treated as ‘problematic’ and overtly repaired by Singh. More specifically, after a gap of silence, he explicitly negates her with an animated tone while quickly looking down at the handout on his lap and smiling (see Figure 5.15). This is interpreted as another of Singh’s repair attempts. It is worth noting that he is smiling while saying “No!,” the function of which might be framing his talk into non-threatening and mitigating possible face-threats related to its negation. He
probably smiles, sensitively orienting to the face-threatening nature of its directness especially because his negation here is more powerful than line 25 (“no,”). At lines 37-38, Singh starts with a metadiscourse marker (“I’m saying,”) with a smile voice, which seemingly sends the signal that he is going to rephrase his original utterance. Perhaps prompted by Singh’s smiling talk, Sharma and Gupta (both from India) initiate laughing. In particular, Sharma laughs and smirks, and Gupta who sits in the first row laughs in elevated volume and with high pitch while looking behind at Sharma (in the second row), which clearly shows his orientation to Sharma and Singh (in the third row) (see Figure 5.16).

In fact, their laughter can be considered a ‘problematic’ action because it seems to cast Teacher L’s previous utterance as laughable together with Singh. It can be argued that Sharma and Gupta’s laughter seems to function as joining in Singh’s humorous frame and also teasing him for building in-group solidarity. This interpretation is reinforced because of the observation that none of the other classmates participated through laughing despite the fact that a few students attended to their laughter by eye gazes (see Figure 5.17). In other words, people outside this group did not get it. This type of laughter observed here shows a rather different image on ELF interactions since many studies have so far demonstrated the collaborative nature of ELF interactions in general. As Jenks (2012) observes, ELF interactants at times highlight troubles through using laughter and joking, and ridicule others depending on specific interactional contexts and communicative goals. This invokes the sense that there might be ‘closed’ solidarity only among friends in ELF or any other interactions. In other words, shared laughter among Singh, Sharma and Gupta only may be used to display affiliation among their ethnic group and alienating those who are not involved in the laughter. As Liebscher and Dailey-O’cain (2013)
suggest, laughing together “can simultaneously be laughing at by establishing nonalliances leaving out those who are not involved in the laughter” (p.253).

Probably influenced by Sharma and Gupta’s laughter, at line 43 Teacher L also smiles (see Figure 5.18), which is interactionally aligned. Teacher L’s smile following her students’ laughing, which rather entails the elements of teasing, can be a way of dealing with their face-threatening acts through non-verbal means without providing comments verbally. Singh then starts to explicate by saying, “on the first page,” while gazing at her and still smiling. Then, he adds, “I chose eight,” Overlapped with this utterance, Gupta is still laughing, more specifically giggling, which is recognizably different from his much stronger laughter at line 41, since he covers his face with his left hand (see Figure 5.19). It appears that Singh and Gupta still keep the humorous frame. Then, at lines 49-52, Singh completes his turn by saying, “and it is, u:h, claims of cause and effects.” as signaled by the falling intonation.

Overlapped with Singh’s utterance, Teacher L eventually signals her newer understanding with a change of state token (Heritage, 1984), or “O:h!” while opening her mouth widely. Then, she further confirms her newer understanding by saying, “you >want me to match,<” One interesting issue is that responding to Teacher L’s turn, Gupta provides an agreement token, “ye:s, “yes.”” as a confirmation that her newer understanding is correct. It is unique that rather than Singh, his classmate confirms her understanding. Based on this, it can be interpreted that Gupta claims his understanding and supports Singh. Right after that, Teacher L says, “okay, okay, I see.” while nodding and looking at the third page of the handout. As such, it can be said that mutual understanding is achieved between Singh and Teacher L at this point.

As for the factors causing Teacher L’s misunderstanding, one potential is that Singh’s utterance was ambiguous from Teacher L’s perspective, which required some clarification for
achieving understanding. In fact, as Kaur (2011b) has found out, ambiguity is one of the most common causes of misunderstanding in ELF interactions. In particular, his utterance only contained two numbers (“eight and second?”) and did not explain the relationship initially.

Stimulated recall interview with Teacher L supports this interpretation: “I couldn’t understand at all what Singh was talking…When I said, ‘Oh, match,’ then I understood what Singh meant. But it took me like several seconds to understand what he was doing” (Interview, November 21, 2013). From this interview, it is found that Teacher L seemingly did not expect the way that he responded and that she needed some time to figure out what his response meant. Another possible cause for this misunderstanding might be associated with Teacher L’s unfamiliarity to Singh’s ways of speaking English, which became clear from the interview. She expresses a sense of difficulty in listening to Singh:

_Students like Gupta and Sharma understood Singh very well because all are Indian. That is interesting… For some reasons, these students are very difficult for me. Still now. Very difficult. I mean, I have to put much effort to understand them. Singh has almost missed all the classes. So I don’t have a chance to adjust my hearing_ (Interview, November 21, 2013).

Considering the interview data above, Teacher L claims that she is suffering from understanding Singh’s speaking. Such a negative attitude towards Singh’s English might lead to her misunderstanding. Lastly, another possible cause is Teacher L’s initial lack of attention to Singh’s coordinated action with the worksheet during his verbal explanation, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, whose focus is on functions of material objects.

To sum up, Excerpt 4 illustrates the negotiation process in which Teacher L and Singh try to construct mutual understanding after Teacher L’s misunderstanding is overtly surfaced.
The use of laughter and smile among Singh, Gupta, and Sharma, who share the national background, appear to be a powerful resource for enhancing social bonds among in-group members through teasing and excluding other class members, and making mutual understanding among people with same backgrounds explicit. On the one hand, it is interpreted as a convergence strategy that can achieve shared-ness and in-groupness. On the other hand, it can be also considered as a divergence strategy, which is one type of accommodation strategy (see Giles et al, 1987; Giles & Coupland, 1991) that makes differences obvious. In fact, such divergence might help others in the classroom achieve understanding through attending to the differences.

Furthermore, such in-group solidarity based on their mutual understanding potentially became support for Singh in dealing with Teacher L’s misunderstanding. In short, it is demonstrated that there might be complex features of laughter for the purpose of teasing a friend and possibly Teacher L involved in misunderstanding, negotiating alliances, building solidarity among a group of members who share nationalities and who probably understand one another better, excluding other class members, and making differences explicit.

5.6 Laughter as letting it pass and constructing humor

The present section illustrates the other functions of laughter that lets non-understanding pass, powerfully shifts the topic to something different, leads to humor that entertains class members, and consequently empowers the self as an English user through constructing humor successfully. The sequence of talk below happened after the group activity in which a couple of students had developed a thesis statement together along with supporting arguments. This sequence was already discussed in Excerpt 3 in Chapter 4, where gesture was used meaningfully for raising explicitness and dealing with non-understanding right after Jacob overtly signaled non-understanding regarding Mohamed’s idiomatic phrase. Jacob is a leader of a group (the main
argument for the group is “People should consume less and save more.”) and in charge of a role of arguing against Mohamed in the other group. All groups’ thesis and supporting arguments were written on the blackboard prior to this debate. Furthermore, as a representative of the group, Jacob keeps standing while Mohamed sits.

Excerpt 5a: “you’re just harming your own pocket.”

1. J: so:, {I mean, we should consume}
2. {points at blackboard twice with RH’s index finger stretched @ neck level,}
3. {less,}
4. {makes U-shape with index finger and thumb, and other fingers curled}
5. but not, (. ) do not consume.
6. {(0.8)}
7. M: {((shifts gaze to blackboard in front))}
8. J: you know, what I mean? uh,=
9. L: ={uh[uhuhuh}
10. J: ={nods several times}
11. J: [just like, my mobile phone,
12. and, if I throw it, broken, {and,}= 
13. {looks down}
14. M: =you shouldn’t buy a new [one. (can) fix it.
15. J: [yeah, I don’t 
16. buy a new one.
17. (0.5)
18. M: okay, {yeah!}
19. {quickly raises RH with its thumb up @ chest}
20. okay, yeah. ((nods))
21. J: [yeah, it- it- could
22. I can use it for more years and keep using it.
23. (0.8) so that’s what I mean.
24. (2.0)
25. M: but that- is that,
26. {affecting you:,}
29. {raises RH @ upper chest with thumb up and other fingers curled}
30. {or you’re affecting like community,}
31. {points at J’s direction with RH thumb up}
32. ➔ {or you are just affecting your own pocket, hh,}=
33.➔ {points at J’s direction with RH thumb up and holds it}
34.➔ J: =[hahaha,
35.➔ Ss: =[HaHaHaHaha,
36.➔ M: {>if you getta go and buy a new phone,<>}
37.➔ {points at J’s direction three times with RH @ upper chest, with thumb up and other fingers curled}
38.➔ just because you broke your screen,
39.➔ >I mean,< (.)
40.➔ {you are not (.)}
41.➔ {moves RH forward @ chest}
42.➔ {harming >anyone,<}
43.➔ {clenches fist with RH}
44.➔ {you’re just}
45.➔ {holds fist with RH and points at J’s direction}
46.➔ harming your own pocket.=
47.➔ X: =˚yeah˚ ( )
48.➔ (1.5)
49.➔ M: {right?}
50.➔ {tilts neck to right while gazing at J, smiling with all fingers on his chin}
51.➔ S?: huh-huh-huh,
52.➔ J: {sorry,}
53.➔ {shakes head}
54.➔ I didn’t get it. uh:,
As mentioned, this sequence of talk entails Jacob’s non-understanding, as overtly signaled by his utterance, “sorry, I didn’t get it.” at lines 55 and 57. Preceding to that, from lines 1-7, Jacob is defending his group’s main arguments by saying, “so, I mean, we should consume less, but not, (...) do not consume.” In particular, at lines 2-3, Jacob employs pointing at the blackboard to direct Mohamed’s attention toward the information there. This embodied action is oriented to by Mohamed, observed in his gaze shift toward the blackboard during a gap of silence at lines 8-9. Also, while saying “less,” Jacob employs a rather conventional gesture, or making a U-shape with an index finger and a thumb, which signifies the meaning of “a little.” At line 10, Jacob provides a comprehension check, “you know what I mean?” to ask if Mohamed is following him. In particular, “you know” invokes the sense of now known-in-common after achieving mutual
attention to the information on the blackboard and going through the discussion sequence among them.

From line 13 onward, Jacob starts to provide an example about a mobile phone to explicate the thesis statement. Latched with Jacob’s turn at lines 14-15 (saying “and,” while looking down), Mohamed states, “you shouldn’t buy a new one.” In particular, Mohamed’s addition to Jacob’s previous turn is construed as “co-creating the message” (Björkman, 2014, p. 133) or anticipation (Kirkpatrick, 2007). What this indicates is that these two speakers fill in the blanks in each other’s utterances in an effort to produce a complete utterance. This type of communicative strategy can build a collaborative atmosphere and lead to building relationships among interlocutors although the interactional frame here should be rather competitive, given the nature of the debate activity. Overlapped with Mohamed’s collaborative completion, Jacob shows agreement by saying, “yeah, I don’t buy a new one.” at lines 17-18, which is clearly built on Mohamed’s utterance. Then, at lines 20-22, Mohamed is also line with Jacob by displaying agreement emphatically. Namely, he repeats, “okay, yeah! okay, yeah.” nods, and uses gesture (right hand’s thumb up) to acknowledge Jacob.

Overlapped with Mohamed’s emphatic agreement, at lines 23-24 Jacob further continues the explanation of his main point: continuing to use a mobile phone instead of buying a new one. At line 25, Jacob seems to complete his turn with a discourse marker, “so that’s what I mean.” By doing this, Jacob most likely makes explicit that he completes his explication. Right after that, there is a 2.0 second silence in which Mohamed does not take up the next turn. Then, after this long gap of silence, Mohamed suddenly shifts his stance from agreement to disagreement, overtly marked by a contrastive discourse marker, “but” (Schiffrin, 1987). Mohamed goes on to explain, “that’s affecting you; or you’re affecting like community, or you are affecting your own
pocket,” while accentuating each word prosodically: “you:” “community,” and “affecting.” Simultaneously, he coordinates a series of deictic gestures pointed at Jacob’s direction with emphasized words (see Figure 5.20). By doing this, Mohamed seems to actively play a role of the devil’s advocate required in this specific interactional context. In the end of this utterance, Mohamed also adds a laughter token (“hh”), which appears to invite laughing to others (Jefferson, 1979; Glenn, 2003) (see Figure 5.20). By providing laughter, he sends the signal that his utterance should be interpreted as a playful frame or non-seriousness. In fact, at lines 35-36, Mohamed’s laugh invitation is successfully taken up by Jacob and classmates and gives rise to the shared laughter (see Figure 5.21).

After receiving laughter from Jacob and other classmates, from line 37 onwards, Mohamed further elaborates his counter-argument. Namely, he starts in a very quick tempo, “if you getta go and buy a new phone,” while pointing toward Jacob’s direction three times with his thumb up. Then, he goes on to explain, “just because you broke your screen,” Then, he inserts a discourse marker, “I mean,” and a micro pause, which subtly signals a shift in his talk, and then utters, “you are not harming anyone, you’re just harming your own pocket.” At the same time, Mohamed crunches a fist with his right hand and points toward Jacob with it when saying “you’re just.” At line 50, there is a silence (1.5 seconds) within which there is no uptake from Jacob. It can be argued that this silence might signal something wrong with Mohamed’s previous turn. Perhaps because there is no clear reaction from Jacob, Mohamed takes up the following turn and states, “right?” with a rising intonation while tilting his neck to his right, gazing at Jacob and smiling (see Figure 5.22). Mohamed’s turn here functions as directly prompting Jacob to provide an ensuing reaction. After Mohamed’s “right?” someone in the class briefly laughs, and then Jacob eventually takes up the next turn by saying, “sorry, I didn’t get it. uh:,” while shaking
his head. His initiation with “sorry,” displays negative politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It seems that Jacob considers his signaling of non-understanding or “open-class repair initiator” as impolite to Mohamed.

It appears from the sequential analysis above that Mohamed’s utterance, “harming your own pocket.” at line 48 is treated as a ‘trouble-source’ by Jacob. This interpretation is also corroborated through the stimulated recall interview. Jacob stated, “I still do not get what Mohamed means by ‘harm a pocket.’ At that time, I was wondering ‘harm a pocket’ means physical pocket or money” (Interview, July 18, 2013). This interview data reveals that Jacob’s non-understanding is trigged by Mohamed’s idiosyncratic phrase. Jacobs even states, “‘Harms a pocket’ is not familiar to me…There are many idioms and slangs unfamiliar to me” (Interview, July 18, 2013). Taking this factor into account, it seems that Jacob assumed Mohamed’s utterance to be an idiomatic phrase that is not familiar to him.

Interestingly, based on a sequential analysis, it becomes clear that prior to Jacob’s overt signaling of non-understanding, he seemingly chose to “let it pass” (Firth, 1996) in the earlier sequence at line 35. This is because, responding to Mohamed’s similar utterance, “you are just affecting your own pocket,” Jacob probably used laughter as a filler to let the matter pass and joined in laughing without clear understanding, which he may pretend to understand Mohamed, whose similar interactional phenomenon was observed in Wong’s (2000) study. This is probably because Jacob thought that the later sequence of talk would clarify his non-understanding about this phrase or because he laughs just to support and preserve Mohamed’s positive face needs. In other words, laughter might have a function of “letting non-understanding pass.”

To sum up so far, Excerpt 5a exhibits the process in which Mohamed’s utterance is first treated as non-problematic through Jacob’s joining in laughing or ‘let it pass,’ and later oriented
as ‘problematic’ through Jacob’s overt signal of non-understanding. It seems that Jacob is aware of his potential risk for face-threat involved with repair, evidenced by his use of “sorry.” However, this overt repair initiation might be chosen by his personal attitude, which emerged through stimulated recall interview. Jacob shared his idea: “When I do not understand it, I think that I should ask others to explain more. Otherwise, there will be more problems. Although a little bit shameful, I think misunderstanding is common among non-native speakers” (Interview, July 18, 2013). It can be argued that such multilingual students’ attitude affects how to react to non-understanding in the classroom.

The following excerpt illustrates the intriguing phenomenon in which Jacob powerfully constructs humor using a famous slogan from a TV commercial and successfully lets the whole class laugh. It appears from the sequential analysis that Jacob does not clearly understand Mohamed’s idiosyncratic phrase, “harming your own pocket” even after going through the negotiation sequence happened right before it, where Mohamed attempted to clarify by using a series of metaphoric gestures (see Excerpt 3b in Chapter 4 in details). However, Jacob’s rather spontaneous use of laughter and constructing humor successfully reduces tension related to his non-understanding, shifts the topic that he does not understand to something different, and consequently empowers Jacob as an ELF user. Moreover, in this sequence, the cellphone alarm appears to have an impact on the interactional flow, which drastically leads to interactional convergence between Jacob and Mohamed.

**Excerpt 5b:** “so, uhn, just do it!”

97. J:   {so uh, >what I mean is,< (.) u:hn, (1.0) wh- when, (.)}
98.     {gaze keeps down}
99.     {we have to do}
100.    {shifts gaze to M}
101.    something, so, uhn,
102.➔ {just do it!}
103.➔ {raises RH to right side with palm facing up slightly cupped}
104.➔ {and,}
105.➔ {holds RH in same posture at lines 103-104}
106.➔ {hah [Hahaha}
107.➔ {smiles}
108.➔ M: [{hhh}
109.➔ {smiles}
110.➔ Ss: [HaHaHa[ha ha ha
111.➔ M: [(NIKE?
112.➔ [((points at J with LH index finger several times while laughing))
113.➔ Ss: [HaHaHaHaHa[Ha ha ha
114.➔ J: [keep it, using for, for long time, so, do not buy new things,
115.➔ instead of using it.
116.➔ because uh,
117.➔ if (uhn, everyone)
118.➔ [draws a circle with BH in front twice, first circle starting from closer to body and then another starting from space away from body}
119.➔ on this earth,
120.➔ [(phone alarm starts to ring))
121.➔ J: [they (. ) uh, ((looks down))
122.➔ (1.0)
123.➔ M: {'yeah,'}=
124.➔ (quickly looks at teacher’s direction in front while nodding ;puts LH near chin, making beats twice)
125.➔ J: =>they throw away< their things, that can be used longer?
134. it will cause a lot of trash.
135. (. ) it’s hard to deal with. (. )
136. and, our ear- ear- earth,
137. gonna be
138.➔ [{occupied, (. ) uh, with,}]
139.➔ {smiles at Teacher’s direction in front}
140.➔TM: [((walks from left to right side of classroom in front
141.➔ while gazing at J))]
142.➔M: [{I see,}]
143.➔ {nods many times and gazes at TM}
144. J: [{lo- lots of}`
145. {draws a large circle with BH in front, starting
146. from chest level to downward while gazing at
147. Teacher M’s direction}
148.➔ rubbish. {that’s right?}
149.➔ {gazes back to M}
150.➔M: {that’s true.}
151.➔ {nods while gazing at J and then shifts gaze to Teacher}

Figure 5.23. Lines 107-108: Figure 5.24. Lines 112-114: Figure 5.25. Lines 111:
“hah Hhaha” “NIKE?” “HaHaHahahaha”
In the very beginning of this sequence, Jacob suddenly shifts the topic into the points that he discussed before from Mohamed’s counter-argument and then moves into his humorous talk. More specifically, at lines 97-98, Jacob starts, “so uh, what I mean is, u:hn, wh- when” while looking down. It is worth noting that he uses a metadiscourse marker, “what I mean is,” with a quicker pace, which signals the change of the topic. This turn also suggests a sense of hesitation, as observed in several hesitation markers (“uh,” and “u:hn,”), gaps of silence, cut-off, and looking down. Jacob then continues, “we have to do something, so uhn,” while shifting his gaze back to Mohamed. At line 102, Jacob abruptly moves into the humorous frame with the punch line, “just do it!” with an emphasis on “do” and animated tone. This punchline employed by Jacob originates from a Nike slogan used widely in their commercial and familiar to many people. In other words, “to laugh with” does not probably require special knowledge. This might indicate that Jacob is spontaneously providing a very clear playful frame and contextualization cue to indicate the humorous nature of his utterance to Mohamed and other classmates.

Right after this punch line, at line 105, he adds, “and,” and starts laughing himself (see Figure 5.23). Jacob’s unilateral laughter seems to function as his invitation to co-laugh (Jefferson, 1979; Glenn, 2003) to other people and provide a humorous cue that his previous turn should be treated as funny. The following sequence demonstrates Mohamed and other classmates’
successful uptake. Namely, other students reciprocate Jacob’s laughter (see Figure 5.25), and then during the occurrence of other students’ laughter, Mohamed says loudly, “NIKE?” while having his index finger point at Jacob and keep pointing with smile on his face (see Figure 5.24). Mohamed’s turn at lines 112-114 clearly shows his acknowledgement and appreciation of Jacob’s humor in the rather exaggerated manner and joining in and even escalating the degree of the humorous tone that Jacob initiated. It can be said that Mohamed and other students ratify Jacob’s utterance as humorous. Norrick (1993, 2000, 2010) notes that evaluative comments and other collaborative contributions from co-participants for humor construction can heighten humor or turn a serious talk into an amusing one. In other words, Mohamed interactionally aligns with Jacob in treating the previous utterance as a conversational humor (Boxer & Cortes-Conde, 1997). Moreover, through joining in this humor, Mohamed probably considers Jacob’s positive face wants despite the fact that Jacob does not address his counter-argument at all. In other words, Mohamed and Jacob’s shared laughter might contribute to uniting them in a clear bond and building rapport among them more than discussing content levels.

Although other students still keep laughing, Jacob restarts explaining about his stance in the serious manner from line 116, which is considered the continuation of his previous topic. Holt (2011) argues that shared laughter often implicates topic termination, but only when there is resolution of the matters at hand. Thus, it can be argued that even after he achieved shared laughter with Mohamed and other classmates by his joke, Jacob still perceives that the same topic should be pursed. At lines 116-118, he repeats the similar statement mentioned in Excerpt 5a that people should keep using old things for a long time instead of buying new ones. Then, from line 119-124, Jacob is explaining the reason why people should not buy new things. He says, “because uh, if uh, everyone” while he draws a circle in his front twice. It appears that
with this iconic gesture he is spatially visualizing the image of the earth, which will be mentioned soon later, “on this earth,” at line 125. At the same time, he also highlights the words, “this” and “earth,” through the prosodic mode.

From line 126 onwards, the sound of the cellphone alarm drastically influences the interactional flow. As important contextual information, this alarm is set up intentionally by Teacher M so that everyone can recognize that the debate time is almost up. In other words, the sound of cellphone has a specific connotation in this classroom and its meaning is shared among class members. At line 126, the alarm starts to ring, and overlapped with this sound, Jacob still continues his explanation, “they uh,” and looks down. After a gap of silence, Mohamed provides a back-channeling, “yeah,” with a smaller voice while looking at Teacher M’s direction and nodding. At the same time, Mohamed also indicates his bodily orientation to Jacob and makes a beat twice with his left hand near his chin, which is probably intended to signal that Jacob should continue his explanation (see Figure 5.26). Mohamed’s turn here not only acknowledges Jacob’s utterance and shows his orientation to him but also demonstrates his newer attention to Teacher M owing to the alarm, exhibited by his eye gaze. Besides Mohamed, Jacob also shows his recognition of the time constraint, especially at lines 138-139, where he smiles in Teacher M’s direction during his utterance (see Figure 5.27). At the same time, Teacher M walks from the front-left to the front-right of the classroom while gazing at Jacob, which has an impact on Jacob’s non-verbal behavior.

Right after demonstrating Jacob’s attention to Teacher M, Mohamed rather emphatically shows his agreement by back-channeling, “I see,” at lines 142-143 while nodding many times. Furthermore, at this moment Mohamed gazes at Teacher M rather than Jacob (see Figure 5.28), which clearly displays his sensitiveness to the time constraint. Overlapped with Mohamed’s “I
see,” Jacob states, “lo- lots of” while drawing a large circle in front and gazing at Teacher M. Then, at line 148, Jacob completes his turn by saying, “rubbish. that’s right?” Especially when he uses a comprehension check, “that’s right?” his gaze shifts back to Mohamed temporally. Reacting to this comprehension check, Mohamed says, “that’s true,” while nodding and gazing at Jacob. Finally Mohamed shifts his gaze to Teacher M, which seemingly sends the message that the debate is completed at this point and returns the floor to Teacher M. In short, as seen, after the alarm starts ringing, both Jacob and Mohamed proficiently orient to its shared meaning without the need of verbal speech, clearly demonstrated by the shifts of their eye gaze towards Teacher M and Mohamed’s usage of back-channelings. In regard to the relationship between the alarm and his use of back-channeling, Mohamed shared his perspective:

In the beginning, I was attacking Jacob, so I did not give him harm feeling any more. I feel that I should have smooth ending. Phone alarm let me stop argument since I thought I had to finish now. But also, I wanted to be friendly (Interview, September 20, 2013).

Taken it into consideration, it appears that because of the time constraints signified by the alarm, Mohamed chose not arguing further, let Jacob complete his argument, and showed his agreement and friendliness in the end.

As for the outcome of this whole sequence of talk, from the sequential analysis, it seems that Jacob did not achieve complete understanding about Mohamed’s idiosyncratic phrase, “harm your pocket.” This is particularly because Jacob does not directly address Mohamed’s question and instead changes it into the humorous sequence. During the stimulated recall interview, Mohamed said, “I think Jacob understood my question, but he was not just ready to answer it. His phrase, ‘just do it.’ shows his panic” (Interview, September 20, 2013). On the other hand,
Jacob expressed that he still does not get what Mohamed exactly means by “harms a pocket” even after watching the video clip at the interview. Taken all these into account, the outcome can be partial understanding.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that although Jacob does not seem to understand Mohamed completely, the conversation goes forward without communication breakdown and even more importantly, Jacob powerfully changes the interactional flow into a humorous frame through his use of a punch line and unilateral laughter as an invitation to co-laugh. In other words, through this abrupt change of the topic and humor construction, Jacob showcases his agency and competence in controlling the interactional flow and projects a more positive image of himself as an English speaker rather than being an English learner stuck with an issue of non-understanding. As van Dam (2002) and Garland (2010) rightly put it, through using humor, language learners can appropriate and experiment with language, and risk making mistakes or sounding silly, while the face-threats inherent in classroom participation are mitigated. Also, as Davies (2003) argues, the ability to produce and understand humor has been recognized as a component of communicative competence in a L2. In fact, through the very experience of producing something misfit and being ratified as humorous by his classmates, Jacob might get a lesson on how to successfully do humor in his L2. In particular, constructing humor achieved through simultaneous laughter among his classmates contributes to the positive outcome besides L2 learning. As Haakana (2002) argues, “(s)haring laughter is seen to exhibit such positive interactional features as intimacy, affiliation and alignment and to be sharing of a similar sense of humour, a similar attitude towards something” (p. 218).

Regarding this humor act, Jacob expressed his idea: “‘Just do it.’ always appears in the TV advertisements of Nike. I thought it is amazing that I have the ability to make everyone laugh
and be happy” (Interview, July 18, 2013). It seems that Jacob feels excited to make everyone laugh with his joke despite the fact that he did not clearly understand Mohamed’s question. Furthermore, Jacob told me that right after this class he asked for Mohamed’s phone number and became a good friend with him. It seems that inside and outside of the classroom interaction, Jacob and Mohamed were engaging in “the ‘work’ individuals invest in negotiating relationships with others” (Locher & Watts, 2005, p. 10). It also appears that this miscommunication-related interaction offered them an opportunity to know each other better and to build friendship. Thus, Jacob’s humor here seems to foster a social relationship as well as his multicompetent self (Belz, 2002). In other words, this non-understanding phenomenon enables them to construct something beyond mutual understanding, namely, close relationships and confidence as an English user that will potentially lead to successful management of intercultural communication in future interactional encounters.

Regarding causes for Jacob’s non-understanding, as indicated earlier, one major reason is associated with Mohamed’s idiosyncratic use of language, “harms your own pocket.” It seems that Mohamed uniquely appropriates an idiomatic phrase, “hurts your pocket.” This finding rather contradicts Kecskes’s (2007) argument regarding semantic transparency. According to Kecskes, ELF speakers tend to avoid the use of less transparent expressions which involve figurative or metaphoric expressions or idioms in order to raise comprehensibility. Instead, they frequently use fixed semantic units, phrasal verbs, and speech formulas in which there is more semantic transparency than in idioms or situation-bounded utterances. Based on the excerpts 5ab, it seems that using idiomatic phrases (especially idiosyncratic ones) easily leads to miscommunication in ELF interactions.
Besides such a lexical problem, through the stimulated recall interview with Jacob other possible factors emerged:

Mohamed’s *pronunciation is not familiar to me*. Also, his speaking is *a little bit quick and unclear*. From my perspective, *Mohamed should slow down* to make what he thinks important… *I came to the U.S. two weeks ago, it is a challenge to speak English. Now it is an adopting stage. So talking longer and fast distracts me* (Interview, July 18, 2013).

Based on this interview, it becomes clear that multiple layers of communicative factors might contribute to non-understanding in the interrelated manner (Linell, 1995). In other words, it is hard to identify a sole cause of miscommunication. In particular, it is intriguing that Jacob is requesting Mohamed to slow down for achieving mutual understanding. In fact, it is observed in Excerpt 5a at lines 37 and 41 for example that Mohamed at times speaks faster, which is in line with the comment that Jacob mentioned in the interview.

In summary, Excerpt 5a demonstrates the process in which Jacob overtly signals non-understanding after he seemingly ‘let it pass’ first with joining in with laughter. On the other hand, Excerpt 5b shows the function of laughter that reduces tension related to non-understanding and constructs humor and laughing among all members in the classroom, which is rather contrastive to in-group laughter in the previous section. Lastly, the result of Jacob’s successfully constructing humor seemingly leads to empowering and providing him legitimacy as an English user although in fact he does not achieve clear understanding and he does not respond to Mohamed’s counter-arguments. Jacob’s humor observed here can be construed as a strategy to avoid his non-understanding topic, which skillfully saves face and construct his positive identity through constructing humor successfully. In particular, Excerpt 5b shows some
evidence that miscommunication phenomena can provide an invaluable opportunity to build relations and friendship among interlocutors after going through miscommunication phenomena together.

5.7 Long silence as signaling challenge and pedagogical consideration

So far this chapter has mainly examined a variety of functions of laughter in multilingual writing classroom interactions, including signaling non-understanding, avoiding controversial topics, signaling something idiosyncratic for raising the possibility of intelligibility, reducing tension, saving face, teasing and building in-group solidarity, letting it pass, and constructing humor among all class members. Now the final section focuses on more complex functions of silence, which are beyond a signal of non-understanding discussed already. While it is true that silence and laughter have different functions, I choose discussing them together in the present chapter. That is because they often co-exist in miscommunication sequences in the complicated manner, as observed in excerpts above. In other words, there is some internal link between two phenomena. One possibility is that laughter is a useful interactional resource for filling in silence in order to fulfill a turn. However, the following excerpt is an exception in which no laughter occurs along with silence.

In the following excerpt, long gaps of silence, in particular more than 5 seconds, appear twice. In the sequence of talk, Teacher L is discussing the guidelines for an analytic essay in whole class. On the projected screen, Teacher L put 19 key words related to the detailed requirements for analytic essays, and she let each student to verbally explain one key word that she assigned. Gabriel (from Ecuador) was assigned to explain the second point (“read a lot”) and tried to explain about it. After his explanation, Teacher L adds a question (“what the subject
could be?"), and then long silence ensues several times, which seems to involve beyond the signal of non-understanding among them.

**Excerpt 6: "what subject?"**
1. TL: {we are}
2. {points at G’s direction with RH’s index finger}
3. number two now.
4. (0.4)
5. {if it is okay, (. ) hu-huh?}
6. {looks at G’s direction while smiling}
7. (0.8)
8. G: {Ah:, in order to be able to make a report?}
9. {leans body to chair on back throughout}
10. you have to read (. ) a lot
11. about the (. ) subject (0.5)
12. we are writing about.
13.TL: and what the subject (. ) could be?
14. (0.5)
15.G: {what a? (.)}
16. {raises eyebrows}
17. [sub?
18.TL: [{what’s}
19. {quickly opens up BH @ chest to left or ride, palms facing each other inward}
20. the subjects? (0.5)
21. {what kind of}
22. {does similar movements with BH in smaller amplitude at lines 19-20}
23. subjects (. ) could be?
24. [{for,}
25. {points at her right with RH, palm facing up}
26. G: [What subject?
27. (0.4)
28. TL: {for an analytic}
29. {points at her right again with RH and holds}
essay, what kind of subjects,

(0.8)

➔

(A:::hn,}

➔

{both eyes slightly look up}

(5.0)

➔

((looks down and remains gaze downward))

(7.0)

➔

is it about [any case of dishonesty?]

➔

([(looks up to TL))

(1.5)

➔

for- for- the one, >in this class?<

➔

{Yeah,} [(        )

➔

{further leans body toward chair on back}

➔

(yeah,}

➔

{raises BH @ chest in parallel with palms facing
down,and then suddenly drops}

we’re talking about,

➔

analytic essay, right?=

➔

{oh, >yeah, yeah.<}=

➔

{keeps leaning body toward chair on back and nods a few times}

➔

=so, it’s about >any case of dishonest- <

➔

{dishonesty,}

➔

{raises BH in parallel @ chest, with flat palms facing up}

➔

>what else?<=

➔

{uh:n,}=

➔

{keeps eye gazes down while opening mouth}

➔

{>it’s like,}<

➔

{raises BH @ higher chest in parallel, palms facing each
other inward}

➔

(1.2)

➔

'uhm,'

➔

(2.5)
64. {frauds, right?}
65. {does similar movement with BH at lines 56-57}
66. (0.8) {hoaxes?}
67. ➔ G: {((looks up his right side while opening mouth largely))}
68. TL: the other day, >I mean,< yesterday, I, I watched a historical
69. channel. and they showed, very interesting, uhn,
70. >I would say,< frauds, about uh, crystal skulls?
71. (0.5)it’s a nice discussion. very interesting discussion,
72. very controversial topic, by the way,
73. (1.2)
74. do you (.) did you watch the movie, uhn, Harrison Ford,
75. [(in   )
76. A: [{Indiana Jones,}
77. {directly gazes at TL}
78. TL: {Indiana Jones? yeah!}=
79. {nods several times while smiling}
80. A: ={"no,”}
81. {shakes head several times while smiling}
82. TL: {yeah,}
83. {raises BH @ shoulder, with palms half-cupped and facing up}
84. it’s- it’s a very interesting topic,
85. I would say,
86. {okay,}
87. {quickly points at G’s direction with RH}
88. [thank you, Gabriel?
89. G: {((nods once while looking down))

Figure 5.29. Lines 8-9: “Ah:, in order to be able to
Figure 5.30. Lines 26-27: “for,”
Figure 5.31. Lines 34-35: “A:::hn,”
make a report?”

Figure 5.32. Line 37

Figure 5.33. Lines 43-44
“Yeah.”

Figure 5.34. Lines 50-51: “oh, >yeah, yeah.<”

Figure 5.35. Lines 56-57: “uh:n,“

Figure 5.36. Line 67

From lines 1-6, Teacher L asks Gabriel to explain the second point of the analytic essay requirements by both gazing and pointing in his direction. After a short pause, from lines 8-12, Gabriel provides an explanation about “read a lot” while putting a prosodic emphasis on “a lot.” It is worth noting that he leans his body on his chair throughout his utterance (see Figure 5.29), which shows his rather reluctant attitude. Furthermore, by using a falling intonation in the end (“we are writing about.”), Gabriel clearly signals to Teacher L that he completes his answer. Right after that, Teacher L adds a question, seemingly intending to further clarify Gabriel’s response, or “and what the subject (. ) could be?” This utterance will be treated as a ‘trouble-source’ by Gabriel in the later sequence of talk. After a short gap of silence, it appears that Gabriel verbally and non-verbally indicates non-understanding by saying, “what a? sub?” and raising his eyebrows at the same time. This repetition with a rising intonation can be considered his repair initiation or clarifying what Teacher L meant by “what the subject (. ) could be?”
Overlapped with Gabriel’s repetition, “sub?”, Teacher L also asks a question, “what’s the subjects?” at lines 18-21. She further continues, “what kind of subjects could be?”, which is basically another repetition of her original question. It seems that Teacher L tries to make sure that Gabriel fully understands her question by a series of repetitions. This phenomenon might be closely related to what a number of ELF studies (Cogo, 2009; Hülmbauer, 2009; Hülmbauer et al., 2009; Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Matsumoto, 2011; Mauranen, 2007, 2012; Watterson, 2008) have identified regarding verbal repetition, which is the most common and robust strategies among ELF speakers that can ensure communicative success. Furthermore, at lines 26-27, while adding “for,” Teacher L points at her right where the projected screen is located, which appears to indicate that she is referring to the information about analytic essays (see Figure 5.30). Overlapped with Teacher L’s turn, Gabriel makes a repair attempt at line 28 in a more overt manner by repeating the phrase, “What subject?” with its prosodic emphasis and rising intonation compared with lines 15-17. After a short silence, Teacher L restarts by saying, “for an analytic” while pointing at her right again and holding it. And then, she adds, “essay, what kind of subjects.” Teacher L’s turn at lines 30-32 demonstrates her efforts to make her meaning more explicit and transparent by combing a variety of communicative strategies, including repetition (“what kind of subjects,”), adding specific information (“for an analytic essay,”) and pointing at the projected screen.

Subsequent to the repair sequence related to Teacher L’s question, at line 34 Gabriel noticeably produces a non-verbal vocalization, “A:::hn.” Simultaneously, his eyes slightly look up, which indicates the need to think by himself about her question (see Figure 5.31). In fact, Gabriel’s non-verbal sound and embodied action here are followed by a couple of extremely long silence (lines 36 and 38). More specifically, right after his non-verbal sound, a 5.0 second silence
ensues, and then after that, Gabriel even looks down and maintains his gaze downward (see Figure 5.32), followed by another long gap of silence (7.0 second). First, Gabriel’s gaze shift here rather displays his disengagement in this discussion with Teacher L. That is because gaze is considered “one means available to recipients for displaying to a speaker whether or not they are acting as hearers to the speaker’s utterance” (Goodwin, 1980, p. 277), and the gaze of the recipient is an important way of displaying recipiency (Mortensen, 2009) and for engagement frameworks (Goodwin, 1981).

Also note that 12-second silence in total was recognizably unique and rare in Teacher L’s classroom based on my regular classroom observation. In fact, it is noticed that Teacher L often interrupted her students and provided clues as quickly as possible instead of having long gap of silence like here. Schegloff (2007) defines overlong silences as inter-turn gaps, which “breaks the contiguity of first and second pair part” (p. 67). The reasons why such extremely long silences are sustained here might be twofold. First, Teacher L probably provides enough interactional space to Gabriel to come up with answers himself. Another reason is that there is no clear claim of lack of knowledge from Gabriel, but only his non-verbal cues (i.e., shifting eye gazes up and looking down at lines 35 and 37). Therefore, Teacher L probably waits until she is sure of the potential lack of contributions from Gabriel. The stimulated recall interview complements these interpretations. Teacher L said,

Why I was pausing so long? I was waiting for him. I just see, I am very cautious about him because he is so unhappy, uh, quite often. He is unhappy that I do not agree with his answers, so I decided to just wait, to give him time to give any examples of subjects… I’m trying to be wary of my words to see whether I might be wrong. Who knows? I
want him to be happy in class. That is why I just, okay. I will give him time and see, if it helps (interview on October 15, 2013).

Based on this interview data, the long gaps of silence happened here probably because Teacher L intended to provide more time to wait so that Gabriel could think and respond to her based on his own ideas. In other words, the long silence means Teacher L’s consideration about Gabriel’s potential contribution. In fact, Maroni (2011) describes that long silence as wait time “fosters the pupils’ involvement and the quality of their answers, particularly if it is accompanied by interventions from teachers, encouraging the pupils’ collaborative participation” (p. 2081).

Furthermore, Gabriel’s behaviors of looking down and keeping his gaze downward during the silence without doing any further action rather contributes to ambiguity whether he needs more time or shows lack of knowledge. However, as Nakamura (2004) argues, student silence does not necessarily mean that a student does not know, but could be that the student is weighing the consequences of the potential answer to be given.

Probably because there is no further contribution from Gabriel even after Teacher L provides sufficient time to think, at line 39, Teacher L seemingly decides to deal with the silence by providing a clue, “is it about any case of dishonesty?” while emphasizing “dishonesty” and using a rising intonation. During this utterance, Gabriel looks up to Teacher L, which nonverbally shows his re-engagement with class discussion. However, at line 41, another gap of silence (1.5 second) arises. Then, Gabriel finally provides a verbal response to Teacher L’s prompt. Namely, he states, “for- for- the one, in this class?” and adds, “Yeah.” while further leaning his body toward the chair on his back (see Figure 5.33). Gabriel’s turn here rather demonstrates his reluctant and resistant attitude toward Teacher L, in particular, the manner in
how he says, “Yeah,” as the response to his teacher’s prompt. Gabriel’s negative attitude is further demonstrated in the later sequence as well.

Before that, Teacher L overlaps with Gabriel’s turn with an agreement token, “yeah,” and then adds, “we’re talking about, analytic essay, right?” Here, it seems that by overlapping she potentially interrupts what Gabriel was going to say and by using “right?” Teacher L swiftly makes a confirmation check with him without listening to him carefully. Latched with Teacher L, Gabriel responds, “oh, yeah, yeah.” At the same time, he keeps leaning his body toward the chair on his back and nods a few times (see Figure 5.34). Similar to his previous turn, Gabriel’s turn at lines 50-51 exhibits his reluctant or challenging attitude toward Teacher L, in particular taking into consideration the manner in which he says, “oh, yeah, yeah.” with a quicker pace.

Despite Gabriel’s reluctant attitude and disengagement observed, from line 52 onward, Teacher L still makes an effort to provide more clues in order to let Gabriel raise examples of topics himself. Namely, she says, “so, it’s about any case of dishonest- dishonesty,” and then further prompts by saying, “what else?” Yet, her continuous efforts do not change the situation much, and then Gabriel just produces a non-verbal vocalization (“uh:n,”) while keeping his gaze down and opening his mouth (see Figure 5.35). Latched with Gabriel’s turn, Teacher L further attempts to prompt, “it’s like,” saying in a quicker pace at line 58. However, again two gaps of silence ensue at lines 61 and 63, which display lack of uptake from Gabriel and probably his reluctant stance and disengagement. Subsequent to the gaps of silence, Teacher L further tries to give examples (“frauds,” and “hoaxes?”) and make a confirmation check with Gabriel by using “right?” and rising intonation. However, at line 67, Gabriel looks up his right while opening his mouth largely (see Figure 5.36), which might show his disengagement and lack of interest in the discussion with Teacher L. In fact, while Teacher L has continued to make lots of effort to
provide Gabriel with clues for answering, Gabriel did not exhibit much effort to respond to her. In other words, the sequence above mostly exhibits only one-party’s effort instead of mutual effort.

When interpreting Gabriel’s behaviors in relation to his non-understanding and long silence, the stimulated recall interview with him becomes a support for sequential analysis. Gabriel provides his own perspectives:

I was kind of confused, uh, what she means, what she wants me to say. I didn’t understand her. I kind of blacked out for a second. That’s why I have no response for her for the moment… Because we were talking about general analytic essays. Not for this class. For any class, for anywhere. So, when she introduced the specific topics, were trust issues something like that. *I was kind of confused if she wants me to apply one of these, read a lot to the class,* or she was just, I didn’t understand what she was saying at the moment. *Later, I understood, she was actually applying the subjects of the essay to the general guideline for analytic essays* (Interview on November 5, 2013).

Based on this, it seems that Gabriel’s cause of non-understanding is that he was not clear about the relationship between the general guidelines for analytic essays that the class was discussing and specific topics that Teacher L was trying to get from him.

Furthermore, Gabriel’s rather negative attitude toward Teacher L was also observed in Gabriel’s interview:

When *she tricked the guideline* for only the subjects of this class, the subject of this essay that she wanna us to write about, I was kind of confused. *Later on, I understood, what exactly what she wants me to explain to her.* And how she was gonna connect guideline with the topic of the essay (Interview on November 5, 2013).
Note that Gabriel’s choice of words such as “she tricked the guideline” and “I understood, what exactly what she wants me to explain to her” implies his rather negative emotional reactions to Teacher L. In contrary to Teacher L’s consideration about Gabriel by providing him silence to give time to think, Gabriel’s negative attitude was possibly expressed in the gaps of long silence. Rather than clarifying how the general guidelines for analytic essays are related to specific subjects with Teacher L, it appears that Gabriel chose not to say anything and create long silence, which might strategically show his disengagement and challenging stance to her.

From line 68 onward, it seems that Teacher L shifts the topic to the historical channel that she recently watched and opens up the discussion to the whole class. In particular, she asks a question, “do you (. ) did you watch the movie, uhn, Harrison Ford,” which successfully gets a response from a student, Aadi (from India). However, Teacher L maintains the major focus, “topics for analytic essays” and talks about crystal skulls from Indiana Jones as an example topic of frauds. Finally, at lines 82-85, Teacher L appears to make a final confirmation check with the class by saying, “yeah, it’s- it’s a very interesting topic, I would say,” followed by a token, “okay,” while pointing at Gabriel’s direction. The stimulated recall interview with Teacher L corroborates this interpretation. She said: “It was not only for Gabriel, for the entire class, because I think, I repeated myself several times at least. If they miss my explanation, I mean my first explanation, they might get my second explanation from paraphrase, probably” (Interview on October 15, 2013). It is clear that Teacher L values repeating major points several times in order to make her students understood. At lines 88-89, Teacher L wraps up the discussion by saying, “thank you, Gabriel?” to show her appreciation while Gabriel nods once with his head down. Here again, he exhibits his disengaged attitude by not looking back to Teacher L.
To summarize, this final section specifically illustrates the functions of long silence between a multilingual instructor and student. From an instructor’s perspective, the gaps of long silence are intended to provide her student sufficient time to think and show her special consideration. Instructors who face students’ silence could enhance their ability “to help students move forward through the silence by giving appropriate support such as rephrasing questions and requests” (Nakamura, 2004, p. 79). On the other hand, from the student’s viewpoint, the gaps of silence might indicate his need to think of alternative answers, negative emotions triggered by his non-understanding about his teacher’s question, and a resistant and challenging stance. More specifically, Gabriel had an alternative choice to negotiate his points of non-understanding explicitly with his teacher, but he rather chose not to do so and remained silent for a long time while gazing down. Therefore, it can be argued that silence means different things for each interlocutor and that how long each interlocutor can remain silent with comfort depends on each person and cultural background as well. Thus, the meanings of silence should be considered in two dimensions or two-ways rather than just seeing it as student silence or teacher silence and be intricately negotiated among interlocutors in classroom interactions. Kramsch (2006) argues that the understanding of silence needs complex competencies of interpreting subtle semiotic practices, or symbolic competence, which is the ability to use multiple modalities (e.g., spoken, written, visual, and electronic). The negotiation of silence among multilingual ELF speakers in classroom interactions is an interesting area of research, which needs further investigation in the future.

5.8 Conclusion

With the exception of one excerpt that entails laughter for constructing solidarity among in-group members only and the final one in which long silence ensues several times, probably
exhibiting a student’s resistance or negative attitude toward his teacher, ELF interactions in the multilingual writing classroom context are generally of a cooperative nature as many ELF researchers have hitherto claimed (e.g., House, 1999; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006; Meierkord, 1998, 2000). Students and instructors employed various communicative strategies for resolving miscommunication and also tried to prevent potential miscommunication through comprehension checks by tag markers (e.g., “right?”) and enhanced explicitness including verbal repetition. Moreover, in these ELF interactions the listener worked as hard as the speaker by double-checking whether their understanding was correct and by asking for more information through overtly signaling non-understanding. Therefore, the joint effort among all interlocutors in attending to mutual understanding might be related to the fact that in ELF interactions communicative trouble tends to be rare despite their divergence in terms of language, culture, proficiency, and content knowledge (e.g., Mauranen, 2006a; Kaur, 2011b; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2004). However, based on the data analysis, I do not intend to claim that cooperative and collaborative attitudes are the unique characteristic of ELF interactions only. That is because the nature of ELF interactions can vary like other types of interactions depending on purposes, contexts, and interlocutors.

In particular, it is revealed from the present chapter that laughter and silence function in various ways in ELF interactions in the multilingual writing classroom context. As for the functions of laughter, the analysis demonstrates that multilingual students effectively employ laughter in order to signal non-understanding or something idiosyncratic, avoid and resist controversial topics to discuss, save face, reduce tension through changing the atmosphere into a playful and favorable one, engage in relational work (i.e., building solidarity among certain members or the whole class), and construct humor and project a positive identity that can lead to
empowering self as an English speaker. In short, laughter and humor are identified as the powerful tools to build and maintain rapport and good relationships among students and instructors in the classroom context, which will become a solid foundation for engaging in meaning negotiation and achieving successful communication in future encounters.

Moreover, the analysis observed that silence is mostly used to show a manifestation of communicative problems or non-understandings, which often prompts the interlocutor(s) to repair in the subsequent talk or is followed by laughter. Furthermore, silence, especially a very long and repeated one might serve beyond just the signal of non-understanding, or subtly signaling reluctant or resistant attitudes toward the interlocutor and choice not to negotiate verbally. In addition, from an instructor’s perspective, long silence can be intended to provide enough wait time for students to think and exhibit special consideration in the classroom context.

Finally, the sound of objects may have the specific connotation in the classroom contexts. Namely, the sound of alarm, as observed in Excerpt 5b, dramatically shifted the “process” (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013, p. 782) of the class activities from the debate mode to the friendly ending or interactional convergence. Based on the data analysis, I argue that we should seriously take into account the functions of and meanings of non-verbal vocalizations such as laughter, silence, and other sounds of objects in the classroom in order to examine the complex process in which ELF speakers negotiate understanding and relationship and deal with miscommunication phenomena through coordinating multiple semiotic modes simultaneously.
Chapter 6

Miscommunication and Object in Classroom Ecology:

The Functions of Classroom Artifacts

6.1 Introduction

A classroom environment which is equipped with a variety of material objects and people can become a rich environment that affords ELF speakers with opportunities to exploit those interactional resources for meaning making possibilities besides speech and resolving miscommunication when they encounter communicative problems. In particular, it is generally considered that classroom artifacts often become the central part of classroom interactions and indispensable sources of ecological affordance that ELF speakers might juxtapose to various resources such as gesture and speech for clarifying meaning. Nevertheless, as Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) rightly argue, there have been hitherto few empirical classroom-based studies on how materials function in the L2 classroom interactions and how they are actually used in the L2 classroom. In order to fill in the gap, this chapter sheds light on the functions of classroom artifacts, with which ELF speakers actively combine their linguistic resources for meaning negotiation and resolving or preventing miscommunication. In other words, it tries to demonstrate how classroom artifacts are actually employed and how they influence classroom interactions.

In fact, in the classroom environment filled with meaning potentials afforded by material objects, instructors and students are probably engaging in an “active relationship” with such a classroom environment (van Lier, 2004, p. 92). Since class activities are often organized by a variety of meaningful objects, including textbooks, teacher-prepared worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, writing on the blackboard, notebooks, and personal computers, it is true that
instructors and students actively and skillfully incorporate those classroom artifacts for meaning negotiation. Thus, classroom artifacts can become crucial interactional components that students and teachers orient to and integrate through gestures and embodied actions, which require special attention for analyzing oral classroom interactions. More specifically, such embodied actions, or gestures closely associated with objects in the environment, can be considered “material actions” (Olsher, 2004, p. 223), or “environmentally coupled” gestures (Goodwin, 2007) since their meanings are deeply entwined with the material surroundings and objects. In the three sections to follow, the important roles of such environmentally-coupled gestures with classroom artifacts will be examined.

In order to differentiate the gestures or embodied actions discussed in Chapter 4, this present chapter focuses more on the functions of “objects” or more precisely, “classroom artifacts” integrated through interactants’ gestures or embodied actions along with speech (e.g., objects held in their hands or ones pointed by their fingers). Lastly, it is worth noting that it is possible that classroom artifacts at times play active and critical roles and control the manner of interactions, especially when interlocutors are not fully aware of their functions and meaning affordances. In such situations, they might influence the classroom discussion in unexpected ways and can cause misunderstanding among interlocutors. As Brant and Clinton (2002) rightly argue, more attention should be paid to the material dimensions of literacy practice (i.e., any types of activities related to reading and writing), which can bridge a great divide between people and things in social practice. Following their recommendation, this chapter attempts to demonstrate the functions of classroom artifacts in multilingual writing classroom interactions. This chapter consists of the following sections: 1) classroom artifacts as a reminder of shared information and reference; 2) classroom artifacts as organizing interaction, creating confusion,
and demonstrating meaning coordinated with embodied action; and 3) classroom artifacts as creating confusion with non-specific pointing and helping clarify meaning with specific pointing.

6.2 Classroom artifacts as a reminder of shared information and reference

The first excerpt involves both an instructor’s and a student’s making use of the information on the projected screen as a means of clarifying non-understanding and more specifically, reminding everyone about the already shared information in the class. The sequence of talk below is during the whole class discussion about each group’s thesis statement right after group work. For the group work, a couple of students were required to develop a thesis statement together based on a same topic, “People should compliment one another more.” and to write it down on the blackboard. And then each group assessed the other group’s thesis statement as to whether claims are clear and as to which types of claims are used. At this moment of interaction, Teacher L is checking what kind of claim is used for the thesis statement on the blackboard (see Figure 6.1), especially with Seo-jun (shown with an arrow in Figure 6.2), whose nationality is Korean). This excerpt entails Anna’s (from Kazak) non-understanding about one type of claims, “claim of value.” As the important contextual information, a teacher-prepared worksheet is projected on that screen (see Figure 6.2), which shows the information about four types of claims that include the claim of value.

![Figure 6.1. Writing on the blackboard](image1)

![Figure 6.2. Projected screen](image2)
Excerpt 1: "how does, what does it mean by, claim of value,"
1. TL:  {about this one!}
2.       {points at thesis statement on BB with LH}
3.       (1.5)
4.       >who needs to say,<
5.       (2.5)
6. SJ:  [it’s a claim of value? because, like?
7. TL:  [{(moves closer to BB)}
8.       (0.8)
9. TL:  {'people should compliment,"}=
10.     {reads thesis while looking at it on BB}
11. SJ:  ="yeah,"
12.     (0.7)
13.     we have an argument? but like,=
14. TL:  =where is value,
15.     (1.5)
16.     {WHERE is the argument?}
17.     {raises LH to chest level, and points at BB with LH}
18.     (0.8)
19. Ss:  people should (. ) compliment to one another,=
20. TL:  ={should (. ) compliment,}
21.     {drops LH from neck to chest level, with head leaning
toward right side}
22.     one another, {okay,}
23.     {nods once}
24.     (1.0)
25. SJ:  and uh,
26.     (0.5) because,
27.     {it is value, because of (. ) it has been elaborated,}
28.     {points at BB with RH, with its palm facing up}
29.     {it strengths health,}
30.     {holds same pointing gesture at line 29}
31.     {and then like, put two other reasons?}=
32.     {points at BB a few times with RH rhythmically
and gradually lowers from neck to chest, with its palm}
35. facing up; shifts gaze to TL and then to group members
36. TL: ={do you agree guys that,}
37. {comes closer to BB while touching with LH,
38. gazing at the front of classroom}
39. it’s ah, claim of value?
40. (1.0)
41.➔ AN: yeah,
42. (0.8)
43. MS: [uh!
44. TL: [{{looks back toward MS}}
45. K: huhuhu,=
46.➔ AN: =how does, what does it mean by, claim of
47.➔ [value,
48.➔ TL: [{{(raises left arm above head and points at PS with LH
49.➔ with all fingers straight up))
50.➔ [it’s there,}
51.➔ {keeps same pointing gesture with LH and walks a little
52.➔ closer to PS}
53.➔ Ss: [it’s there,
54.➔ SJ: [{{(points backward at PS with LH))}
55. TL: when [you are talking about,
56.➔ AN: [sorry, sorry,
57. TL: any problem, uh, different focus of objects,
58. different properties of u:h, (0.4)
59. of the phenomenon,
60. (0.5)
61.➔ A: I didn’t know [we need to do [like?
62. TL: [{{(shifts gaze to BB))
63. [but,
64. (0.5)
65. [yeah, that’s what}
66. {gazes back to AN and points at her with RH}
67. {you mean to identify,}
From lines 1-4, Teacher L prompts Seo-jun’s group to answer what kind of claim is used in the thesis statement on the blackboard by combining a pointing gesture along with speech. After a
long pause (2.5 seconds), Seo-jun takes up the turn, representing his group. He answers, “it’s a claim of value? because, like?” at line 6. Simultaneously, Teacher L moves a step closer to the blackboard and then reads aloud the first part of the thesis statement with a quieter voice. It is clear by her series of actions here that Teacher L orients to the thesis statement written on the blackboard as the important semiotic resource with which to engage. At line 11, Seo-jun provides a back-channel, “yeah,” with reduced volume and then starts to provide the reason why he thinks it is “a claim of value” by saying, “we have an argument? but like,” Latched with Seo-jun, Teacher L responds by asking, “where is value,” at line 14. Moreover, after a pause, she further asks in the emphatic manner, “WHERE is the argument?” with a loud voice on “where” and a higher pitch and prosodic emphasis on “argument.” At the same time, she quickly points at the blackboard. In response to Teacher L’s projected question, several students provide an answer in unison, “people should (.) compliment to one another,” This clearly exhibits other students’ active engagement in the whole discussion along with Seo-jun. Latched with this response, Teacher L repeats part of the answer, “should compliment, one another,” while putting a gestural stroke on “should” (see Figure 6.3) and then adds, “okay,” while nodding, which seemingly exhibits her agreement.

From lines 26-35, Seo-jun tries to further explicate the reason why he considers that the thesis statement employs the claim of value. Throughout his explication, he coordinates speech with other semiotic resources. Notice that Seo-jun incorporates the thesis statement written on the blackboard by pointing gestures (at lines 29 and 33-35) and gestural hold (at line 31), which enables Teacher L to draw attention to it and keep focus on it together (see Figure 6.4). Here, the thesis statement on the blackboard functions as foregrounding the relevant information for Teacher L and being used as the visual and more “static,” spatial representation. Then, at lines
36-39, Teacher L opens up the interactional floor to the whole class by asking, “do you agree guys that, it’s ah, claim of value?” Noticeably, she gazes at the front of the classroom (see Figure 6.5), which non-verbally displays her orientation to the students in front. According to Teacher L’s shift of eye gaze, Seo-jun also gazes at the same direction with her. After a gap of silence, at line 41, Anna who is in front of the classroom provides a brief answer, “yeah,” as a response to Teacher L’s question. Then, Mei San who is right behind Teacher L also says something like “uh!,” recognized by Teacher L’s gazing back towards her. Yet, Mei San’s uptake here is not followed up sequentially. Latched with the brief laughter by Kung-soo who is in Seo-jun’s group, Anna suddenly asks, “how does, what does it mean by, claim of value,” It appears that she is now trying to clarify what the claim of value means. In fact, by doing this, Anna shifts her strategy to making a clarification request regarding “claim of value.” It is intriguing that at line 41 Anna already provided an answer to Teacher L’s question about the claim of value while she is now clarifying what it means. In other words, her minimal response, “yeah,” which implicitly shows a manifestation of non-understanding, can be interpreted as a “let it pass” strategy (Firth, 1996). As Pitzl (2010) observes, “let it pass” phenomena can be implicitly pointed to on the basis of interactive features such as minimal responses.

Noticeably, overlapped with Anna’s last word of “value,” Teacher L begins raising her left arm and pointing at the projected screen with her left hand (see Figure 6.6). In fact, as mentioned above, on that screen a teacher-prepared worksheet is projected. The worksheet includes the information about four types of claim, and it was distributed to all students in class two weeks before this class session. Teacher L clearly recognizes the ecological affordance from the worksheet that might be able to clarify Anna’s question without the need of explaining it verbally. In other words, Teacher L endeavors to make this information “visible” and
“recognizable” to Anna by the employment of her deictic gesture only. At lines 50-52, Teacher L further attempts to clarify and make the information available on the projected screen more explicit by saying, “it’s there,” while holding the same pointing gesture and then walks closer to the screen. Interestingly, at lines 53-54, other students also join in clarifying Anna by the same phrase (“it’s there,”), and Seo-jun points back at the projected screen as well (see Figure 6.7).

The interactional behavior by Seo-jun aligns with Teacher L’s at lines 48-52, which constitutes a joint embodied action. In particular, the pointing gesture by Teacher L and Seo-jun can establish joint attention to the specific classroom artifact (i.e., teacher-prepared worksheet projected on the screen) in the environment and make it interactionally relevant and significant. As observed, it is true that not only Teacher L but also students are aware of that available ecological resource for resolving Anna’s non-understanding and actively incorporate it by employing pointing gestures. With Teacher L and Seo-jun’s finely aligned pointing at the handout projected on the screen, they appeal to the possibility of Anna’s remembering “claim of value,” thereby indirectly checking her familiarity with it. In other words, teacher-prepared worksheet on the projected screen here functions as a reminder or point of reference already shared among class members to determine which type of claims. In fact, especially because Teacher L always prepared word documents and projected relevant information on the screen throughout the semester as her regular teaching practice, her students were keenly aware of the information for reference on the projected screen when they needed some clarification. That is, students are equipped with such contextual affordance, which has become unique and “historical” in this classroom context. Also, contextual affordances like this are probably employed in the manner that Teacher L originally intended for clarifying students’ understanding whenever needed.
At line 56, after Teacher L and Seo-jun’s attempts to direct Anna’s attention to the information on the projected screen, Anna says, “sorry, sorry,” This turn exhibits her negative politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) that targets Teacher L’s face want through apologies. With this utterance, she seemingly implies that she did not recognize that the information about “claim of value” was on the projected screen, which is treated as her fault. In other words, she might interpret that she should have realized the affordance from the projected screen herself before she overtly made a clarification request. At line 61, Anna even states, “I didn’t know we need to do like?,” which exhibits her non-understanding about the requirement of the group activity, or identifying types of claims. In response to that, Teacher L says, “yeah, that’s what you mean to identify” which confirms what Anna said.

As for the outcome of Anna’s non-understanding, it seems that Anna achieves understanding about claims of value. This evidence especially comes from the stimulated recall interview. Anna said:

> So I was confused because I didn’t know that we need to do like, to identify. But when Teacher L explained it to me, it was clear. Nothing complicated. This way, I said nothing. Because after my question, okay. I see (Interview on November 21, 2013).

With regard to the possible causes of her non-understanding, Anna was confused by the word, “claim of value” since she did not realize the necessity of identifying types of claims as part of group activity. This issue was brought up during the stimulated recall interview. Anna commented, “I didn’t know that we need to identify it. That is why I didn’t follow. Someone started to talk about value. like, what’s going on ‘like, what’s value” (Interview on November 21, 2013). Taking this factor into consideration, Anna’s lack of understanding about the exact requirement for the group work might have triggered Anna’ non-understanding about “claim of
value.” Another possible reason is based on the ethnographic information gained from my regular classroom observations and notes. Because this handout projected on the screen was distributed two weeks ago, Anna might have forgotten what the types of claim are. In other words, the projected screen can serve as a useful reference source for students in the classroom for reminding them of the key information necessary to participate in the classroom discussions.

In summary, Excerpt 1 demonstrates that Teacher L, Seo-jun, and other students in this multilingual writing classroom are aware of the useful information for reference available on the projected screen and actively incorporate such visual resources by deictic gestures and gestural holds for resolving Anna’s non-understanding. It seems that such semiotic resources are not ‘passively’ available, but they are actively brought in, shared and combined by these ELF speakers for meaning making possibility. Furthermore, this excerpt reveals their collaborative attitude for clarifying Anna’s question and resolving her non-understanding, especially exhibited at lines 53-54 where they chorus and point at the projected screen together. Finally, in addition to verbal speech, mutual understanding can be achieved by the assistance of meaningful objects like the word-document projected on the screen and writing on the blackboard. Most importantly, it can be argued from this excerpt that classroom artifacts have important functions in foregrounding the relevant information and helping remind interlocutors of information already shared in the class. Such use of classroom artifacts can also become part of class history if instructors employ them consistently, and they can gain autonomous power to provide information whenever interlocutors need it without a need to explain verbally.

6.3 Classroom artifacts as organizing interaction, creating confusion, and demonstrating meaning coordinated with embodied action
The foregoing section has demonstrated the process in which an instructor and students incorporate the information on the projected screen by deictic gestures that functioned as directing the student’s attention to it and clarifying about the meaning of “claim of value.” The projected screen functions as effectively reminding the information already shared to the student who signaled non-understanding, which did not require detailed verbal explanations. The next excerpt, which already appeared in Chapter 5, whose focus was on laughter, illustrates the functions of another classroom artifact, namely the teacher-prepared worksheets. In this excerpt, Singh’s utterance (“eight and, uhn, second?”) causes Teacher L’s misunderstanding. After her misunderstanding is clearly observed, Singh initiates his overt repair through incorporating the action of flipping the handouts with speech. As the contextual information, the class is learning about four types of claims related to argumentative essays from the third page of the worksheets (three pages stapled). On its first page, there are 12 example statements. Right before this sequence of talk, Teacher L asked the class to choose one statement and to link it with which types of claims are suitable for the chosen topic. It can be said that the moment of interaction here represents what Walsh (2006) referred to as the “materials mode” of classroom interaction, where “the interaction is organized exclusively around the material” (p. 70). In other words, the teacher-prepared worksheet appears to play a crucial role of organizing the classroom interaction, which can be considered as one of unique functions of classroom artifacts.

**Excerpt 2:** “eight and, uhn, (0.8) second?”

1. TL: {uhn,}
2. {points at Singh’s direction with RH}
3. {(1.2)}
4. {looks down at list of students’ names on desk}
5. S: {uhn,}
6. {looks down at handout on lap under the desk}
7. TL: {Singh?}
8. {shifts gaze to S}
9. (1.0)
10.➔S: {eight}
11.➔ {gazes at first page of handout on lap}
12.➔ {and,}
13.➔ {flips pages}
14.➔ {uhn, (0.8) second?}
15.➔ {looks at third page}
16. (0.5)
17. TL: [{second one?}
18. {gazes at first page of handout holding with RH}
19. S: [{(quickly looks up to TL)}
20. (0.4)
21. [{eight.}
22. {gazes at TL while widening eyes}
23. TL: [{okay,}
24. {gazes at handout}
25. S: {'no,' eight and second.}=
26. {body leans toward chair back while gazing at TL}
27. TL: ={okay,}
28. {nods once while looking at handout}
29. (0.4)
30.➔ {probably choose one.}
31. {quickly raises RH to chest level with index finger up, which possibly shows the image of number 1 and holds it}
32. (0.7)
33. S: {No!}
34. {quickly looks down at handout on lap while smiling}
35. [{($I’m saying,$)
36. {looks down at handout while leaning forward}
37. SH: [{haha[ha}
38. {smirks}
41. G:       [{Hahaha, ↑Hahaha}  
42.          {body orients back to SH’s direction}  
43. TL:     {((smiles and looks down at handout))}  
44.➔S:      {on the first page,}  
45.➔        {gazes at TL while smiling}  
46.➔        [I chose eight,}  
47. G:      [{khhuhhhhhhh,}  
48.         {covers face with LH while laughing hard; looks in front}  
49.➔S:      {and it is, u:h,}  
50.➔        {looks down, flips pages, and looks at third page}  
51.➔        [claims {of cause and effect.}  
52.➔        {gazes back to TL}  
53.➔TL:     [{O:h!}  
54.➔        {opens mouth widely}  
55.➔        (you >want me to match,<}  
56.➔        {flips pages of handout, shifts gaze to third page, and nods head}  
57.➔        {yes, “yes.”}  
58. G:      {{okay,}}  
59.         {body orients to TL}  
60. TL:     {{okay,}}  
61.         {nods}  
62.         {okay, I see.}  
63.         {looking at third page}  

Figure 6.8. Lines 14-15:  Figure 6.9. Lines 44-45:  Figure 6.10. Lines 49-50:  
“uhn, (0.8) second?”  “on the first page,”  “and it is, u:h,”
As mentioned above, this sequence of talk entails Teacher L’s misunderstanding of Singh’s response, as clearly manifested in her utterance, “probably choose one” at line 30. Singh’s response, “eight and, uhn, second?” at lines 10-15 became a trouble source for Teacher L. While Singh is saying, “eight and, uhn, second?,” he also gazes at the first page of the handout on his lap, flips the pages when saying, “and,” and looks at the third page (see Figure 6.8). This embodied action coordinated with the worksheets subtly signals that Singh is visually referring to both the first and third pages for his utterance. This demonstrates that not only teachers but also students actively employ objects in the classroom ecology for meaning negotiation. However, this non-verbal signal does not help Teacher L’s understanding of the very meaning of Singh’s verbal response, exhibited by her partial repetition, “second one?” (line 17) and utterance, “probably choose one.” (line 30). In fact, Teacher L’s utterances implicitly repair Singh’s response without recognizing Singh’s verbal meaning that is deeply entwined with the worksheets. The possible reason why Singh’s coordination of non-verbal, embodied action with verbal speech is not taken up by Teacher L is that Singh’s action is mostly done under the desk in which his actions are hardly visible to her (see Figure 6.8).

In particular, from line 35 onwards, Singh initiates his overt repair by actively employing the handout along with speech. At lines 35-36, he starts with “No!” which is an overt
rejection of Teacher L’s previous utterance, while shifting his gaze to the handout on his lap, which demonstrates his attention to it. He then follows up by saying, “I’m saying,” while smiling in order to signal his intention to clarify what he meant by the previous contribution. Singh then explains verbally, “on the first page, I chose eight,” while directly gazing at Teacher L at lines 44-46 (see Figure 6.9). By doing this, he provides an important cue through verbal speech. At lines 49-52, he further explains verbally, “and it is, u:h, claims of cause and effects.” It is important to note that during this utterance, he is also non-verbally exhibiting what he originally meant by “eight and second.” More specifically, he now looks down at the worksheets, flips the pages, and looks at the third page (see Figure 6.10), which physically demonstrates that what he is referring to is both on the first and third pages of the worksheets. This coordinated action with the worksheets is similar to what he did at lines 10-15 (see Figure 6.8). Nevertheless, this time Singh’s embodied action is skillfully combined with verbal speech that explains the relationship about “eight and second.” This might contribute to giving richer clues to Teacher L. In other words, Singh’s integration of the handouts for verbal explanation along with directing his eye gaze downward makes his verbal speech more “visible” to Teacher L.

It is worth noting here that this is interpreted as a unique function of classroom artifacts in demonstrating the relevant information closely related to speech with coordinated embodied action. In particular, Singh’s gaze shifts to the worksheet along with flipping pages might allow Teacher L to attend to Singh’s non-verbal behaviors and realize what Singh meant by “eight and second.” Streeck (1993) described how a speaker’s gaze can be used to lead a recipient to see a gesture as something relevant to be attended to, thus acting as a guide to the recipient’s organization of attention. In other words, his gaze directed at the worksheets and flipping action of the worksheets might serve as a deictic for Teacher L, who might pay attention to his
coordinated action with the object along with his verbal speech. Therefore, it can be argued that a well coordinated action of various semiotic resources (e.g., eye gazes and actions) along with verbal speech is one of the key factors concerning whether material objects cause miscommunication or help achieve mutual understanding.

Overlapped with Singh’s utterance, at line 53, Teacher L eventually signals her newer understanding with a change of state token (Heritage, 1984), or “O:h!” while opening her mouth widely (see Figure 6.11). Then, she further says, “you >want me to match,<” at line 55. Here, with this utterance, Teacher L still seemingly tries to understand what Singh has explained. In other words, she is confirming whether her newer understanding is correct or not with Singh. At the same time, Teacher L also non-verbally demonstrates and confirms her understanding. Note that at lines 56-57 she flips the pages, shifts her gaze to its third page, and nods her head (see Figure 6.12). The series of her embodied actions coordinated with the worksheets here clearly aligns with Singh’s non-verbal behaviors at lines 10-15 and 49-52. Here, the coordination of Teacher L and Singh’s embodied actions with the worksheets are achieved in order to confirm their mutual understanding. In other words, such coordinated embodied actions can serve as a means of a confirmation check through non-verbal modality besides speech. One might argue that Teacher L’s demonstration of newer understanding provides evidence that Singh probably succeeded in directing Teacher L’s attention enough to the multimodal, embodied resources that he employed, namely his eye gaze shifts to the worksheets and flipping motions. Thus, the multimodal, embodied resources successfully became the object of joint attention between Singh and Teacher L.

In summary, this excerpt demonstrates that the teacher-prepared worksheets (as the physical entity in comparison to the one projected over the screen in the previous excerpt) can
also become an important interactional, semiotic resource for clarifying meaning, resolving misunderstanding, and confirming mutual understanding. In particular, since Singh’s utterance, “eight and, uhn, second?” is intricately situated in the context and closely related to the contents and structures of the worksheets, it might be hard to comprehend without paying attention to other interactional resources that Singh incorporates with verbal speech. As Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) argue, the teacher-prepared worksheet is a particularly important ecological resource that provides structure for class activities and affects classroom interactions. This excerpt clearly illustrates such significant influence of the teacher-prepared handout on the classroom interaction.

Furthermore, it can be argued that the handout seemingly provides the “unintended affordances” (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013, p. 792), which are probably different from the intended and imagined ones by Teacher L who originally designed this classroom artifact. In other words, Teacher L did not probably expect the way in which her students might use the worksheets, which engendered a mismatch in expectations between Singh and her and led to misunderstanding. This might indicate that how the classroom objects are actually used by students in the classroom is unclear until the classroom interactions unfold. Also, such unexpected usage of the handouts by Singh might be triggered by the specific interactional context in which Teacher L assumed that Singh already understood what and how to answer her question without giving specific instructions, because she already asked other students the same question. In other words, there might be a mismatch between Teacher L’s expectation about how to be answered and Singh’s own understanding of his teacher’s expectations.

Lastly, Singh and Teacher L’s alignment by their embodied actions of flipping pages and gazing at the handouts is quite effective in terms of achieving and confirming mutual
understanding between them. It can be argued that achieving joint attention to material objects and aligning with each other among interlocutors are crucial for making use of material objects in the classroom meaningfully. In short, this excerpt demonstrates that worksheets have important functions in organizing the classroom interactional structure, creating confusion if interlocutors do not recognize their roles and do not achieve joint attention, and externalizing the key information that gives clues for clear understanding of verbal responses in order to manage a communication breakdown.

6.4 Classroom artifacts as creating confusion with non-specific pointing and helping clarify meaning with specific pointing

The last excerpt in this section involves another classroom artifact often used in the classroom, namely, the PowerPoint slide. From the regular class observation, Teacher M always brought his PowerPoint presentation slides for explaining academic writing concepts, which underscores the importance of this classroom artifact for him and probably for his students. The following sequences of talk (Excerpt 3a and 3b) entail Mohamed’s misunderstanding of Teacher M’s question. The sequences of talk arose during the whole class discussion, in which Teacher M raised a question (i.e., Do we need to include “data” for supporting counter-arguments in argumentative essays?). Mohamed’s misunderstanding becomes apparent by his response (“yea:h,”) as well as his explanation about the reason why he answered this way. On the PowerPoint slide to which he is referring, there is an example paragraph of counter-arguments toward older people’s driving, including statistical data with regards to the percentage of car accidents involving old people (see Figure 6.13).
Figure 6.13. PowerPoint slide

Figure 6.14. Lines 1-4: “now the question is,”

Excerpt 3a: “do we have to write this- >write this< in our essay?”

1. TM: {now the question is,}
2. {points at PP slide with LH, with palm facing slide;}
3. points to Ron’s direction with RH, who originally
4. asked question}
5. (0.5)
6. ➔ {do we have to write this- >write this<}
7. ➔ {points at PP slide with LH index finger many times
8. ➔ and holds it while body facing students}
9. ➔ in our essay?
10. ➔ (3.0)
11. ➔ do I need to provide?
12. ➔ {(1.0)}
13. ➔ {walks toward left side, in which specific number from
14. ➔ scholarly source on PP slide is available}
15. ➔ {scholarly, (. ) source,}
16. ➔ {fully extends left arm to his upper left; points
17. ➔ at PP slide with LH twice and holds it until line 20}
18. ➔ (0.5)
19. ➔ do I need to {back up, with scholarly source,}
20. ➔ {clenches fist with RH @ chest and holds}
21. ➔ (. ) for what my enemies (. ) are going to say to me.
22. ➔ (2.2)
23. ➔ >what do you think?<
24. (0.8)
25. W: "no,"
26. M: yea:h,
27. (0.8)
28. TM: {yeah, and no.}
29. {first points toward M, and then points at W}
30. with RH index finger}
31. {okay,}
32. {points towards W with LH @ chest}
33. could you explain .) why you think no?
34. (0.8)
35. W: >no, I mean,< you’re just giving a, the uh,
36. opposing idea, ’but’ not necessary to be, (.)
37. opposing data,
38. (1.2)
39. TM: {okay,}
40. {raises RH @ neck and points at M’s direction}
41. then, why do you say yes,
42. (0.8)
43. M: I mean, uh, if you are:, (0.5)
44. >you’re just< getting ready for like?
45. (0.8) like? you, present the opposing ideas?
46. they should be ready for the, (0.4) answer to them,
47. or like, ways to back up the arguments.
48. (0.4) by, but (. ) presenting u:h,
49. (1.8) arguments?
50. like {against}
51. {raises RH @ chest, with its palm facing
52. body rounded, and quickly moves forward
53. as if punching}
54. the opposing ideas.
55. (4.0)
From lines 1-9, Teacher M seems to reframe the question originally raised by Rong (from China) and embark on a whole class discussion about it. In particular, as he initiates the question, he points at the PowerPoint slide with his left hand while pointing to the direction of Rong with his right hand (see Figure 6.14). These deictic gestures simultaneously exhibit that what he is going to ask regarding the information on the PowerPoint slide is closely related to Rong. Furthermore, at lines 6-8, while saying, “do we have to write this- >write this<”, Teacher M points at the PowerPoint slide with the index finger of his left hand many times and holds this deictic gesture throughout (see Figure 6.15). It is worth noting here that not only his use of a demonstrative pronoun (“this”) but also his pointing at the PowerPoint slide that is not targeted at specific information may contribute to the ambiguity within his question. In fact, there is also too much information on this one slide (see Figure 6.13). Therefore, both verbal speech (“this”) and pointing are not specified and explicit. In other words, Teacher M’s turn at lines 6-9 does not make his intended meaning clear, especially regarding whether he is referring to the writing data (i.e., statistical data on the slide) or to writing opposing ideas (i.e., the whole paragraph of counter-arguments on the slide), which might cause confusion among students.

At line 10, there is a long pause (3 seconds) in which no students take up the next turn perhaps because of their uncertainty caused by Teacher M’s question that entails the ambiguity.
It can be argued here that classroom artifacts such as PowerPoint slides might cause confusion and misunderstanding if they are not used strategically by interlocutors. In other words, both the classroom artifacts and people who employ them might contribute to causes of miscommunication, and several factors act in multilateral directions and subtle ways to lead to miscommunication phenomena.

After the long silence, it seems that Teacher M begins to rephrase the question in order to elicit responses from students. He starts, “do I need to provide?” and then during a pause, he walks towards his left side of the PowerPoint screen, where the information about the number from a scholarly source is located (i.e., “it turns out that the elderly are involved in 25 accidents per 100 drivers.”). Then, he adds, “scholarly, (. ) source,” emphasizing both words, in which he appears to highlight the key information that he envisages. Simultaneously, he extends his arm to his upper left side, then points at the exact place where the scholarly source regarding the number of car accidents is available, and holds this pointing gesture (see Figure 6.16). By doing this, Teacher M most likely attempts to make sure that his question is clearly understood by his students, which is interpreted as a communicative strategy, namely explicitness strategies by self-initiated rephrasing (Björkman, 2014). In particular, his physical movement toward his left side and pointing at the specific information on the PowerPoint slide might contribute to making his intended meaning clearer. Such self-initiated rephrasing is also observed in the following sequence.

After a short pause, at lines 19-21, he rephrases again, “do I need to back up, with scholarly source, (. ) for what my enemies (. ) are going to say to me.” At the same time, while saying, “back up, with scholarly source,” he firmly clenches his fist with his right hand at chest level and holds it (see Figure 6.17), which seemingly visualizes the metaphorical meaning of
“power” of scholarly, academic sources. Also, Teacher M simultaneously keeps holding the pointing gesture at the scholarly source on the PowerPoint slide with his left hand. Here, two modes (i.e., gesture and classroom artifact) complement each other with the graphic image being more durable and static and the gesture being more fleeting and dynamic. The gestural hold also serves to compensate for the transient nature of the gesture by making it more permanent and re-accessible for the students. Furthermore, it is observed that Teacher M’s rephrased questions in the verbal modality at lines 11-21 are more specific, explicit, and clearer than that at lines 6-9.

In addition, with regard to his non-verbal behaviors as well, Teacher M’s movement to his left side (lines 13-14) and deictic (lines 16-17) become targeted to the scholarly source on the PowerPoint slide. According to Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013), when classroom artifacts are used by participants for specific activities, they have intended affordances that designers have in mind when they create them. Here, since Teacher M prepared his PowerPoint slide himself, he is probably aware of its meaning potential that can be used as interactional resources for specific purposes, especially when he walked toward his left side and pointed at the exact location of the PowerPoint slide. In other words, the PowerPoint slide is purposefully used by Teacher M now for letting his students orient to the most relevant and key information related to his question for eliciting their responses. Furthermore, it appears that the speaker’s good design of coordinating non-verbal interactional resources with verbal speech (or with highlighted speech) is a trick that enables material objects to function effectively in terms of clarifying meaning and achieving mutual understanding.

Despite Teacher M’s attempts to rephrase his original question, it will turn out later that his rephrasing does not pre-empt Mohamed’s misunderstanding. This phenomenon rather contradicts findings from previous ELF research that claims that rephrasing serves as a proactive
means to help avert problems of understanding in ELF interactions (Cogo, 2009; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Kaur, 2009a; Mauranen, 2006b, 2007). One might argue that the manner of how rephrasing is conducted and how much the recipient is attentive to such rephrasing are crucial for making it effective. After Teacher M’s rephrasing his question, there are no volunteers to provide a response again, and instead a 2.2 second gap of silence follows at line 22. Probably because of the lack of uptake from students, Teacher M now takes a further action to actively prompt students to share their opinions by saying, “what do you think?” in a quicker tempo.

Followed by another gap of silence, two students (Weimin and Mohamed) eventually respond by providing minimal responses, “no,” and “yea:h,” With their contradictory answers, it is clear that one should be correct and the other should be wrong. After a gap of silence, Teacher M acknowledges the responses from them by repeating “yeah, and no.” and pointing at each student. By these pointing gestures, Teacher M clearly ties Mohamed and Weimin with each of their responses and puts them at the center stage for the whole class discussion. After this acknowledgment and confirmation, from line 31, Teacher M invites explanations from them about the reasons behind their answers to determine which answer is correct. In particular, since they only provided minimal responses, Teacher M appears to seek an explanation rather than swiftly judging which one is correct. At lines 31-33, he nominates Weimin to explain his reason first. In response to Teacher M’s prompt, Weimin provides a reason at lines 35-37. Note that Weimin employs a discourse marker (“I mean,”) to signal a self-repair and make it clear that what follows is what he actually wants to say or is trying to say. Moreover, he uses prosodic features effectively, in particular, emphasizing “data,” in order to contrast with “idea.” After Weimin’s explication, Teacher M moves on to ask for Mohamed’s explanation. It is worth noting that at this point, Teacher M does not provide any feedback to Weimin’s explanation. It is
probably because he intends to provide Mohamed with the equal opportunity without giving any clues regarding which answer Teacher M thinks correct.

From lines 43-49, in response to Teacher M’s request, Mohamed starts up with a discourse marker, “I mea:n” and then provides a lengthy explanation. It is clear that Mohamed’s turn exhibits his hesitation and difficulty in constructing his response, evidenced by a number of pauses, fillers (e.g., like?), false starts, and repetition. More importantly, throughout his utterance, Mohamed does not mention anything about “data.” At line 45, for example, he says, “you, present the opposing idea?” Even from lines 48-54, he still goes on to discuss opposing “ideas.” Right after Mohamed’s explanation, a very long silence (4.0 seconds) ensues. This gap of silence can signify that there is something wrong with Mohamed’s turn. According to Schegloff (2007), silence can signal that a next action is dis-preferred, which anticipates Teacher M’s repair for Mohamed’s utterance.

In fact, as observed, Mohamed’s explanation does not provide any reason why he answered, “yea:h” to Teacher M’s question regarding whether it is necessary or not to include opposing “data.” Therefore, it can be argued that Mohamed’s response here covertly displays his misunderstanding about Teacher M’s question. It seems that he misinterprets his teacher’s question as asking whether it is necessary to include opposing “ideas” instead of opposing data. Stimulated recall interview supports this interpretation. Mohamed shared his perspectives:

*I really didn’t actually understand the question directly. I thought he was saying,

…when you are having a counterargument, do we provide, do we say that argument? so I was, yes! When you are arguing, you wanna say opposing ideas. So you can attack them back… but I didn’t understand first when he said the first question, uh, it was not clear to me* (Interview on July 26, 2013).
Based on this, it became clear that Mohamed was trying to explain providing opposing “ideas” without clear understanding about Teacher M’s exact question, as observed in the sequential analysis. It might be argued that Teacher M’s effort of rephrasing his question along with the support of the information on the PowerPoint slide integrated with his deictic gesture was not effective in terms of making it explicit and comprehensible to Mohamed.

To sum up so far, with Teacher M’s opening up the interactional space to discuss why Weimin and Mohamed answered, “no and yes,” Mohamed’s misunderstanding became clear to Teacher M. It appears that Teacher M’s integration of the information on the PowerPoint slide by his deictic gesture and his verbal rephrasing do not help clarify his question to Mohamed. The next excerpt continues right after Excerpt 3a. After going through Teacher M’s explicit repair attempt through his verbal explanation integrated with the specific information on the PowerPoint slide with his deictic gesture, now Mohamed clearly recognizes his prior misunderstanding as seen below.

**Excerpt 3b:** “OH, NO,NO,NO, presenting DATA,”

56. TM: got **actually**, you are all right?
57.➔ (0.5) but (.) my question is:,
58. (1.2) so, I wanna to say,
59. {people should be **allowed** to **drive**. this is like,}
60. {points at PP slide with LH, with palm facing PP and
61. all **fingers** straight, and holds it until line 62}
62. not this should not be,
63.➔ {because, look at this **data,**}
64.➔ {walks toward his left side, and points at part of slide
65.➔ where number from data locates with LH **index finger**}
66.➔ {this is not good.}
67.➔ {points at the slide a few times with LH **index finger
68.➔ in the similar manner at lines 64-65}
(0.8)

(0.8) 70.➔ TM: {so, do I (. ) present the data,}

(0.8) 71.➔ {holds pointing gesture with LH index finger}

(0.8) 72.➔ {against}

(0.8) 73.➔ {raises RH in front of chest, with palm facing body and all

(0.8) 74.➔ fingers opened up; holds pointing with LH index finger}

(0.8) 75.➔ {my own argument,}=

(0.8) 76.➔ {touches chest with RH and holds until line 83; holds

(0.8) 77.➔ pointing with LH index finger}

(0.8) 78.➔ M: =OH, NO, NO, NO,

(0.8) 79. TM: {hhuh,}

(0.8) 80. {smiles}

(0.8) 81.➔ M: presenting DATA,

(0.8) 82.➔ TM: {yeah,}=

(0.8) 83.➔ {nods}

(0.8) 84.➔ M: =sorry, sorry. {>no, no,<}

(0.8) 85.➔ {shakes head}

(0.8) 86.➔ (0.8) no!

(0.8) 87. (1.5) that’s (. ) just like, could be, (could weaken)=

(0.8) 88. TM: =so, do not provide any data,

(0.8) 89. >even though< you know it.

(0.8) 90. M: ((nods twice))

Figure 6.18 Lines 63-65:

Figure 6.19 Lines 75-77:
“because, look at this data,” “my own argument,”

At line 56, after a long gap of silence, Teacher M first pursues affiliation with Mohamed by identification with his perspective. His utterance (“got actually, you are all right?”) is also interpreted as “positive politeness” (Brown & Levinson, 1987) that aims for constructing affiliation and solidarity between them before his initiation of repair, which might be considered a dis-preferred act. Then, he moves to an overt initiation of repair by saying, “but (.). my question is;” clearly signaled by “but.” It is possible that Teacher M employs this marked disagreement to make it clear that some repair attempt is upcoming. It is generally considered that other-initiated repair in the classroom is most often associated with the teacher repairing student talk (Jung, 1999; McHoul, 1990), which is observed here as well. From lines 58-61, Teacher M begins rephrasing his question once again by saying, “so, I wanna to say, people should be allowed to drive. this is like.” At the same time, he employs deictic gesture and gesture holds, but here his gestures are not so specifically targeted at the information on the PowerPoint slide.

From lines 62-68, Teacher M starts to clarify the main point of misunderstanding. First, he begins, “not this should not be;” and then provides the reason, “because, look at this data.” At the same time, he walks toward his left side, and points at the part of slide with his left index finger, where the specific number from scholarly sources is available (see Figure 6.18). This deictic gesture integrating the specific information on the PowerPoint slide is very similar to the one observed at lines 15-17 in Excerpt 3a. Here Teacher M seems to strategically combine the PowerPoint slide with this gesture to make his verbal explanations more complete. Yet, Teacher M’s turn here is even more effective in terms of clarifying his meaning. This is because he uses an imperative form “look at” in order to forcefully direct attention to the information on the slide and also accentuates the key information, “data” with marked stress along with “this” that specifically indexes the meaning from the target object (the statistical number on the PowerPoint
slide). Furthermore, he pinpoints with his index finger only, which specifies more the highlighted information. In other words, he makes it very explicit to Mohamed that he is required to pay attention to the data in particular on the PowerPoint slide. In addition, Teacher M adds more verbal explanation as clues for clarification by saying “this is not good.” while pointing at the same place on the PowerPoint slide a few times. What he is able to accomplish here is emphasizing the importance of the information on the PowerPoint slide and also providing his evaluation (“not good”) toward the data in the overt manner, which becomes an important clue for getting the right answer and which might contribute to Mohamed’s realization of misunderstanding.

Lastly, it should be noted that Teacher M specifically directs his eye gazes toward Mohamed and that Mohamed also looks at Teacher M’s and PowerPoint direction now. In other words, their joint attention to the PowerPoint slide has been achieved here, which was probably not in the sequence of Excerpt 3a. With the achievement of mutual attention, it can be argued that the PowerPoint slide functions as providing the most relevant information for clarifying meaning. In particular, in comparison to ephemeral verbal speech, the PowerPoint slide can provide much more “stable” visualization and make it “visible” for a longer span, which can be quite effective for meaning negotiation and confirmation. One might argue that Teacher M recognizes the unique, effective function of PowerPoint slides when designing and utilizing them in the classroom. Yet, for material objects to be effective, interlocutors need to coordinate the organization combing them with other semiotic resources and then also direct joint attention to them, which might require a more complex communicative competence.

Subsequent to that, there is a gap of silence, in which neither Teacher M or Mohamed take up in the following turn. Then, from line 70, Teacher M reinitiates his explanation by
summing up what he has explained, prefaced with “so,” and continues, “do I (.) present the data, against my own argument.” During this utterance, he holds the same pointing gesture that integrates the specific data on the PowerPoint slide. At the same time, while saying, “against my own argument,” Teacher M raises his right hand in front of his chest, with its palm facing his body and all fingers opened up, and touches his chest when saying, “my own argument,” (see Figure 6.19). Along with his prosodic emphasis, it seems that Teacher M highlights the meaning of “my” by indicating himself through touching his chest. Furthermore, he maintains different gestures with his left (pointing at the PowerPoint slide) and right (touching his chest) hands until Mohamed eventually recognizes misunderstanding.

Notice that a series of Teacher M’s repair practice is successfully achieved through his active alignment with and adaptation to the classroom environment. Atkinson et al. (2007) offer the important construct of “alignment,” defined as “the means by which human actors dynamically adapt to—that is, flexibly depend on, integrate with, and construct—the ever-changing mind-body-world environments. In other words, alignment takes place not just between human beings, but also between human beings and their social and physical environments” (p. 171; emphasis in original). Here, Teacher M aligns his body, objects, and physical environment to negotiate misunderstanding with Mohamed and to create learning opportunities based on the affordance brought from interactional alignment. In particular, in this excerpt, the PowerPoint slide is a useful interactional resource for providing the specific information about what Teacher M means by “data” and clarifying his question to Mohamed especially by using his pinpointing gestures and gestural holds, which successfully gained Mohamed’s attention.

Latched with Teacher M’s more explicit repair work conducted through the careful coordination of multiple semiotic resources, Mohamed finally shows his newer understanding,
first signaled by the use of “OH,” (a change of state token, Heritage, 1984). And then, he repeatedly says, “NO, NO, NO,” with a louder voice, which provides his alternate response to his teacher’s original question after he realizes his misinterpretation. Right after that, Teacher M issues a brief, weak quality of laughter with a smile, which might show his relief after resolving miscommunication and at the same time his attempt to mitigate face-threat involving repair.

After he displays his newer understanding, at line 81, Mohamed still tries to make a confirmation with Teacher M in order to make sure that his understanding is correct. He produces, “presenting DATA,” in emphasis on “data” and a louder voice. Orienting to his request for clarification, Teacher M provides an agreement token, “yeah,” while nodding. Latched with Teacher M, Mohamed demonstrates his negative politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) by “sorry, sorry,” that targets his teacher’s face wants through apologies. Furthermore, he repeats “no, no,” again with a quicker pace while shaking his head, exhibiting his new answer again. After a short pause, Mohamed further adds, “no!” with an animated tone, and seems to provide the reason why he does not need to provide opposing data at line 87. Latched with Mohamed’s utterance, Teacher M takes up the next turn for summing up the discussion. Orienting to Teacher M, Mohamed’s head nod shows his agreeing stance non-verbally.

As for the outcome of this miscommunication phenomenon, it is observed from the sequential analysis that Mohamed recognized his misunderstanding and achieved clearer understanding, evidenced by a variety of signals, including a change of state token, a correct response, repetition of Teacher M’s key phrase (“presenting data”), and negative politeness. Teacher M also affirms Mohamed’s newer understanding with a minimal agreement token “yeah,” and head nods. Teacher M’s invitation for an explanation observed in Excerpt 3a enabled Mohamed’s misunderstanding to become explicit, which is probably his spontaneous
pedagogical decision. Such a decision leads to creating the interactional space to actively negotiate Mohamed’s misunderstanding on the spot. The stimulated recall interview also indicates such a pedagogical purpose at which Teacher M aimed:

“I mean, we had contradictory, right? One person says yes, and the other says, no. So I wanna to be opening up the discussion, and then I think Weimin said, something that I came to, Mohamed, he was saying, initially yes, but after I explained it, oh, nonono” (Interview on July 25, 2013).

In particular, Teacher M’s explication through verbal speech and integration of the specific information on his PowerPoint slide through his “pinpointed” deictic gestures along with an achievement of joint attention to it were quite effective in clarifying what he originally meant by “do we have to write this- write this in our essay?” and resolving Mohamed’s misunderstanding. In short, through going through the pedagogical negotiation process created by Teacher M, Mohamed was able to achieve clearer understanding about differences in terms of presenting opposing “ideas” and “data” for argumentative essays than before, which is one of the important issues when students write argumentative essays. His clear understanding was also exhibited in the interview. Mohamed said, “it’s fine to provide the opposing ideas? but you don’t wanna say, fact, the statistics against your arguing. That’s just like, that’s weird” (Interview on July 26, 2013).

As for the causes of Mohamed’s misunderstanding, the sequential analysis reveals that ambiguity of Teacher M’s original question, first framed as “do we have to write this- write this in our essay?” along with his non-specified deictic gesture might lead to Mohamed’s confusion. In particular, Teacher M’s use of a demonstrative pronoun (“this”) does not specify whether he is asking about writing opposing data or ideas. Equally true is that Teacher M’s initial pointing at
the PowerPoint slide does not clearly target at the specific information either. In contrast, later on during his rephrasing (lines 11-21) and repair sequence (lines 63-77), Teacher M provides more specific verbal information (e.g., “scholarly source” at lines 15 and 19 and “this data” at line 63) as well as detailed explication (e.g., “for what my enemies are going to say to me.” at line 21, “this is not good.” at line 66, “against my own argument, at lines 72 and 75). Moreover, in terms of the non-verbal modality (both gesture and use of classroom artifact), Teacher M’s deictic gestures become “pinpointed” at the key information (i.e., statistical data) on the PowerPoint slide. Thus, through coordinating the classroom artifact and gesture along with speech, the interactional context in the classroom environment provides Teacher M with affordance that can stimulate intersubjectivity and joint attention.

Furthermore, another cause of Mohamed’s misunderstanding might be because Teacher M repeats his questions in different ways, which might engender ambiguity about which question needed to be responded to. In the interview with Teacher M, he commented about his own interpretation about the possible reason for Mohamed’s misunderstanding and his attitude toward such misunderstanding in the classroom:

I don’t know …. maybe, in the first part, before my explanation of should we present data against ourselves, I think he probably did not understand that. …I don’t know why, but this kind of things keep happening in the classes. That is why we need negotiation (Interview on July 25, 2013).

Even though he cannot specify the causes of misunderstanding, Teacher M shows his willingness to negotiate and resolve misunderstandings in ongoing classroom interactions. In other words, he is claiming that he is ready to negotiate and deal with miscommunication whenever it happens in the classroom.
Another reason for Mohamed’s misunderstanding became apparent from the stimulated recall interview. Mohamed commented about the reason near the end of the interview:

It’s because, uh, at the beginning, he said, is it fine to provide the counterargument, and *then I just heard that*. And then, here is the second part. *I wasn’t focused. hhhhh.* focused on the first part when he just said, counterargument. But then, he started, started showing facts about the counterarguments, *I wasn’t that focusing, hhh, just, I said yes on the first one* (Interview on July 26, 2013).

Mohamed is claiming that his lack of attention to Teacher M’s question, especially the rephrased one which is more specified and clearer than the first, contributes to his misunderstanding and leads to his initial answer (“yes”). It is quite interesting to observe that in this context Teacher M’s rephrasing did not function well for raising explicitness and pre-empting Mohamed’s misunderstanding owing to Mohamed’s lack of attention at the moment. This might indicate an unpredictable and emergent dimension of miscommunication, which requires interlocutors to keep attending to critical, relevant information afforded by verbal speech and material objects and negotiate understanding in the moment-to-moment manner. In other words, a strategy of rephrasing does not always function as effective in the classroom context and at times creates even confusion regarding which versions of interpretation are actually intended. Therefore, it can be said that the combination of verbal repetition with material objects well incorporated by gesture or embodied action is a useful strategy in soliciting the student’s attention, especially in the classroom context where many students are co-participating.

Lastly, from the stimulated interview with Teacher M, it is found that that the classroom artifact (namely PowerPoint slides) affected his decision to open up the whole discussion about the question initially raised by Rong. He commented:
so I want to answer, give an answer to Rong, *but I had, like, an example on PowerPoint slide. So that is why I took a long way, to go to the slide*, and then, after finishing it, I then checked it with the class (Interview on July 25, 2013).

Based on Teacher M’s comment above, it can be argued that classroom artifacts available in the classroom ecology shape class interactions, dynamics and styles, similarly observed in Excerpt 2. Teacher M is aware of having a sample paragraph in his PowerPoint slides, thus making a decision to open up a whole discussion by using this artifact instead of just responding to Rong’s question instantly. It seems that the sequence of talk above exhibits Teacher M’s clear effort to engage student contributions and involvements in the explanation of counterarguments. In other words, Teacher M treats classroom artifacts as important interactional resources for specifying the most relevant information related to his explanation. In fact, such visual resources can contribute to resolving misunderstanding through the unique affordance, which is a much more stable, specific visualization of information.

However, it is also observed that non-specified gesture pointed at the PowerPoint slide led to making meaning ambiguous and creating confusion. Also, constructing joint attention by mutual gazes at material objects is a crucial step for achieving understanding with the help of objects. Thus, one can argue that anyone including ELF speakers who use English as a means for communication in academic classroom contexts, need to be very aware of the functions of classroom artifacts and rightly coordinate unique affordance from them in order to make the organization of semiotic modes meaningful and effective for communicative success.

6.5 Conclusion

To summarize, all of the excerpts examined in this chapter have illustrated what kinds of the functions various classroom artifacts (worksheets, projected screens, PowerPoint slides,
and writing on the blackboard) have in the multilingual writing classrooms and how they are actually used by multilingual instructors and students. Such functions include foregrounding the most relevant information in relation to verbal speech, becoming a reminder or point of reference already shared among class members whenever needed, making verbal speech “visible” to the interlocutor, organizing and controlling the classroom interactional structure, and letting the interlocutor orient to the most significant information through achieving mutual gazes. More specifically, the visual, spatial representations afforded by classroom artifacts and also finely coordinated with gestures and embodied actions appear to provide different affordances from speech. The visual modality through classroom artifacts can provide more specific, detailed information and keep “visible” for a longer span in the students’ visual field and thus easily accessible as their reference than rather fleeting and transient speech. Such use of visual modality has become conventionalized as classroom practice among class members because of instructors’ consistent use of classroom artifacts throughout the semester. I argue that classroom artifacts can contribute to ELF speakers’ clarifying meaning and preventing and resolving miscommunication efficiently.

All of the excerpts also demonstrate intricacy and the complex manner with which verbal speech works in tandem with classroom artifacts, gestures, and embodied actions for clarifying meaning and constructing understanding. It seems that both multilingual students and instructors align a variety of multimodal, semiotic resources with speech for specific purposes. Put otherwise, such alignments are resourceful in the communicative interactions of these ELF speakers, and these speakers are probably aware of such meaning affordance from material objects available in the classroom environment and purposefully incorporating the affordance of meaning from them in order to specify meaning and enhance explicitness. Environmentally-
coupled gestures (specifically deictic) and embodied actions (especially eye gazes and body orientations) are effectively employed among the ELF speakers for tying up meanings of classroom artifacts with speech and gaining mutual attention to those materials. In short, ELF speakers are capable of tailoring or designing the use of diverse multimodal resources together in the classroom ecology to fit their specific purposes of explaining and clarifying meaning.

Thus, producing and understanding words only are not enough for them to achieve mutual understanding in the classroom ecology. We can see how important it is that ELF speakers in the writing classrooms align to a range of multimodal, material resources in constructing meaning and resolving miscommunication and that they make use of the distinctive functions of such material resources for communicative effectiveness. Therefore, it can be argued that using formal or grammatical proficiency in isolation from such an employment of multiple ecological resources for meaning making can lead to ‘deficient’ readings of the communicative competence of ELF speakers. As observed throughout Chapters 4-6, when we consider their resourcefulness in using an ensemble of semiotic resources to achieve their communicative objectives, we appreciate ELF speakers’ more sophisticated and complex communicative competence beyond linguistic aspects.

Although it is true that ELF speakers can often employ classroom artifacts meaningfully and purposefully, it has been also noticed from Excerpts 3a and 2 in particular that at times ELF speakers cannot fully control the ways in which objects influence the structure of a classroom discussion, which created ambiguity or confusion and led to misunderstanding in unexpected ways. As Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) rightly argue, “affordances may either enable or constrain language learning” (p. 782), which underscores the unexpected nature of affordances from material objects. More specifically, when the speaker coordinates material objects well
along with other ecological resources with clear intentions and he/she can gain enough attention from the interlocutor, material objects can become meaningful. On the other hand, when the speaker does not coordinate the meaning from material objects specifically with speech and other resources and joint attention cannot be achieved with the interlocutor, material objects might just end up with leading to misunderstanding. In other words, joint attention to material objects and specificity might be critical components for making them meaningful. Tomasello (2003) similarly sees the importance of joint attention for language use and acquisition.

Furthermore, it can be argued that classroom artifacts entail autonomous power to function themselves in unique ways rather than always being controlled by interlocutors, as observed in Excerpt 2 wherein the handout controlled the interaction in the way that the teacher did not expect and created misunderstanding. As Latour (1993) puts it, objects should be given the status of social actors and have their own roles to play, independent of human agents, in the conduct of various social activities. Even though instructors themselves create those classroom artifacts with their intended purposes and imagine how they will be used in classroom discussions, it might be hard to envision how they are actually used by multilingual students and how they influence on classroom interactions. That is why it is important to further examine how materials function in L2 classroom interactions and how they are actually used in the L2 classroom. At least this chapter clearly demonstrates that ELF speakers in the multilingual writing classrooms actively make classroom artifacts interactionally relevant for meaning negotiation and resolving miscommunication. As a future endeavor, it will be an intriguing field of research to investigate classroom artifacts as potential communicative agents in the classroom.
Chapter 7

Miscommunication and People in Classroom Ecology:

The Functions of Third-party Participants

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have observed the important, unique roles of classroom artifacts coordinated by pointing gestures, embodied actions, and mutual gazes, including teacher-prepared worksheets, writing on the blackboard, and PowerPoint slides, for pre-empting and resolving miscommunication. Now this final chapter for the data analysis details miscommunication instances where multilingual instructors or students, who do not initially get involved in miscommunication sequences and do not often share linguistic and cultural backgrounds, voluntarily help resolve miscommunication by actively joining in the interactional sequences and participating in meaning negotiation. In Goffman’s (1981) term, third-party participants are considered as a type of “ratified participants” based on the concepts regarding his participation framework. Within the ratified type, Goffman (1981) differentiates between the “addressed recipient”, i.e. ‘the one to whom the speaker addresses his visual attention and to whom, incidentally, he expects to turn over his speaking role” and the rest of the “official hearers” who are not addressed (p. 133).

In the case of more than two-person talk like the classroom interaction, there are normally more “official hearers,” or what I call third-party participants involved in on-going interactions by listening and having the right to join in turn-taking whenever they want. In other words, the functions of co-participants, which are also one element of ecological resources in the classroom (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013), will be considered in this chapter. Voluntary help among class members in classroom interactions clearly reflects ELF speakers’ collaborative
attitude as a number of ELF researchers (e.g., Hülsmbauer, 2009; Kaur, 2011c; Meierkord 1998, 2000; Smit, 2010) have so far observed. From the following two sections, we will see five excerpts in which either a teacher or students with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds try to clarify meaning, represent the other’s point of view, and achieve mutual understanding by drawing on various communicative strategies, especially in the sequential position when initial repair attempts among interlocutors initially involved did not work out.

7.2 Teacher’s assistance for resolving miscommunication

The first section examines a teacher’s assistance as a third-party participant after non-understanding among students is clearly observed in classroom interaction. It is possible to argue that teachers often function as resources for resolving miscommunication in the classroom. Varghese et al. (2005) argue that the teacher often plays a huge role in the constitution of classroom practices and that the teacher’s whole identity is at play in the classroom all the time. In other words, the presence of an instructor in the classroom always has an impact on classroom interactions explicitly or implicitly even though he or she remains silent or regardless of its interactional relevancy. The following sequence of talk happened immediately after Excerpt 1 in Chapter 5, whose focus was on the functions of laughter. In that excerpt, Mei San demonstrated non-understanding about Hong’s question related to her argumentative essay. The excerpt below happened after Hong repeated his question (“do you personally believe that more and more developing countries are gonna use of nuclear power in the future?”) in the exactly same manner with his original question. This repetition failed to clarify Mei San’s non-understanding. After a long silence at line 29, Teacher L, who initially remained silent and did not get involved in the non-understanding sequence of talk, starts to clarify Hong’s intention, which seems to demonstrate her understanding of Mei San’s cause of non-understanding.

Excerpt 1: “are you talking about developed or undeveloped,”
30.➔ (2.0)
31.➔ TL: {why?}
32.➔ {shifts gaze to H back in the classroom}
33. [(2.0)
34. MS: [{hah?}
35. {smiles}
36. SJ: {why not?} ((smiles))
37. {gazes at TL}
38.➔ TL: why did you ask.
39. (1.2)
40. H: uh, (1.0) since, uh:, (0.8) most of development, uh,
41. [developed countries,
42. MS: [((nods a few times silently))
43. TL: uh-huh,=
44. H: =uh:, (2.0) [just uh,
45.➔ TL: [get >get rid of it,<
46.➔ H: use more, uh, nuclear power, and [this
47.➔ TL: [{huhn,}
48.➔ {nods}
49.➔ H: uh:, (0.8) so, I guess (let we) some developing
50.➔ countries not have, uh:, (1.0) uh:, (0.8) the the,
51.➔ technologies of that, so:,
52.➔ ‘they they’=
53.➔ TL: =are you talking about developed, or undeveloped,
54. (1.2)
55.➔ H: <develop (.). ing.>
56.➔ TL: [develop, developing
57.➔ MS: [((nods several times))
58.➔ TL: [countries,
59.➔ H: [yeah!
60.➔ TL: {okay, I see,}
62.➔ {nods a few times}
63.  good point,

Figure 7.1. Lines 31-32: “why?”

Figure 7.2. Line 56: “<develop (.)”

Figure 7.3. Line 56: “ing.”

Figure 7.4. Line 58

As observed, from line 31, Teacher L takes over the conversational floor in order to provide assistance for Mei San as a third party participant in clarifying Hong’s intention regarding why he asked the question, perhaps prompted by the gap of silence preceded at line 30. As discussed in Chapter 5, silence can function as a subtle signal of communicative problems or non-understanding to the interlocutors involved and other members in the classroom as well. Teacher L first asks briefly, “why?” while shifting her gaze back to Hong (see Figure 7.1). Right after that, there is a 2.0 second pause in which Mei San briefly laughs while smiling. Right after that, Seo-jun who sits right next to Hong utters, “why not?” while directly looking at Teacher L. Seo-jun’s act here displays a rather challenging stance to Teacher L. Yet, he seems to mitigate it to some degree with the use of a smile in the turn final position. Here, his smile can subtly add a non-serious tone. Then, at line 38, Teacher L extends her original question, “why did you ask.”,
which is a clearer clarification request to Hong. Furthermore, her question here might address Mei San’s potential problem of not knowing why Hong asked the question.

After a gap of silence, from line 40 Hong initiates an answering of Teacher L’s question. He starts, “u:h, (1.0) since, u::h, I realize that, uh:, (0.8) most of development, uh, developed countries.” Apparently, this turn exhibits his disfluency and difficulty in terms of constructing his response. Perhaps because Teacher L recognizes Hong’s struggle to frame his response, she displays her support and active engagement as a listener with the use of a back-channeling, “uh-huh,” at line 44. Furthermore, Mei San also shows her support nonverbally through head nods during Hong’s utterance. In other words, by these acts, Teacher L and Mei San most likely express their empathy and solidarity with Hong. Latched with Teacher L’s back-channeling, Hong further continues, “uh:, just uh.” Overlapped with Hong’s turn, it appears that Teacher L collaboratively produces a candidate completion of Hong’s turn (“most of developed countries just uh,”) by saying “get rid of it (nuclear power)” at a quicker tempo. This collaborative completion shows a high degree of accommodation in which Teacher L finishes Hong’s utterance, with the result that they end up speaking together and “co-creating the message” (Björkman, 2014, p. 133).

Although Teacher L’s behavior can be construed as collaborative, it in fact demonstrates their distinctive interpretations about the relationship between developed countries and nuclear power. This is because Teacher L says, “(developed countries) get rid of it,” while Hong says at the following turn that developed countries use more nuclear power. In other words, these turns reveal that a misunderstanding between Teacher L and Hong exists at this moment. At lines 48-49, Teacher L produces a minimal response, “huhn,” while nodding, which displays her acknowledgement. This token is considered a continuer (Schegloff, 1982), which may indicate
that Teacher L recognizes that an extended turn by Hong is still underway. It is generally
considered that continuer tokens are free-standing, and that by producing such a token as
opposed to a full turn at talk, a recipient passes on an opportunity to initiate repair, namely, to
indicate a lack of understanding regarding the immediately preceding talk. It seems that Teacher
L decides to let Hong continue his talk instead of doing repair at this point.

After Teacher L’s continuer, Hong goes on to provide further explanation. Hong’s turn
at lines 50-53 demonstrates his sense of hesitation, given his pauses, fillers, repetitiveness, and
elongation. These might contribute to the impeding of Teacher L’s clear understanding.
Moreover, his utterance is lengthy, which might also make his utterance confusing. In addition,
his topic suddenly shifts from “developed countries” in his previous turn (line 42) to “developing
countries” (lines 50-51), which might confuse her as well. Most importantly, “they they,” – a
repetition of pronouns (line 53) – contributes to ambiguity regarding what “they” actually index,
thus requiring her to request a clarification. This interpretation is supported by Teacher L’s
following turn in which she tries to explicitly clarify by saying, “are you talking about developed
or undeveloped.” This is considered Teacher L’s overt repair request for clarifying. This decision
was made likely because Hong’s turn did not provide her with the opportunity to clarify
ambiguity and because she wanted to prevent more serious miscommunication before going
further. It should be noted here that Teacher L herself now seems to be actively engaged in
resolving her own non-understanding about Hong’s explanation rather than helping clarify
meaning for Mei-San, which was her original attempt. In other words, as interactional sequences
go forward, different miscommunication phenomena may arise, which needs to be constantly
negotiated on the spot.
After 1.2 second pause, Hong responds to Teacher L’s request by saying “develop (.) ing.” in the slow and careful manner, separating each morpheme with a micro pause (i.e., morphemic repair), and accentuating the second part (“ing.”) (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3). This turn demonstrates Hong’s communicative strategies to make his utterance clear to Teacher L, including slowing down, restating (from undeveloped to developing), and enhanced explicitness (e.g., Mauranen, 2007, 2012; Kaur, 2009a, 2011b, 2011c) by laying prosodic emphasis on “ing.” It appears that Hong realizes that this is the key information to let Teacher L understand for resolving misunderstanding. Right after that, Teacher L accepts his answer with a repetition and also explicating it by adding “countries.” In addition, Mei San also seemingly shows her acknowledgment non-verbally through her head nods several times (see Figure 7.4). At line 60, Hong displays his agreement by saying “yeah!” with an animated tone. Finally, Teacher L clearly displays her understanding by saying “okay, I see,” while nodding and then adds an evaluative comment, “good point,” which accepts Hong’s explanation as adequate. Especially, “okay,” is considered as a type of a change of epistemic state (Heritage, 1984), which shows Teacher L’s new state of understanding.

As for the outcome of Teacher L’s misunderstanding, it is clear from the sequential analysis that it is resolved. More specifically, mutual understanding is achieved, exhibited clearly by Hong’s agreement (“yeah!”) at line 60 and Teacher L’s showing understanding (“okay, I see,” along with her head nods) at lines 61-62. This interpretation is further corroborated by the stimulated recall interview. Teacher L explains what she understood:

because developing countries do not have technologies not developed for them to have the power. Also, Hong explained why he asked the question because of technologies. He would expect developing countries have less nuclear power plants because of lack of
high-developed technologies. *I do not agree, but I understood his intention* (Interview on December 20, 2013).

On the other hand, in regard to the outcome of Mei San’s non-understanding about Hong’s question sustained from the previous sequence of talk, it is rather difficult to make a firm conclusion since she did not get actively involved verbally in the interaction as seen in the excerpt. However, I claim that Mei San achieved claimed understanding at least based on her non-verbal reaction (nodding at lines 42 and 57) and especially from the stimulated recall interview. Mei San explained, “I thought that Teacher L helped me clarify why Hong asked the question… I focused on what he was going to say and just answered “yes” and then he seems to be satisfied with my answer” (Interview on December 10, 2013). Taking this into account, she clearly recognizes Teacher L’s intention to help her understand why Hong asked the question.

Especially when focusing on the interactional aspects of Hong, who originally created ‘trouble-sources,’ the sequential analysis demonstrates that despite his dis-fluent, lengthy and ambiguous utterances, he also exhibits his effective communicative strategies to make his utterance clear and comprehensible to Teacher L. He slows down, rephrases (or morphemic repair), and enhances explicitness by laying prosodic emphasis on a key element of his speech. In other words, Hong has communicative competence or awareness for making his utterance understandable to his interlocutors. Nevertheless, at the stimulated recall interview, Hong expressed that his English is ‘bad,’ which he thinks was probably the reason why Teacher L and Mei San did not understand him. It seems that he has a negative perception about his own English.

Yet, the excerpt above demonstrates that prompted by Teacher L’s clarification request for asking the reason why Hong asked the question, which is an instance of third-party
participant’s assistance, she provided him with the interactional space to elaborate his intentions and to succeed in making them understood, which shows his communicative achievement through using his L2. In other words, it can be argued that instructors have the enormous power to contribute to such facilitative roles of resolving miscommunication in classroom interactions, which might be perceived as part of teacher identity. Also, it is worth noting that in the process of their facilitative roles of resolving miscommunication for students, instructors might face their own non-understanding or mis-understanding, which requires on-going negotiation. Lastly, it is true that such facilitative and assistant roles are not only restricted to instructors but also other members in the classroom ecology. Students’ voluntary help as third party participants will be examined from the following sections.

7.3 Students’ voluntary help for miscommunication between teacher and student

In the previous section, we have looked at how an instructor helped resolve non-understanding among students as a third-party participant when the first repair attempts failed. In the instructional context, it makes sense that a teacher usually facilitates classroom interaction and provides necessary assistance when communicative problems occur, which is considered one of his or her assigned roles. In contrast, the role of students might be different than instructors’, and students are not necessarily required to deal with other classmates’ communicative problems unless they are willing to get directly involved. In other words, they always have choices to remain silent and not get involved in miscommunication or to join in the sequence and provide assistance to people involved. It is up to students’ volition whether or not they collaborate in resolving miscommunication phenomena.

From this section, we will closely examine four instances of miscommunication phenomena resolved by the voluntary help of multilingual students. First two instances zoom in
the negotiations of pronunciation and phrase, which are treated as ‘problematic’ by an instructor and then collaboratively resolved by students’ assistance. The other two instances showcase the students’ representation of their peer’s point of view as a strategy of repair. It appears that the students who are the third party participants, or “official hearers” who did not get involved in miscommunication sequences initially but become part of the interaction later, have a better understanding about what the problem is probably because of their unique position from a more objective stance, and effectively assist in resolving miscommunication by projecting their own interpretations, as will be seen below.

7.3.1 Pronunciation negotiation

The first excerpt is mainly related to the communicative problem at the phonological level. As discussed in Chapter 3, the trouble with understanding different pronunciation has been found out as one of the most common communicative problems in ELF interactions because ELF speakers usually have accents influenced by their L1 backgrounds (e.g., Deterding, 2013; Jenkins, 2000, 2002; Matsumoto, 2011). It should be noted that this instance happened in Week 5 during a 15-week semester when an instructor and students probably did not fully get accustomed to their communicative styles in general and pronunciations in particular. This sequence of talk arose right before students’ oral presentations about essays. Several students were asking Teacher L about specific requirements for their presentation. Mei San asks a question related to the time limit for the presentation, but Teacher L does not seem to understand her even after she repeats it.

**Excerpt 2:** “Exceed? Exceed?”

1. TL: yes,
2. MS: what if we exceed the time "limit,"
3. (0.4)
4. TL: {What?}=

Excerpt 2: “Exceed? Exceed?”

1. TL: yes,
2. MS: what if we exceed the time "limit,"
3. (0.4)
4. TL: {What?}=
5. moves one step forward, closer to MS
6. MS: =what if we exceed the time limit,
7. TL: {(1.2)}
8. both eyes look up, with a quizzical look on face
9. what if, we::,
10. MS: ['exceed,' 
11. G: [{Exceed, Exceed,}=
12. {his body leans back towards chair while gazing
13. at TL’s direction}
14. TL: =exceed?
15. AN: [huh-huh,
16. MS: [(nods)]
17. 'the time limit,' 
18. TL: [the time 'limit',
19. {O:h! uh:n,}
20. Looks at Said’s direction and then points at him
21. with LH’s index finger, holding it until line 22)
22. [Said’s to be very very strict,
23. SA: [{(Raises left arm near head and keeps waving
24. LH to classmates})
25. F: haha|haha!
26. TL: [he’ll stop.
27. AN: (sure,)
28. TL: he will interrupt you,(0.8)
29. >right away!<
30. S? [(coughs)]

Figure 7.5. Lines 11-13:
“Exceed, Exceed,”
At line 1, Teacher L nominates Mei San as the person who asks the question. Orienting to that,
Mei San begins asking a question, “what if we exceed the time ‘limit’,” with a smaller voice on
“limit.” After a brief gap of silence, Teacher L initiates repair through both verbal and non-
This turn can be interpreted as “open-class repair initiator” (Drew, 1997; Schegloff, 1997, 2000),
which does not specifically target a trouble-source, but rather an attempt to clarify the previous
utterance in a general sense. Also, her moving closer to Mei San non-verbally displays her close
attention to her utterance. As a response to Teacher L’s request for clarification, Mei San orients
to Teacher L’s repair initiation and repeats her question in the similar manner, “what if we
exceed the time limit.” This is construed as “exact repetition” (Lichtkoppler, 2007), which is
sensitively oriented to Teacher L’s open-class repair initiation.

Despite Mei San’s repair attempt through repetition, the following sequence of talk
clearly demonstrates that her repetition does not help resolve Teacher L’s communicative
problem. At lines 7-8, during the 1.2 second pause, Teacher L’s gaze shifts upward and she
shows a quizzical look on her face, both of which display her difficulty in understanding Mei
San by such embodied resources. According to Seo and Koshik (2010), “a quizzical look, a
raised eyebrow and a frown without accompanying speech are often used and understood to
signal recipients’ emotional reactions to or problems with the prior talk” (p. 2220). Then, at line
9, Teacher L tries to repair again in more targeted way, by saying “what if, we::.” This turn
shows Teacher L’s signaling the specific part as a trouble-source to indicate that repair needs to
be done on this specific part. Namely, she employs elongation (“we::”), which is effective in
terms of specifying where her problem is (i.e., “exceed,” which comes right after “we” in Mei
San’s question) and eliciting assistance. In this way, this turn can be Teacher L’s attempt at
seeking for assistance for repairing her communicative problem. Teacher L’s strategy here resembles Eliciting Completion Device (ECD) (Margutti, 2006), elongating her speech and leaving her statement incomplete so as to elicit the responses from her students. Here Teacher L makes her struggle “explicit” to co-present others in the classroom, which can function as eliciting collaborative participation from her students.

Right after Teacher L’s second attempt for repair, which is more specific than the first one, both Mei San and Gupta orient to it accordingly and successfully uptake her request. At line 10, Mei San utters in a quieter voice, “exceed,” At the same time, as a third-party participant, Gupta voluntarily joins this repair work by saying loudly, “Exceed, Exceed,” with the prosodic emphasis on “ceed.” Here, Gupta does prosodic repair. His gaze at Teacher L clearly addresses that this turn is specifically intended and designed for her (see Figure 7.5). Furthermore, recognizably Gupta increases the volume of his voice, repeats the word, and even accentuates its second syllable, all of which can contribute to raising explicitness and increasing intelligibility of this key word in Mei San’s utterance. In other words, Gupta uses a communicative strategy, namely, repetition along with the shift of prosody to make sure that it draws Teacher L’s attention enough and that her non-understanding will be resolved. It is true that repetition has been identified as one of the most robust and common strategies among ELF speakers that ensure communicative success (Cogo, 2009; Hülmbauer, 2009; Hülmbauer et al., 2009; Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Matsumoto, 2011; Mauranen, 2007, 2012; Watterson, 2008). Yet, here Gupta also combines a prosodic emphasis with verbal repetition.

Latched with Gupta, Teacher L seemingly tries to confirm her understanding through repetition at line 14. Note that Teacher L maintains the same prosodic emphasis on its second syllable, and uses a rising intonation for asking for clarification from her audience. Teacher L’s
turn here functions as ensuring accuracy of understanding, thereby confirming each other’s interactional construction. It appears that the stress on the second syllable matters for Teacher L’s understanding of this key word.

Immediately after Teacher L’s confirmation check, Anna produces a continuer, “huh-huh,” (Gardner, 2001), which acknowledges Teacher L’s utterance. Simultaneously, Mei San also shows her agreement nonverbally through her head nod. Then, at line 17, Mei San says, “the time limit,” which is the later part of her question that follows “exceed” in a smaller voice. This turn might show her attempt to ascertain that Teacher L understands the “whole” part of her question besides the key word. Overlapped with Mei San, Teacher L also says, “the time limit,” which aligns with her. At line 19, Teacher L eventually signals her newer understanding with a change of state token or “O:h!” (Heritage, 1984) and then starts to provide the explanation with regard to Mei San’s question from lines 22-29. It is clear that Teacher L achieved understanding about Mei San’s question and that the negotiation of the key word, “exceed” has been successfully achieved.

As for the causes of Teacher L’s non-understanding about Mei San’s question, it probably happened because of Mei San’s phonological quality of “exceed,” and its lack of the clear stress on its second syllable. Nevertheless, Gupta from a different linguistic and cultural background was able to understand Mei San clearly and repeated the word for Teacher L while laying prosodic emphasis on the second syllable, which seemingly assisted Teacher L to understand Mei San’s pronunciation. Gupta commented about his own behavior and the possible reason why he understood Mei San:

*Her accent is very different. “Exceed, exceed,” But I got it, …Professor did not understand. She was like, “What? What?” I said, I shouted loudly. “Exceed?,” and she*
got it. *Professor’s accent is also very different from her accent.* Very different. I got it *because my accent and her accent are similar* (Interview on October, 22, 2013).

Gupta claims that since his and Mei San’s accents are similar, he understood her and repeated loudly for his teacher. It is intriguing that he commented that Mei San (including his) and Professor’s accents are very different from each other, which he implies is a possible cause for non-understanding. As Smith (1988) argues, if interlocutors do not have familiarity with English sounds produced by speakers from other regions outside of their L1, it might be difficult to negotiate different pronunciations with one another in the initial encounter. Put otherwise, familiarity with a range of English varieties can develop high intelligibility.

One might argue that through helping each other in negotiating pronunciations (both segmental and suprasegmental levels) in interactional sequences, Teacher L and multilingual students in the classroom are constantly developing familiarity of their different pronunciations. Furthermore, it is important to note that Gupta has awareness in terms of differences in intercultural communication, especially pronunciation aspects. This recognition is found out as a crucial step towards perceiving intercultural communication as a two-way phenomenon in which participants of the two sides need to be ready to collaboratively construct and interpret meaning and to overcome misunderstandings across cultural boundaries (Moalla, forthcoming).

Furthermore, the stimulated recall interview with Teacher L reveals that she clearly recognized assistance from Gupta:

*I understood when Gupta repeated that word.* But I didn’t get this word from Mei San.

*He helped me.* Because I didn’t hear her say “exceed,” *Since it is a key word* in her question, I was trying to figure out what her question was about. And *Gupta helped me,* he is a very active student (Interview on October 15, 2013).
Similarly Mei San also seems to appreciate Gupta’s attempt of repeating “exceed,” provided the evidence from the interview. Mei San said that Gupta helped her to clarify what she tried to ask Teacher L (Interview on October, 8, 2013). It appears that negotiating pronunciations can be an on-going challenge for instructors who need to communicate with multilingual students, which probably requires a great amount of time to get used to different pronunciations for achieving mutual understanding. Thus, it is possible that assistance from student peers who understand different pronunciation is a quite helpful and effective resource for constructing understanding in a multilingual classroom. In particular, when the repetition by second party participants turn out to be ineffective, which is the case in the excerpt above, repetition along with an prosodic emphasis by third party participants in the classroom can become an important interactional resource for negotiating pronunciations while saving face.

Finally, in addition to different pronunciation, there is another potential cause of Teacher L’s non-understanding. Namely, the volume of Mei San’s speech was rather low. This interpretation became clear through the stimulated recall interview. Teacher L said, “she speaks in the very soft voice, and since there is always background noise against, it is difficult to catch” (Interview on October 15, 2013). In fact, it is found from the classroom observation that at the moment when Mei San and Teacher L was interacting, there was some background noise especially because several students were moving around and going to the podium in front to be ready for their PowerPoint presentations. Thus, it is possible that Mei San’s soft voice triggered non-understanding in this stretch of interaction regardless of the phonological matter.

In summary, the excerpt above demonstrates the collaborative assistance provided by a multilingual student peer for an instructor’s non-understanding caused by a student’s different pronunciation or soft voice. Furthermore, it shows a variety of communicative strategies by both
instructor and students, including an instructor’s use of ECD (i.e., elongation that pinpoints the
object for miscommunication and elicitation of the response from her audience), verbal repetition
in louder voice with prosodic emphasis, a teacher’s confirmation check by using a rising
intonation, and an attempt to complete the turn by adding the missing part. Such careful and
collaborative joint effort among multi-party participants in the classroom led to resolving
miscommunication effectively, and such negotiation of pronunciations as in this sequence can
contribute to developing familiarity of different pronunciation among class members. It is worth
noting that the third party participant’s voluntary help is quite effective in making ‘problematic’
pronunciation “explicit” and spotlighting on it for negotiation among all class members. Lastly,
such joint efforts regarding pronunciation negotiation among class members demonstrate their
interactional competence because effective communication rests on an ability to interact with
others and to collectively reach understanding (Walsh, 2012).

7.3.2 Negotiation of phrase

The next excerpt is an example of the negotiation process triggered by the
communicative problem at the lexical level. In this sequence of talk, ELF speakers are
collaboratively negotiating the meaning of a specific phrase related to a student’s argumentative
essay topic. Since the interactional context is academic writing classroom in which students write
on a range of topics that interest them, unfamiliar or idiosyncratic phrases tend to emerge, which
need to be negotiated on the spot in classroom interactions. It is also true that since multilingual
students have different linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds in their L1s, they might
bring out some knowledge and interpretation, which might be not shared with others and trigger
miscommunication. This sequence of talk happened during Atikah’s (from Malaysia) Q & A
session followed her oral presentation. Her argument is “Prostitution should be banned.” In the
beginning of this sequence, Gupta asks a question about the situation in Malaysia and her
response triggers Teacher L’s non-understanding, which will be clarified by two multilingual
students’ collaborative, voluntary assistance.

Excerpt 3a: “not fully legalized.”

1. G: ((audience’s clap ends)) what is the situation (.) in Malaysia?
2. (0.8)
3. A: {Ah::,}
4. {shifts both eyes upward}
5. the situation in Malaysia is (.)
6. fifty percent (. ) legalized.
7. (0.5)
8. ➔ TL: {legal?}
9. ➔ {slightly leans forward gazing at A}
10. A: ah:, fifty percents.
11. [it’s like,
12. TL: [((nods a few times))
13. A: {Ah:::n?}
14. {opens mouth widely looking upward}
15. (1.0)
16. A: [brothels is legal,
17. TL: [((slowly nods once))
18. A: but, (. ) {not being}
19. {shakes head}
20. (1.2) pimping?
21. [>it’s like,< (0.8)
22. TL: [((gazes at her upper left side))
23. A: when {you (.) recruit someone}
24. {raises BH @ chest and moves closer to body,
25. with palms facing body}
26. 'to become a prostitute.'
27. (1.2)
28. ➔ TL: {so, it’s legal?}
29.➔ {looks at A with quizzical look}
30. you said [like that?]
31. A: [it’s
32. fifty percent legal,
33. (0.5) {it’s just like,}=
34. {shifts both eyes upward}
35.➔ MS: ={not fully legalized.}=
36.➔ {looks at TL}
37.➔ A: =fully,
38.➔ [not fully, legalized.]=
39.➔ MS: [((nods a few times looking at A))
40.➔ ={yeah,}= 
41.➔ {gazes at TL}
42.➔ TL: ={it- it could be legal, (.).} or}
43.➔ {gazes at MS}
44.➔ {illegal,}=
45.➔ {leans her right side when putting an emphasis on “ill”}
46.➔ MS: ={yeah.}
47.➔ {nods once looking at TL}
48. TL: ’I, I,”
49. A: [YEAH!
50. MS: [((nods several times while glimpsing at A))

Figure 7.6. Lines 13-14: “Ah:::n?”
Figure 7.7. Line 22
Figure 7.8. Lines 28-29: “so, it’s legal?”
At lines 3-6, in response to Gupta’s question, Atikah answers, “Ah::, the situation in Malaysia is (. ) fifty percent (. ) legalized.” In particular, her phrase, “fifty percent legalized” triggers Teacher L’s non-understanding, as clearly observed in the later sequence of talk. After a gap of silence, Teacher L selectively repeats, “legal?” with a rising intonation while slightly leaning forward and gazing at Atikah. This turn seems to function as her clarification request for Atikah’s previous utterance, bringing it into focus for negotiation. Orienting to Teacher L’s request, at line 10 Atikah utters, “ah:, fifty percents.” which supplements the missing component from her original utterance. It seems that Atikah treats “fifty percents” as the essential information.

From lines 11-26, Atikah tries to explicate what it means by “fifty percent legal” in order to negotiate the meaning with Teacher L. At line 11, she starts with “it’s like,” which signals her initiation of rephrasing. Then, she continues “Ah:::n?” while opening her mouth widely and...
directing her gaze upward (see Figure 7.6), which seemingly displays her thinking effort. In other words, she may need a little time to think how she will explain. Followed by a gap of silence, Atikah provides the detailed explanation, “brothels is legal, but, (. ) not being pimping?” at lines 16-20. Simultaneously, while saying, “not being” she slightly shakes her head, which shows the negation (“not”) through the embodied modality. It is also observed at lines 12 and 17 that Teacher L shows her collaborative attitude and listenership through her head nod. At line 21, Atikah signals her rephrasing again by saying, “it’s like,” in a quicker pace, and from lines 23-26, she seemingly rephrases the word, “pimping,” by saying, “when you (. ) recruit someone “to become a prostitute.” In particular, Atikah’s turn at lines 21-26 exhibits her employment of communicative strategy or “pre-empting strategy” (Kaur, 2009a, 2011b, 2011c; Cogo, 2009) in making sure that Teacher L clearly understands the word, “pimping” through rephrasing. In other words, Atikah might expect Teacher L’s unfamiliarity about this phrase and prevent a communicative problem beforehand by rephrasing. It is possible that Atikah orients to Teacher L’s non-verbal reaction (namely, raising eye gazes) at line 22 (see Figure 7.7) as a signal of non-understanding.

Subsequent to a gap of silence that follows Atikah’s rephrasing, Teacher L still tries to clarify the intent of the utterance regarding Atikah’s phrase by saying, “so, it’s legal?” while looking at Atikah with a quizzical look (see Figure 7.8). This is interpreted as Teacher L’s second attempt for repair. Overlapped with Teacher L’s utterance, “you said like that?” Atikah promptly responds, “it’s fifty percent legal,” adding the information, “fifty percent” again. It becomes even clearer that this phrase (“fifty percent legal”) matters for Atikah. At lines 33-34, she goes on, “it’s just like,” while shifting both eyes upward. Interestingly, from line 35, Mei San, who shares national and linguistic background with Atikah and sits right next to Teacher L,
suddenly chimes in and supplies the later part, “not fully legalized.” with its emphasis on “fully.” Mei San’s turn here can be interpreted as “collaborative completion,” which shows a high degree of accommodation where Mei San adds Atikah’s incomplete utterance, with the result that they end up speaking together and “co-creating the message” (Björkman, 2014, p. 133). At the same time, Mei San looks at Teacher L (see Figure 7.9), which non-verbally signals that she sensitively orients to her for the purpose of the clarification. Responding to Mei San, Atikah latches with her and says, “fully, not fully legalized.” in prosodic emphasis on the first “fully,” which shows her agreement with Mei San. Aligned with Atikah, Mei San nods a few times during her utterance (see Figure 7.10) with her eye gaze on Atikah. Then, Mei San provides a minimal response, “yeah,” while shifting her gaze to Teacher L (see Figure 7.11). In particular, Mei San’s gaze at Teacher L clearly displays her orientation to the teacher and her attempt to clarify what Atikah means as part of voluntary, collaborative assistance as a third-party participant.

However, despite Atikah and Mei San’s mutual efforts in terms of clarifying through rephrasing, it is observed at lines 42-45 that Teacher L begins clarifying once again by saying, “it- it could be legal, (.) or illegal.” This time, she gazes at Mei San (see Figure 7.12), who just provided the assistance rather than Atikah. At the same time, as she says, “illegal,” with its emphasis on “ill,” Teacher L leans her body to her right side (see Figure 7.13), which appears to enhance explicitness through the embodied resource along with the prosodic emphasis for making a clear contrast between “legal” and “illegal.” Teacher L’s turn here can be considered as her third repair attempt or morpheme repair. With her utterance, Teacher L seems to underscore her own version of understanding regarding “what legal means” different from Atikah (i.e., the possible option that she thinks should be either legal or illegal, not fifty percent). Latched with
Teacher L, Mei San provides a minimal response, “yeah.” while nodding and looking at her. Then, Teacher L tries to take up the next turn by saying, “I, I,” in a quieter voice, but Atikah takes it over by saying, “YEAH!” with a louder volume. In this way, Atikah displays her understanding of Teacher L in the emphatic manner. Overlapped with Atikah, Mei San nods several times while glimpsing at Atikah’s direction.

To summarize so far, it is observed that Atikah’s rephrasing and Mei San’s voluntary, collaborative assistance as a third party participant have contributed to resolving Teacher L’s non-understanding to some degree. Yet, as observed, Teacher L clarified three times in different ways, which implies that she still does not get what Atikah means by “fifty percent legal.” The following excerpt happens right after Excerpt 3a. After Teacher L’s more direct clarification request, another student from different linguistic background (Sharma from India) tries to help with her non-understanding.

Excerpt 3b: “how can it be fifty percent legal,“

51.➔TL: {how can it be, fifty percent legal,}
52.➔ {looks at MS}
53.➔MS: [Like?]
54.➔SH: ['maybe,' 
55.➔ {some parts of the,}=
56.➔ {raises RH @ chest level, with palm facing down
57.➔ and half-cupped, fingers slightly curled; roughly draws
58.➔ a circular shape while pointing down; looking at TL}
59.➔MS: ={yeah.}
60.➔ {nods looking at TL}
61.➔SH: cit- [uh:,
62.➔TL: [{in some,}
63.➔ {quickly shifts gaze from SH to A}
64.➔A: {((nods a few times while looking at TL))}
At lines 54-58, it is observed that Sharma joins in and tries to help resolve the miscommunication between Teacher L and Atikah sustained from the previous excerpt. Prior to that, at line 51, Teacher L attempts to clarify Atikah’s phrase in a more direct manner by raising a question, “how can it be, fifty percent legal.” Such “metalinguistic questions” (Vasseur et al., 1996, p. 88) are precise in pinpointing the object that the miscommunication originally relates to. Also, explicit procedures of indicating problems like this are generally considered as more
effective than implicit ones (Vasseur et al., 1996). During Teacher L’s overt repair work, she looks at Mei San’s direction instead of Atikah (see Figure 7.14), which implies that she is still seeking for assistance from Mei San, who is a third party participant. This nonverbal signal is probably oriented by Mei San since she takes up the next turn by saying, “Like?” By doing this, Mei San seemingly starts to explain her own reasoning for “fifty percent legal” as a response to Teacher L’s question.

However, at line 54, Sharma overlaps by saying, “maybe,” with a quiet voice, and then continues, “some parts of the.” This can be considered as an attempt of rephrasing of Atikah, followed by Mei San’s previous rephrase, “not fully legalized.” Simultaneously, Sharma raises his right hand at chest level, with its palm facing down and half-cupped and fingers slightly curled, and roughly draws a circular shape while pointing down (see Figure 7.15). This gesture seemingly visualizes the image of space, or more specifically “some parts” that he is explaining verbally. Thus, this might function as raised explicitness regarding the word, “parts” through employing the iconic gesture coordinated with speech. Furthermore, Sharma looks at Teacher L’s direction while gesturing along with speech, which shows its “recipient design” (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). Overlapped with Sharma, Mei San provides a minimal response, “yeah.” while nodding and looking at Teacher L. It appears that Mei San shows her agreement with Sharma. At line 61, Sharma tries to add something to his incomplete utterance, but Teacher L overtakes his turn, which ends up with being incomplete.

From line 62 onwards, Teacher L tries to confirm her newer understanding built upon Sharma’s explication. She says, “in some, some areas, (. ) it’s legal?” Her use of a phrase, “some areas” is probably reflected on Sharma’s verbal and embodied explanation about “some parts.” At the same time, she shifts her gaze from Sharma to Atikah (see Figure 7.16). This embodied
action through her gaze skillfully signals the shift of her orientation to Atikah. In response to Teacher L’s clarification request, Atikah displays her agreement by saying, “yeah!” with an animated tone. At line 67, Teacher L further double-checks with Atikah by her utterance, “that’s what you are saying?” Again latched with Teacher L, Atikah provides a minimal positive response, “yeah!” It is particularly worth noting here that the lines 62-68 exhibit the active communicative effort among these ELF speakers in terms of ensuring correct understanding. Namely, Teacher L is carefully confirming her understanding about Atikah’s phrase to make sure that she interprets it correctly and to avert further communicative problems. As Kaur (2009a) and Mauranen (2006) argue, multilinguals are known to monitor their utterances and anticipate trouble sources in their lingua franca interactions. Finally, at line 69 Teacher L indicates her understanding of Atikah’s phrase by “Oh!” with an animated tone, which is a change of state token (Heritage, 1984). And then at lines 71-73, she adds, “okay,” nods a few time, and states, “I see,” with a smaller voice, all of which display her understanding.

As for the cause of Teacher L’s non-understanding, it was triggered mainly because of Atikah’s phrase, “fifty percent legalized” and different interpretations about this phrase between them. In the long stretch of sequence of talk, Teacher L tried to clarify and negotiate what this phrase means to Atikah many times and in different ways, as observed at line 8 (“legal?”), line 28 (“so, it’s legal?”), lines 42 and 44 (“it- it could be legal, or illegal,”), and line 51 (“how can it be, fifty percent legal,”). Noticeably, such clarification attempts are getting more direct and specific later on.

In the stimulated recall interview, Teacher L commented about her reason why she did not understand this phrase:
I remember this situation because it was a very funny answer. I understood her very well. I mean, I understood what she means, but the content of her phrase, uh, it does not make any logic to me. Because something can be either legal or illegal. It cannot be 50% legal. That’s why I clarified what it means to her. …did you see, uh, Shan and Hong were laughing? Because everyone understands that it cannot be, something can be legal or illegal. It’s funny (Interview on December 20, 2013).

Taking this into consideration, for Teacher L, the logic of the phrase, “50 % legal” does not make sense. She even states that it is very funny and laughable among other students as well. Thus, the nature of this phrase seemingly triggered Teacher L’s non-understanding. On the other hand, regarding the reason why Atikah used this phrase, she commented:

Because I did research, and they said like, Malaysia is 50 percent legal. And also illegal. Because like some parts, uhn, they just like, they are being in the brothels. And some of the parts, when they are doing it like, they are pimping, they recruit people, that’s become illegal (Interview on December 10, 2013).

She claims that she got this idea from the result of her research about this topic. Furthermore, Atikah mentioned in the interview that Teacher L did not get what she meant, “50 percent legal.” but Mei San understood and other people also helped her to clarify the meaning. In other words, she was aware of her classmates’ assistance for resolving her communicative problem although Shama’s clarification through verbal speech and gestural mode was not what Atikah really meant. That is because 50 percent legal in Atikah’s sense is not about some “areas” in the certain regions in Malaysia, but some “aspects” of the prostitution business, which became clear in her interview. Yet, one can argue that classmates’ collaborative support for negotiating the phrase is still helpful for Atikah despite their rather distinctive representation.
In summary, the excerpts above illustrate the miscommunication phenomenon between a multilingual student and Teacher L regarding the unique phrase that the student claimed as important based on her own research about a topic before writing. Although Teacher L does not see the reasoning of why “50 percent legal” is possible, her classmates seem to understand Atikah better (or try to understand from her point of view) and collaborate in terms of clarifying the meaning for Teacher L and effectively resolving her non-understanding. In particular, both Mei-San and Sharma help resolve the miscommunication by providing different clues or interpretations about the meaning of the phrase after Atikah’s own rephrasing and explication did not work out. In addition to giving different rephrases, it can be argued that these two third-party participants’ involvement can provide Teacher L sufficient time to think about this unique phrase from different angles and understand it better. In fact, Atikah insists on using this unique phrase as observed in her repetition even after it is treated as a ‘trouble-source’ by Teacher L. Thus, Atikah and Teacher L needed to negotiate the meaning *in situ* through getting voluntary, collaborative assistance from other class members. Finally, as observed in a number of ELF pragmatic research (Cogo, 2009; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Kaur, 2009a; Mauranen, 2006), this excerpt also demonstrates that rephrasing appears to be effectively used as a communicative strategy in terms of helping clarify meaning, averting problems of understanding, and better understanding the meaning of unique phrases in this writing classroom as well.

### 7.3.3 Students’ representing a peer’s point of view

In this section, we still center on examining instances of miscommunication resolved by the collaborative assistance among multilingual students, but the specific type of support, namely overt signals of representing another student’s point of view. Two cases below involve such students’ acts of representing their peers based on their own interpretations and helping resolve
their teacher’s non-understandings. It has been revealed based on the classroom observation that this kind of collaborative phenomenon rather occurred often with the progress of the semester. This is probably because students and instructors became more aware of potential communicative problems and became familiar with one another’s communicative styles through spending time together. The following sequence of talk happened during Weimin’s Q & A session about his argumentative essay. His thesis statement is “Chinese government should keep on building the nuclear fuel plant.” and just prior to this sequence, Alireza (from Kuwait) asked him about the difference between fuel and power plants and negotiated about the main difference. While Alireza seemingly understood Weimin’s explication, Teacher M does not quite get it. The excerpt below exhibits the process of how Weimin responds to Teacher M’s request for clarification and then Alireza represents Weimin to help resolve Teacher M’s non-understanding.

Excerpt 4a: “That’s what he is trying to say.”

1. TM:  
   ((raises right arm and drops after W recognizes by nodding))
2. I’m not clear about the difference
3. so,
4. [you said, (0.8) fuel plants? are:,
5. ➔ A:  
   (((changes body orientation from front to TM in back))
6. (0.5)
7. TM:  required through the processing
8. of (. ) nuclear power plants, "right?"
9. (0.4)
10. W:  Yeah! because [in case of {another physicists}]
11. {smiles}
12. TM:  
   (((that’s the point!) ((smiles at direction of M at his right side))
13. 
14. W:  
   {it’s ah:, (0.5) there’s some like, (0.5) rock science
15. {keeps smile on face through line 16}
16. >inside of it.<
17. they cannot, (.) presented in (.) three minutes,
18. But, I’ll mention that in my uh, thesis,
19. yeah, >it’s pointing out what’s the difference between<
20. (0.5) >a fuel plant and a power plant.<
21. (0.8) >so like,< why this procedure in the (.) fuel plants,
22. are much safer,
23. (0.8) >yeah,< I’m gonna mention in my uh:,
24. (0.5) thesis,(0.5) I mean, my essay,=
25.➔ A: ={I mean, simply, fuel plants produce fuels, to generate}
26.➔ {keeps eye gaze at TM throughout his turn}
27.➔ the power plants.(.) into the power plants.
28.➔ so, there is no- nothing danger, dangerous for the,(.)
29.➔ fuel plants.
30. (1.0)
31.➔ that’s {what he}
32.➔ {points at W’s direction with RH}
33.➔ is trying to say.=
34.➔ W: =yeah,
Figure 7.20. Lines 31-32: “that’s what he”
At line 2, Teacher M explicitly signals non-understanding by his utterance, “I’m not clear about the difference.” Subsequent to this overt signal, at lines 3-8, Teacher M tries to clarify by summarizing what he has understood from Weimin’s explanation. In particular, the tag question particle, “right?” in the end shows Teacher M’s intention of making a confirmation check with Weimin. Furthermore, this tag question seems to serve as downgrading his epistemic claim (Heritage & Raymond, 2005) to Weimin’s topic of writing (i.e., nuclear power and fuel plants) and positioning the recipient, Weimin as likely knowing the answer (Heritage & Raymond, 2012). In other words, the design of the tag question invites a confirmation from Weimin, who is treated as a person more familiar with this specific topic.

After a request of a confirmation from Teacher M, a short pause followed and Weimin initiates his explication at lines 10-24. Weimin begins with an agreement token, “Yeah!” with an animated tone, and continues, “because in case of another physi-cists.” in stress on its first two syllables. Notice that he smiles (see Figure 7.17) while saying, “another physi-cists.” Overlapped with Weimin, Teacher M utters something like, “that’s the point!” while smiling at the direction of another student on his right. Here, their acts of smiling align with each other. From lines 14-17, Weimin tries to provide the reason why he did not explain about the difference during his presentation by highlighting the fact that there were only three minutes for presenting, which is not enough to cover the detailed processes of producing fuel and power in relation to physics and petology. In particular, Weimin’s turn here rather indicates his challenge towards Teacher M since he is claiming that the presentation time is not enough for him to cover his content, which is necessary for a clear understanding of the difference between fuel and power plants. In fact, Weimin’s major is physics, so he is probably more familiar with this topic than Teacher M. Thus,
Weimin may claim epistemic authority in his challenge of his teacher, which represents an inversion of traditional teacher-student interaction in the classroom.

Nevertheless, note that Weimin skillfully employs smile throughout his turn (see Figures 7.17 and 7.18), perhaps for mitigating his challenge. In fact, smile can highlight the interactional trouble occasioned by challenge and sensitively orient to its face-threatening nature, using smile to soften the challenge (Jacknick, 2013). From lines 18-22, Weimin shifts his challenge to an agreeing stance, signaled by a contrastive conjunction (“But,”), and mentions that he is going to write the difference and the reason why the procedure in the fuel plant is much safer than the power plant in his essay. Moreover, in the following sequence, Weimin repeats what he already said for making sure that his teacher clearly understands it. Notably, Weimin highlights his agreeing stance by his repeated use of a token, “yeah,” (lines 19 and 23) perhaps because he attempts to align with his teacher after indicating his challenge.

Interestingly, latched with Weimin’s turn, Alireza takes up the next turn from line 25. In fact, since line 5, Alireza changed his body orientation from the front to Teacher M sitting in back and kept this body orientation to Teacher M all the time (see Figure 7.19). He jumps in the interaction with a discourse marker, “I mean,” and continues his explanation by saying, “simply, fuel plants produce fuels, to generate the power plants. into the power plants. so, there is no-nothing danger, dangerous for the, fuel plants.” while maintaining his gaze at Teacher M. Here, as a third-party participant, Alireza is trying to simply paraphrase Weimin’s explanation based on his own understanding probably achieved through his negotiation sequence before. Alireza’s behavior is specifically targeted for Teacher M in terms of clarifying the meaning, evidenced by his body orientation and direction of his gaze.
Followed by 1.0 second pause, at lines 31-33, Alireza adds, “that’s what he is trying to say.” while pointing at Weimin’s direction with right hand (see Figure 7.20). This turn clearly signals his role of representing Weimin’s point of view. Furthermore, by this utterance, Alireza tries to legitimize his utterance by referring back to Weimin and tying his turn to Weimin through the verbal and non-verbal (i.e., deictic gesture) modalities. Right after Alireza’s retrospective utterance that signals his representation for Weimin and makes discourse structure explicit, Weimin indicates his agreement with a minimal response, “yeah,” The interpretation regarding Weimin’s acceptance of Alireza’s explanation is also corroborated by the stimulated recall interview. Weimin said, “it was pretty clear and close to what I was thinking about. That’s pretty helpful” (Interview on July 31, 2013). Based on this, Weimin appreciates Alireza’s appropriate representation of his opinions for the purpose of clarifying Teacher M’s non-understanding. One might argue that Alireza’s collaborative representation can give Weimin emotional support and confidence to successfully resolve Teacher M’s non-understanding. To sum up so far, it is observed that Teacher M’s non-understanding overtly signaled is taken up by Weimin’s rather mixed attitude of challenging and agreeing stance, and then followed up by Alireza’s assistance for resolving it by his representation and simplification of Weimin’s opinions based on his own interpretation. It should be noted that Alireza’s repair sequence by a third-party participant functions differently from Weimin’s one since Alireza provides an alternative, more simplified explanation than Weimin, which can be effective for clarifying Teacher M’s non-understanding with multiple interpretations and also simplification. Furthermore, the phrase, “that’s what he is trying to say.” skillfully gives Alireza credence and right to represent his classmate’s viewpoint. Excerpt 4b continues right after the previous one. Teacher M displays his non-understanding again even after Alireza’s attempt of rephrasing
simply. In the sequence below, Alireza and Weimin still attempt to resolve their teacher’s non-
understanding together.

Excerpt 4b: “No, I’m still not getting it.”

35. (1.5)
36. TM: {{(shakes head)}}
37. {no, I’m still not getting it.}
38. {still shakes head}
39. S?: [Hhhh!
40. → A: [so,
41. → you need fuel? to:, generate
42. → {power plants, right?=}
43. → {points at W’s PP behind with RH’s thumb up @ neck}
44. → TM: =so that, that part is dangerous.=
45. → W: =yeah,
46. [the fuel, the fuel plants,
47. → A: [{yeah, power plant,}]
48. → {gazes at TM while explaining and then shifts to W}
49. → W: are consumed with the refinement of the uranium.
50. → (0.6) but, the:, (..) nuclear power plants,
51. → are consumed with the _fusion_? (0.5) >I mean,<
52. → {to divide the:,}
53. → {raises BH @ stomach with all fingers curled, which
54. → looks like holding something inside the shape of tube, and
55. → moves BH apart laterally}
56. {to divide the}
57. {holds same tube-shape gesture at lines 53-55 and
58. makes beats a few times}
59. [atoms. (..) the energy’s
60. [((phone alarm starts to ring))
61. released by uh, >dividing the atoms is really huge,<
62. but, {to refine? (..) uranium, doesn’t require}
63. **(raises LH @ stomach with palm up and half cupped; RH fingers tap on LH palm, which makes beats; keeps making beats until line 66)**

64. a lot of (0.5)energy. and a lot of uh:n, **damage** in the environment.

65. ((1.8))

66. ➔ A: (((nods several times gazing at TM, and then tilts head to his left while opening up BH’s palms))

70. ➔ W: ‘yeah.’

71. TM: ‘okay, so if the danger is **lessened**,}

72. A: ‘*yeah.*’

73. **raises both shoulders slightly up**

74. then, >that’s good.<

75. ➔ A: ‘*yeah.*’

76. ➔ W: ‘*yeah,*’

77. ➔ ‘gazes at TM and then looks down’

78. ➔ ‘*nods*’

79. ➔ ‘*nods*’

80. (0.8)

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**Figure 7.21.** Lines 42-43: “power plants, right?”

**Figure 7.22.** Line 48 “to divide the:,”

**Figure 7.23.** Lines 52-55: “to divide the:,”
As observed, Teacher M displays his non-understanding once again by shaking his head at lines 36 and 38 and verbal speech, “no, I’m still not getting it.” at line 37. In fact, this is his second overt signal of non-understanding. Possibly orienting to this teacher’s explicit signal, a student issues a stifled quality of laughter (“Hhhha!”) because it can be considered the dis-preferred response to the instructor. This is particularly because it can be interactionally treated that the student may be *laughing at* the teacher’s non-understanding, which is by nature face-threatening (Glenn, 2003). Overlapped with this laughter, Alireza takes up the turn again by saying, “so, you need fuel? to; generate power plants, right?”

It is clear here that Alireza still maintains his active role of helping resolve Teacher M’s non-understanding. Simultaneously, he points at Weimin’s PowerPoint slide behind him with his thumb up (see Figure 7.21), which aims for drawing his teacher’s attention to the information on the PowerPoint slide. By doing this, Alireza appears to clarify the main point and makes a confirmation check, especially signaled by a tag marker, “right?” with the prosodic emphasis. Notice that this tag marker signals orientation toward the recipient-design of his explanation, targeted for Teacher M. Namely, Alireza employs a communicative strategy, or a self-initiated comprehension check (Björkman, 2014). This comprehension check is considered the questions that the speaker asks to see “if the partner can follow the speaker” (Jamsidnejad, 2011, p. 3762) and treated as an active attempt to make sure of mutual understanding.
Attending to such an active attempt to clarify by Alireza, at line 44, Teacher M latches with Alireza and says, “so that, that part is dangerous.” With this utterance, he seems to show part of his understanding although it is unclear what he means by “that part.” Right after Teacher M, Weimin provides an agreement token, “yeah,” and seemingly initiates providing more explanations about fuel and power plants. Overlapped with Weimin, Alireza also provides a same minimal response, “yeah,” and then adds, “power plant,” which specifies what is dangerous regarding Teacher M’s previous utterance (“that part”). In this way, Weimin and Alireza collaboratively attempt clarify meaning in order to resolve Teacher M’s non-understanding. Furthermore, at line 48, Alireza shifts his gaze and body orientation to Weimin from Teacher M (Figure 7.22), which subtly signals that he now gives up his continuation and provides Weimin with the conversational floor. In other words, here Alireza seems to make a spontaneous decision to resign from his active role of representing Weimin’s viewpoint and rather to return to be the audience with active listenership.

From line 49 onwards, Weimin himself elaborates about the difference between fuel and power plants by focusing on the different procedures and using a number of terminologies (e.g., refinement, uranium, atoms, and fusion) related to Physics. It is noticeable that during his elaboration sequence, Weimin employs various communicative strategies for making his verbal explanation comprehensible. First, he highlights key words (e.g., “fuel plants” at line 46 and “power plants” at line 50) with marked stress (at the prosodic level) and a conjunction, “but” (line 50) (at the syntactic level). In particular, situating fuel plants and power plants on contrast by the conjunction of “but” is effective in terms of explaining the different procedures (“refinement of the uranium” and “fusion”) associated with them. Second, prefaced by a discourse marker, “I mean,” Weimin paraphrases the key word, “the fusion” into “to divide the;
to divide the atoms.” This is probably because he might anticipate that Teacher M is not quite familiar with what “fusion” is since it can be a technical term. In this way, Weimin’s turn here can be a pro-active strategy to help avert problems of understanding, which has been exhibited in many existing ELF studies (e.g., Cogo, 2009; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Kaur, 2009a; Mauranen, 2006b, 2007).

Furthermore, this strategy is not only conducted verbally but also non-verbally. Namely, during Weimin’s paraphrasing of “fusion,” he simultaneously employs the iconic, motion-related gesture that visualizes the imaginary process of dividing atoms. More specifically, he raises both hands at stomach level with all fingers curled, which looks like holding something inside the shape of a tube, and then moves both hands apart laterally when saying, “divide” (see Figure 7.23). This iconic gesture seemingly enhances explicitness and spotlights the very process that he imagines is the most dangerous process happening in power plants. In other words, Weimin is specifying the most dangerous procedure in fusion through both verbal (“to divide the atom”) and gestural (iconic gesture) modalities. From line 62 onwards, he employs a contrastive conjecture (“but,”) again in order to make a clear contrast between the process of dividing the atoms and refining uranium, and then summarizes his explanation so far, highlighting his main argument that the refinement of uranium does not require a lot of energy and a lot of damage in the environment.

After Weimin completes his turn, indicated through the use of a falling intonation contour at line 67, a gap of silence ensues. During this silence, Alireza noticeably nods his head while gazing at Teacher M and then tilts his head to his left while opening up both palms (see Figure 7.24). Alireza’s turn here seemingly claims his understanding about Weimin and at the same time checks if Teacher M has achieved understanding. In other words, Alireza is still actively
involved in the act of clarifying Teacher M’s non-understanding even after giving the conversational floor to Weimin. He is still engaging in this repair sequence as a third party participant through the embodied modalities. Right after that, Weimin provides a minimal response, “yeah.” with a reduced voice. Latched with Weimin, Teacher M finally begins to indicate his understanding, evidenced by “okay,” (i.e., acknowledgement token) and providing a positive assessment (“that’s good.”). Interestingly, at lines 76-79, Alireza and Weimin simultaneously show agreement with Teacher M by saying, “yeah.” In particular, Alireza first gazes at Teacher M and then looks downward (see Figure 7.25), which non-verbally signals that his orientation to Teacher M is now terminated since Teacher M already displayed understanding. In other words, the sequence for negotiating Teacher M’s non-understanding together with Weimin is now completed at this point.

As observed from the sequential analysis, the outcome of this miscommunication is Teacher M’s clearer understanding with the assistance of Weimin’s self-clarification and Alireza’s representation. Especially by signaling his non-understanding explicitly twice, Teacher M successfully let Weimin elaborate about his key points of the essay. Furthermore, probably because of Teacher M’s overt signal that enables his communicative problem “publicly shared” in the classroom, Alireza also actively attempted to help Teacher M understand through collaboration with Weimin. Another reason for Alireza’s collaborative assistance is because he just clarified the same point with Weimin by asking questions immediately before this stretch of sequence. The other reason is that Alireza’s major is petro-chemistry, which is closely related to the topic about which Teacher M and Weimin were discussing. As Linell (1995) suggests, some episodes of miscommunication may “increase the depth of understanding in ways that, without them, would be difficult to come by.” (p. 185). According to Linell, the interconnected
relationship between communication and miscommunication opens up the potential for arriving at an in-depth understanding through miscommunication. Taking these perspectives into consideration, the sequence of miscommunication above was beneficial for both Teacher M and Weimin since through going through this sequence, Teacher M was able to understand better about Weimin’s main ideas. Furthermore, Weimin was also able to realize that this information was important. As his utterances (lines 18, 23, and 24) indicate, he intended to integrate them into his writing.

As for causes of Teacher M’s non-understanding, it can be argued that this non-understanding arose because of the complexity of Weimin’s topic related to nuclear and fuel plants, which needs background knowledge from physics and petrology. Weimin’s topic involves the complex process of generating nuclear power, thus requiring rather technical knowledge to understand in depth. It became clear from the sequential analysis that Weimin might be aware of his audience’s potential difficulty in understanding his topic, evidenced by his attempt to paraphrase a term (“fusion”) and to enhance explicitness through using the iconic gesture synchronized with speech. Based on the stimulated recall interview with Weimin, such awareness became evident: “I was trying to explain why the two processes are different… yeah, but I mean, I didn’t make it so clear… yeah, I mean, it’s really difficult to explain the science inside of it” (Interview on July 31, 2013). In the context of writing classrooms, I argue that this kind of miscommunication triggered by the complexity of content topics for essays tends to occur especially because each student chooses a quite wide range of topics in which he or she is interested, often arising from his/her academic disciplines. Thus, it can be hard for writing instructors to be familiar with all of the students’ disciplinary knowledge. This is why miscommunication sequences in writing classroom interactions potentially provide the essential,
meaningful space for negotiating understanding and learning about specific topics through the assistance of students who are more familiar with the genres of topics, as Alireza did it in the excerpts above.

To summarize, Excerpts 4a and b have demonstrated Alireza’s active engagement for resolving Teacher M’s non-understanding through his representation of his peer’s point of view along with Weimin’s self-clarification by using a range of communicative strategies. In particular, Alireza’s simplified explanation about the difference between fuel and power plants and continuing support through verbal and non-verbal means for Weimin are considered as effective and helpful for resolving Teacher M’s non-understanding. One might argue that mutual understanding cannot have been achieved effectively without Alireza’s collaborative support and attempt to clarify meaning. In other words, the third party participants’ repair can be more useful than the second party’s repair in that they can project other viewpoints and raise the potential of achieving mutual understanding especially when the second party repair does not work well.

Also, such third-party participant’s assistance can construct the collaborative class atmosphere where miscommunication should be handled by anyone in the classroom and understanding should be achieved through *mutual efforts* among all rather than putting burden on some specific person. Furthermore, owing to Teacher M’s overt signal of non-understanding, which can be his strategic and pedagogical act, the interactional space to negotiate meaning was forcefully created on the spot in the classroom interaction for achieving a higher level of understanding about Weimin’s critical points for his argumentative essay. In fact, after his teacher’s second indication of non-understanding, Weimin generated a more expanded explanation than before, which can contribute to a clearer understanding for his teacher.
Finally, this interaction seemingly gave a positive influence on Weimin’s writing process as well, evidenced by his first written draft. He developed a paragraph that clearly highlights a lower risk of fuel plants in comparison to power plants in his essay, which was discussed in the classroom interaction:

In this plan the factory that will be built only deals with nuclear fuel fabrication. According to US Nuclear Regular Commission, “These facilities generally pose a low risk to the public” (“Fuel Fabrication”). According to a research done by University of Chicago, the radiation caused by fabricating nuclear fuel is much less than the reaction…there was no major criticism of such fabrications causing damages to human body (emphasis added, Draft 1 for Weimin’s argumentative essay submitted on August 7, 2013).

This may become some evidence for supporting the argument that talking about writing in writing classroom can improve the overall quality of writing or at least in draft-to-draft changes (e.g., Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Hyland, 2002; Hyland, 2008; Weissberg, 1994, Williams, 2008).

Similar to Excerpt 4a, the final excerpt, which already appeared in Chapter 4 whose focus was on gesture, also illustrates the miscommunication sequence in which the other multilingual student in the classroom collaboratively assists in resolving it by representing her peer’s point of view. The following excerpt entails Teacher L’s non-understanding triggered by Gupta’s rather unexpected question regarding the requirement of analytic essays. Although Gupta repeated his question, Teacher L did not seem to understand what it means (i.e., problem at the level of comprehensibility). This sequence of talk occurred followed by Teacher L’s explanation of the general guidelines for analytic essays. Anna, who sits right next to Gupta, is trying to help Teacher L and Gupta as a third-party participant by representing Gupta’s meaning.

Excerpt 5: “I think, he means that,”
TL: [okay?]
2. G: {((raises RH while looking at TL))}
3. TL: {hopefully next time, (. ) you will have questions?}
4. {walks to space right behind podium}
5. {"oh,"}
6. {glimpses at Gupta}
7. Gupta,
8. (0.5)
9. G: yeah, {uh:,}=
10. {looks up PS}
11. TL: ={as your question?}
12. {looks at computer in front while smiling}
13. (0.8)
14. G: like, the quotes or any (. ) comments? (0.8)
15. ye-ah, in the essay,
16. >are included in the (wordly-) word count?<
17. (. ) twelve hundred words?
18. (1.2)
19. TL: >say that again<?
20. (0.5)
21. G: [the quotes and,
22. TL: {((walks from podium to center of classroom in front))}
23. {uh-huh?}=
24. {nods while looking at G}
25. G: =any references, >you make,< is included
26. in the word count?
27. (0.8)
28.⇒AN: 'yeah.'
29. ((2.0))
30. TL: {((both eyes gaze shifts upward))}
31. {u:h, what do you mean,}
32. {points at G with RH, with palm facing body;
33. with confused face}
34.⇒AN: that is, ((quickly turns head to G))
35.➔ [[I think,]
36.➔ {turns back to TL}
37.➔ G: [((nods once while making eye contact with AN))
38.➔ AN: he means that, does these quote:s,
39.➔ uh:n, (1.5) will count, >in this like,<
40.➔ [uh, twelve hundred words?
41.➔ G: [((nods a few times looking at TL’s direction))
42.➔ AN: for the present essay? (1.2)
43.➔ [like (. ) he means,
44.➔ TL: [((both eyes gaze shifts upward))
45.➔ whether, it’s (. ) uhn,=
46.➔ AN: =yeah! are they [part,
47. TL: [{in the part?}
48. {both eyes gaze shifts upward}
49. {yeah!}
50. {nods}
51. [((thrusts out BH in parallel @ chest with palms up))
52.➔ AN: [((faces to G and directly gazes at him))
53.➔ G: [((smiles at AN and nods several times))
54. TL: [{(0.8)}
55. {raises BH @ chest, with palms facing each other in parallel,
56. all fingers stretched and opened up, and bounces them
57. at the same time, which seemingly visualizes boundary of
58. text; looks at G and AN’s direction}
59. G: ["I see."=]
60. {gazes at TL}
61. TL: ={it’s within the text.}
62. {does same bouncing gestures with BH at lines 55-58}
63. G: [((keeps nodding whole looking at TL))
64. (1.0)
65. TL: [yeah!$ Huh-h?
66. G: [((looks front at PT and nods while smiling))}
At lines 1-7, Teacher L recognizes that Gupta is raising his hand, so she glimpses at him and calls his name for nominating him as the person to ask questions. After a brief pause, Gupta produces a minimal response, “yeah,” and adds, “uh:,” while looking at the projected screen.

Latched with Gupta, Teacher L asks, “as your question?” with prosodic emphasis on “question.”
and rising intonation, probably for confirming whether Gupta is asking a question. From lines 14-17, Gupta asks, “like, the quotes or any (. ) comments? ye-ah, in the essay, >are included in the (wordly-) word count?<” Then, he further adds, “(. ) twelve hundred words?” which is the specific information about the limit for analytic essays. Gupta’s turn here shows that he is generating his question in the spontaneous, unplanned manner, exhibited by a few pauses, a shift of pace in speaking, and grammatical structure in particular adding the information in the end. Gupta’s turn will be treated as a ‘trouble-source’ by Teacher L, which will be seen in the following sequence.

At line 18 there is a gap of silence (1.2 seconds), which subtly signals communicative problems regarding the previous turn by lack of uptake, as discussed in Chapter 5. At line 19, Teacher L requests simple repetition by “say that again?” at a quicker tempo. This is interpreted as a general repair request that does not specify any particular problematic issue. After a gap of silence, at lines 21, 25, and 26, Gupta repeats the original question in the similar manner, “the quotes and, any references, >you make,< is included in the word count?” During Gupta’s repetition, Teacher L walks from the podium to the center of the classroom and provides a back-channeling, “uh-huh?” while nodding and looking at Gupta (see Figure 7.26). A series of Teacher L’s embodied and verbal behaviors clearly display her active listenership and keen attention to Gupta’s repetition probably for expressing solidarity with him.

At line 28, after a short pause, Anna provides a minimal token of understanding, “yeah.” in a quieter volume as a response to Gupta’s repetition. It appears that Anna claims her understanding about Gupta’s question in rather restrained manner. This is probably because it is supposed to be Teacher L who gives a response to Gupta’s repetition in this sequential context. Followed by Anna’s covert showing of understanding, from lines 29-33, Teacher L displays her
non-understanding again in various ways. Namely, at lines 29-30, during a 2.0 second pause, her
gaze shifts upward suddenly, which non-verbally displays her difficulty and need to think, and at
lines 31-33, she overtly says, “u:h, what do you mean,” while accentuating “what” prosodically
and pointing at Gupta (see Figure 7.28). Her utterance clearly indicates that her problem is not in
hearing but in understanding its meaning. Moreover, she displays confusion on her face (see
Figure 7.27), signaling that she is having trouble interpreting Gupta’s question. It is obvious that
Teacher L’s turn here, which is the second indication of her communicative problem, is more
specific than the previous one at line 19.

Interestingly, from line 34 onwards, in response to Teacher L’s repair request, Anna
takes over the conversational floor instead of Gupta. At line 34, Anna starts, “that is,” and swiftly
looks at Gupta’s direction (see Figure 7.28). By having a quick gaze at Gupta, she is probably
signaling to him that she will take over the turn from now and be in charge of clarifying his
meaning on behalf of him. At lines 35-36, she says, “I think,” while she turns to Teacher L (see
Figure 7.29). Simultaneously, Gupta nods once while looking at Anna’s direction (see Figure
7.29), which seems to demonstrate his agreement with Anna’s clarification attempt. From lines
38-40 and 42, Anna explains what “she thinks” Gupta means, or representing his point of view.
Here, as a third-party participant, Anna is taking an active role in this miscommunication
sequence of talk and attempting to resolve it by sharing her own interpretation about Gupta’s
question with Teacher L, which might facilitate the teacher’s better understanding through
getting another’s perspective. As Anna utters, “twelve hundred words?,” at line 40, Gupta nods a
few times while looking in Teacher L’s direction, which non-verbally displays his agreement
with Anna’s interpretation. After a 1.2 second silence which is not taken up by Teacher L, Anna
still tries to explicate further by saying, “like, he means,” at line 43. At the same time, Teacher
L’s gazes move upward again (see Figure 7.30), which is similar to the one occurred at line 30. By doing this, Teacher L covertly signals her upgraded state of non-understanding even after Anna’s representation about Gupta’s question.

Right after her non-verbal signal of non-understanding by a quick gaze shift, from line 45, Teacher L attempts to clarify meaning with Anna, by saying, “whether, it’s (.) uhn,” Latched with Teacher L, Anna first provides an agreement token, “yeah!” with an animated tone, and then goes on to explain, “are they part of that.” In particular, when she says, “part of that,” Teacher L overlaps, “in the part?” while her gaze shifts upward again. It appears that at lines 45-47 Teacher L and Anna are collaboratively negotiating what Gupta means by briefly rephrasing (namely, “part”). In fact, Anna's voluntary help by her representation, as observed from lines 34-46, is effective in terms of saving face for Gupta and Teacher L. On the one hand, Gupta might have been perceived as communicative ‘failure’ by others in the classroom if he was unable to make Teacher L understood through several repetitions. On the other hand, Teacher L also might have felt losing Gupta’s face if she was not able to understand him. In other words, Anna’s voluntary assistance as the third party participant can serve well to save both Gupta and Teacher L’s face.

In addition, in terms of meaning negotiation, Anna’s representation is helpful for both Gupta and Teacher L because Teacher L can get other’s perspective (second opinion) that can facilitate her understanding and because Gupta can become objective by being silent and can join in later if the third party help does not work. It can be argued that Teacher L’s overt signal of non-understanding afford Anna the opportunity to shift footing from her role as an observer to an active co-participant or contributor to the resolution of the communicative problem between
Gupta and Teacher L. In other words, Anna takes on the role of a full-fledged collaborator in the resolution of miscommunication by representing her peer’s viewpoint.

Subsequent to Anna and Teacher L’s negotiation of meaning through overlapping, Teacher L finally demonstrates her clear understanding by saying, “Yeah!” with an animated tone and nodding at lines 49-50. Especially through her animated tone and head nods, Teacher L demonstrates that she now achieves understanding and also provides her answer to Gupta’s question. Right after that, some interesting non-verbal behaviors occur between Anna and Gupta at lines 52-53. Namely, Anna quickly shifts her gaze back to Gupta while Gupta smiles, nods several times (see Figure 7.31). By this, Anna and Gupta establish mutual gaze. With her embodied behavior (i.e., shifting her eyes toward Gupta and bodily orienting to him), Anna is probably checking whether Gupta is satisfied with the response obtained from Teacher L as the result of her clarification.

This interpretation is corroborated by the stimulated recall interview as well. Anna said, “I was just like, *I’m trying to check he is getting it*. Maybe he was trying to say something different, *so I wanna make sure*” (Interview on October, 17, 2013). As a response to Anna, it appears that Gupta displays his satisfaction with his smiling and nodding. In particular, Gupta’s smile functions effectively in terms of confirming that Anna’s representation about his viewpoint was correct and what he received from Teacher L was satisfactory. As Haakana (2002) argues, smiling often occurs in proximity to laughing, but in some situations smiling might substitute for laughing. In this interactional context, smiling generates meaning quite effectively as a confirmation that Gupta’s intention behind the question was represented well by Anna and that it was correctly understood by Teacher L. Therefore, Gupta’s turn at 53 indicates that repair is not needed anymore from this point. The interview data with Gupta confirmed this
interpretation through a sequential analysis. He commented, “I smiled because Professor finally answered, that was my question was. Anna rephrased it. So like after three or four times, she understood my question. Then, she answered. So I smiled. Because I got an answer” (Interview on October, 22, 2013). In short, he thinks that he smiles because he finally got an answer from Teacher L after a series of his own trials and Anna’s voluntary assistance.

Followed by the confirmation check among Gupta and Anna, Teacher L also tries to make a confirmation check by saying, “it’s within the text.” at lines 61 and using a metaphoric gesture at lines 55-58 and 62. At the same time, Gupta keeps nodding while looking at his teacher’s direction, which demonstrates his agreeing stance. At line 65, Teacher L says, “yeah!” with an animated tone and a smile voice, and then adds brief, moderated laughter, “Huh-h” (see Figure 7.32). While this turn (in particular, “yeah!”) displays Teacher L’s response to his question, it also demonstrates her puzzlement and awkwardness through smile voice and the comparatively timid laughter delivered in a more downplayed way in the post-completion position.

Glenn (2003) explains that the theory of “incongruity” suggests that laughter results from experiencing the unexpected from perceived inconsistency between what one believes will happen or should happen and what actually occurs” (p. 19). Here in this interactional context, with her laughter, Teacher L may display her unexpected feelings about the nature of Gupta’s question even though she understood what he meant. This interpretation is also supported by the stimulated recall interview:

I mean, how would people, I would never, I just cannot explain why he would ask this question. If, the quotations, are within the text, how would you, why would you exclude those words. But I did not want to offend him….When I rose my eyes, probably you figured out that I, what I was thinking about the question HAHAHA. I am stingy with
time. You know, if I would love to have nice questions. probably it’s a nice question for him. That’s what he wants to know, even though, uh, I didn’t think that, it was not at that time (Interview on October, 31, 2013).

As observed in the interview, even after she achieved understanding, she still did not understand why Gupta asked such a question, which she felt was not qualified to discuss at that moment. This can become evidence that there are multiple realities that exist in each miscommunication phenomona among interlocutors involved. Indeed each miscommunication phenenon involves complexity, and even after negotiation sequences, there is no guarantee that interlocutors can achieve mutual understanding. Also, this becomes evidence for the presence and quality of her brief laughter at line 65. During Teacher L’s laughter, Gupta nods and smiles, which enacts alignment with her. Finally, at line 67, Teacher L closes the discussion about Gupta’s question and moves on by “okay,” which marks a topic closing and shift.

With regards to the possible causes of Teacher L’s non-understanding, one of major causes is the idiosyncratic nature of Gupta’s question. It seems that from Teacher L’s point of view, it is a matter of fact that quotations and comments are included in the word counts for essays. As introduced above, Teacher L commented, “I just cannot explain why he would ask this question. If the quotations, are within the text, how would you, why would you exclude those words” (Interview on October, 31, 2013). It is obvious that she was thinking that Gupta’s question does not make sense and that she was rather at loss about how to answer this question without making him feel offended. Thus, it is probable that she does not understand what Gupta actually intended even though she might have achieved intelligibility of each word of Gupta’s utterance. Teacher L even provided some possible reason why Gupta asked such a question:
I think, you know, some of the questions, asked, only *because I offered. I suggested down that they would ask questions*. So he was like, looking around and then when I said, “okay, probably next time you will have questions?” *he is just okay? if you wanna questions, “Here you are.”* I had that feeling (Interview on October, 31, 2013).

Based on this, it can be interpreted that Gupta’s question that was created only for the sake of asking questions might lead to her non-understanding.

Nevertheless, as observed in the excerpt above, Anna seems to understand Gupta well and correctly represents his point of view, as confirmed by Gupta. At the stimulated recall interview, Anna mentioned about her impression about Gupta’s question:

> Well, he’s asking if sources, like citations and quotations is in word counts? *I was like thinking how it can’t be.* It’s surprising that it says if you use sources, it’s part of your essay, so part of word counts. *I was like, I’ve never heard of this question before in classes, so I was very surprised* (Interview on October, 17, 2013).

As seen above, Anna remembered her surprising feeling about Gupta’s question. Nevertheless, she never treats his question as something ‘strange’ or ‘irrelevant’ in this sequence of talk. In fact, Anna voluntarily helped Teacher L to understand his question by representing and rephrasing it. As for her own behavior and the reason why she took such an action, Anna provided the comment:

> *She (Teacher L) didn’t understand his question*, because I don’t think she has ever heard such a question before… *I decided to help her understand the question because she looked so confused.* Sometimes Gupta talks, tells, asks, not clear questions, and *I feel like, because we are peers, we actually understand his confusion.* But this way, I tried to explain (Interview on October, 17, 2013).
In the interview, she claims that she understands Gupta and his confusion because they are “peers.” Also, it seems that Anna sensitively perceived Teacher L’s confusion from her facial expressions and decided to help her understand Gupta’s question.

From a regular classroom observation, I recognize Anna’s active engagement and leadership in every class activity, which also led to make Anna’s assistance happen in this non-understanding case. Similarly, Teacher L also commented about Anna’s character: “Actually she is a very centered person, I think. She wants to be, if she knows, she speaks. That’s good. That’s nice to everyone” (Interview on October, 31, 2013). In fact, Anna’s contribution in the classroom interaction based on such active character saved Teacher L’s face especially since Teacher L already asked Gupta to repeat his question once and to clarify what it means. Also, the sequence of talk above was helpful for Gupta in terms of his understanding the requirement more clearly and feeling the sense of relief by getting it understood, exhibited in his smiling.

In short, it can be argued that the third party participants’ repair is effective in many ways in the multilingual writing classrooms, including considering face among interlocutors involved in miscommunication, negotiating meaning based on more objective interpretations, creating active participation patterns and positive identities as collaborative and active interactants, and engendering the class norm that dealing with miscommunication and achieving mutual understanding are everyone’s responsibility in multilingual classrooms.

7.4 Conclusion

To summarize, the five excerpts in this chapter demonstrate the process how the third-party participants or “official hearers” in Goffman’s (1981) sense actively join in negotiation sequences and help resolve them with other interlocutors initially involved. It seems that third-party participants’ voluntary assistance observed in these multilingual writing classrooms is
meaningful in various ways, including face consideration among people involved in miscommunication, meaning negotiation based on more interpretations from different angles, and construction of active participation patterns and positive identities in and through classroom interactions. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the timing of the entry by the third-party participation is sequentially significant. That is because the third party repair attempts often ensue after initial failed repair attempts, which illustrates the third-party participants’ close orientation to the ongoing classroom interactions, especially ‘problematic’ ones.

Furthermore, both of multilingual instructors in writing classrooms appear to make their miscommunication explicit and public to their students, which becomes an effective prompt to create the interactional flow to move onto to repair sequences for negotiating meaning through collaborative assistance among students in the classroom. This is similar to Smit’s (2010) finding in that explicitness (i.e., a high level of directness) was found to be particularly important for their achieving understanding and not treated as ‘impolite,’ because students and instructors shared a great interest in achieving communication for the purpose of teaching and learning. In particular, students’ representation for their peers’ point of view observed in the last two excerpts clearly illustrate ELF speakers’ strong sense of collaboration, tolerance, and responsibility to construct understanding among class members, which can serve as a solid foundation for building a good atmosphere for class environment for learning in ELF. It has been generally considered that in the situations of miscommunication that happens among so-called non-native speakers and native speakers, responsibilities for miscommunication are automatically put on the side of ‘non-native’ speakers only rather than mutual responsibilities. This conceptualization is indeed problematic, and it does not actually represent what is happening in the multilingual ELF interactions. Instead, representation for their peers even shows that other class members act like
active, full-fledged co-participants in the accomplishment of resolving miscommunication rather than just being ‘observers’ or ‘bystanders’ to the unfolding situations.

Besides, all of the excerpts demonstrate ELF speakers’ collaborative engagement in negotiation of meaning regardless of instructor’s or students’ roles, validating the claim of ELF previous research that ELF speakers generally have a collaborative, humble, and tolerant attitude toward differences that interlocutors bring with them, such as phonological and lexical aspects, which enables them to achieve communicative success (e.g., Hülmbauer, 2009; Kaur, 2011c). As Anna commented at the interview, it is possible to argue that especially since they are positioned as the role of “peers” in the classroom, multilingual students understand each other better especially when they get accustomed to their communicative styles. Or even though they might not clearly understand each other initially, especially with regards to the aspects of pronunciation, they make special efforts to clarify unclear points and achieve mutual understanding based on their awareness of differences like Gupta demonstrated in his interview. And when non-understanding or mis-understanding arises, these ELF interlocutors in the academic writing classroom try to share responsibility for repairs and resolve it through mutual effort and collaborative assistance, conducted by both non-verbal and verbal interactional resources. Thus, resolving miscommunication is treated as a collaborative act in the multilingual classroom and it can be argued that people in the classroom function as effective ecological resources for resolving miscommunication and achieving higher level of understanding after going through miscommunication sequences together.

Since such affordance as co-participants is available in multilingual writing classrooms, I envisage that ELF speakers might be able to maintain their cultural, linguistic, and personal differences comfortably and can always negotiate such differences based on their collaborative
nature and attitude. In other words, they can speak differently at multiple levels, including phonetics, grammar, usage of phrase, interests of academic subjects and even personal characters, as long as they are willing to negotiate differences and learn from such differences. Friedman and Berthoin Antal (2005) provide an alternative approach to intercultural competence as “negotiating reality” in which cultural differences are used as a resource for learning. Although ELF speakers’ cultural differences and their affective attitudes are not clearly revealed in the analysis of this chapter, it can be argued that participants’ awareness of cultural and linguistic differences and willingness to negotiate and learn from such differences can be a key for intercultural communication among ELF speakers.

It is worth noting in the very end of the data analysis chapters that I am not arguing that such collaborative, third-party participants’ assistance observed in this chapter as well as other employments of communicative strategies and multimodal and ecological interactional resources demonstrated in all of previous chapters is unique only in multilingual classroom contexts or only among ELF speakers. For instance, the importance of enhanced explicitness (e.g., Mauranen, 2007) in order to avoid ambiguity, which is considered as one of the most common causes of misunderstanding in ELF interactions (Kaur, 2011b), can be applied not only for ELF but also for all other human communication in nature. As Mortensen (2013) rightly claims, the use of English that emerges in ELF interaction is inherently complex, variable, and diverse. In addition, differences that we can observe if comparing ELF use to language use in monological encounters based on a shared L1 might be just “matters of degree rather than type” (p. 35, emphasis added). The possible reasoning for this is that it is more plausible to speculate that ELF speakers skillfully and flexibly employ and adapt existing strategies that they already developed in other communicative settings rather than they develop totally ‘unique’ communicative
strateiges for dealing with ELF situations. To recap, I would argue that as long as interlocutors are willing to negotiate differences and try to understand each other about various layers of differences, miscommunication can turn into a meaningful interactional *space* for negotiating and achieving understanding and learning something new regardless of so-called native or non-native speakers’ status.
Chapter 8

Conclusion and Implications

8.1 Introduction

Based on the data analysis from Chapters 4-7, this final chapter considers implications for English language pedagogy informed through ELF. In particular, the data analysis chapters have demonstrated that non-verbal, multimodal semiotic modes such as gesture, embodied action, non-verbal vocalization (laughter and silence), classroom artifacts, and people in the classroom ecology are skillfully and purposefully incorporated by ELF speakers (both instructors and students) along with speech as part of many interactional resources for resolving or preventing miscommunication, achieving mutual understanding, and constructing relationships in the multilingual writing classrooms. The ELF speakers’ complex composition of those ecological, multimodal resources with verbal speech along with other communicative strategies contribute to creating extra explicitness, which leads to making ambiguous utterances transparent to interlocutors and successfully communicating each other.

This finding can provide important suggestions regarding language teaching and language teacher education in general and at the same time make us reconsider what we mean by “language.” Block (2014) points out a “lingual bias” that has a “tendency to conceive of communicative practices exclusively in terms of the linguistic (morphology, syntax, phonology, lexis)” (p. 56). However, this study clearly demonstrates the need to incorporate a variety of non-verbal, multimodal, and ecological resources into elements of language and to invent more holistic ways of analyzing linguistic competence for ELF speakers. In other words, we miss an important part of the communicative competence of ELF speakers if we focus on verbal speech only.
Also, the approach from an ELF perspective is distinct from other SLA models that attempt to incorporate multimodal and ecological resources for analysis in that it does not set up specific interactional norms that should be attained in comparison with so-called native speakers from the outset. Instead, this study examines ELF interactions among multilingual speakers from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds as they are and describe them independent of native speaker norms while considering the possibility of legitimate variances and communicative effectiveness. Thus, with this finding, I would propose a development of multimodal orientation to ELF interactional analysis in order to examine ELF speakers’ more complex communicative competence that can coordinate multiple semiotic modes simultaneously for various purposes with a more egalitarian analytical approach than the dominant SLA ones. In addition to pedagogical and theoretical implications, I will point out several limitations of this study in the end, which should be explored as future research endeavors. In the following section, I will first summarize the major findings from the previous four data analysis chapters, and then discuss ELF research in relation to English language teaching and existing gaps between ELF actual use and English language pedagogy.

8.2 Summary of major findings

In this section, I address the summary of answers in relation to the three major research questions. After that, I summarize the findings related to the unique functions of various ecological, multimodal interactional resources (i.e., gestural and embodied action, non-verbal vocalization including laughter and silence, classroom artifacts, and third-party participants in the classroom), thus synthesizing the major findings from this dissertation work.

8.2.1 Answers to three research questions
The three research questions answered throughout the data analysis were the following:
1) In what ways does miscommunication surface among ELF speakers in two multilingual writing classrooms while maintaining politeness?; 2) How do ELF speakers integrate non-verbal, embodied, and multimodal resources (including gesture, embodied action, laughter, facial expression, silence, and material objects and people in classroom ecology) with speech when resolving or preventing miscommunication?; and 3) What are the outcomes of such miscommunication sequences? Overall, the possible causes of miscommunication (including misunderstanding, non-understanding, and “let it pass”) identified through the data analysis include inaudibility, lack of the listener’s attention at critical moments, ambiguity, lengthiness, differences in pronunciation, idiosyncratic lexis and idioms, forgetting key information relevant for interactions, unexpected questions and unclear intentions behind utterances, complexity of writing topics, difficulty of understanding abstract concepts, and different understandings about academic writing concepts. Importantly, in line with Linell (1995), it is found that each miscommunication phenomenon is often triggered by not only a single factor but a combination of multiple factors. Thus, it is hard for analysts to identify what specifically causes miscommunication.

Furthermore, it is true that depending on each interlocutor’s or analyst’s perspective, interpretations of categories of miscommunication (either misunderstanding or non-understanding) and causes for miscommunication might be quite divergent. However, it is found from the data analysis that ambiguity (which includes various types, such as lengthy questions, rephrasing in different ways, utterances that do not specify the relationship between two numbers, and pointing at the PowerPoint slide in a non-specified manner) most often contributed to miscommunication in these multilingual writing classrooms. This finding rather corroborates
Kaur (2011b) in that ambiguity seems to be one of the most common causes of misunderstandings in ELF interactions.

It is also revealed that communicative strategies employed among ELF speakers in the multilingual writing classrooms entail verbal repetition (whole or selective), rephrasing, explicating with some examples, using discourse or metadiscourse markers (e.g., “I mean” or “what I’m saying”), frequent comprehension check with tag markers (e.g., “right?”), enhancing explicitness through metaphoric, iconic, or pointing gestures, use of laughter and making humor, use of silence for signaling non-understanding or implying challenge, incorporating classroom artifacts and people for clarification, politeness strategies, and ‘let it pass.’

Finally, the outcomes of miscommunication emerging from the data analysis include mutual understanding (i.e., achieving negotiated meaning after repair sequences), partial or at least claimed understanding, and non-understanding. It seems very rare to end up with sheer non-understanding among the ELF speakers in the classrooms perhaps because they make efforts to achieve mutual understanding about content matters in particular because of the nature of high-stakes academic setting (see also Björkman, 2013; Smit, 2010; Mauranen, 2012). Both instructors and students are rather expected to understand each other in this instructional context rather than letting it pass and abandoning the topics; failing in understanding leads to negative consequences for both parts.

Nevertheless, there were a few intriguing instances of global miscommunication involving student’s and teacher’s different conceptualizations about academic writing (such as “thesis statement”), where they rather ended up with not being able to achieve mutual understanding during the class time owing to their disagreeing stances or identity work. Yet, it is found from stimulated recall interviews that these ELF speakers often achieved understanding
privately after class or outside of the classroom, which indicates that they continued to engage in communication through seeking for other opportunities to negotiate each other. In other words, achieving understanding indeed requires ongoing negotiation, and communication never ends inside the classroom.

8.2.2 Unique functions of ecological, multimodal interactional resources

Now I provide a summary of findings based on each chapter’s focus, zooming on the unique functions of various ecological, multimodal interactional resources: namely, gesture and embodied action (Chapter 4), non-verbal vocalization including laughter and silence (Chapter 5), classroom artifacts (Chapter 6), and third-party participants in the classroom (Chapter 7).

From Chapter 4, it is found that both multilingual instructors and students employ a wide range of gestures and embodied actions meaningfully. Gestures generally function as “raising explicitness” related to verbal speech and sometimes adding additional layers of meaning, such as visualization of the structure of writing essays that is not realized in the speech modality. In particular, metaphoric gestures are often employed because of the nature of writing classroom interactions wherein students and instructors discuss abstract writing concepts. Such metaphoric gestures are very effective in making abstract entities concrete, visible and actionable to ELF speakers and highlighting contrast between related categories and meanings while using two spaces in a consistent manner. Besides metaphoric gestures, ELF speakers also use iconic, motion-related gestures to make their verbal explanation vivid and colorful. They also employ other types of gestures to demonstrate their affective reactions and beats to signal the change of footing. Besides gesture, one excerpt illustrates how the teacher effectively exploits the other student’s embodied action in the classroom as “body quotes,” which enables the abstract meaning of “directive” to be visible to everyone in the classroom. Lastly, it was found from the
analysis that in order to make gesture and embodied action effective, the “ensemble” of multiple modes that ELF speakers coordinate is critical. Namely, speakers need to skillfully \textit{design} how to combine verbal speech with such bodily engagements in order to emphasize or clarify meaning rather than just add emphatic tone or regulate their speaking.

From Chapter 5, it is found that laughter and silence function in various ways in ELF interactions. As for the functions of laughter, multilingual students effectively employ laughter in order to signal non-understanding or something idiosyncratic, avoid controversial topics to discuss, save face for one another, reduce tension through changing an atmosphere into playful and favorable, engage in relational work (i.e., building solidarity among certain members or the whole class), and construct humor and project a positive identity that can lead to empowering themselves as English users. In particular, co-construction of humor through a use of laughter is found as one of the powerful means for students in making the class atmosphere better, building and maintaining relations with other classmates and instructor, creating a sense of community, and at times temporarily taking over the power from instructors by dragging the interactional flow into something more fun for themselves.

On the other hand, silence is often treated to be demonstrative of non-understanding, which often prompts the interlocutor(s) to repair in the subsequent talk. Furthermore, silence, especially a very long one, might serve as beyond the signal of non-understanding, or resistance or reluctant attitudes of negotiating to the interlocutor. In addition, from an instructor’s perspective, long silence in the classroom interactional setting can function as a “wait time” and show consideration for students who might need time to think in order to produce appropriate responses. Since silence is rather a complex interactional phenomena that needs to be negotiated based on cross-cultural understandings, it is important to investigate further the functions of
silence and how silence is actually taken up and negotiated among ELF speakers in the classroom.

Chapter 6 demonstrated that ELF speakers in the multilingual writing classrooms are aware of meaning affordance from classroom artifacts such as handouts, blackboard writing, and PowerPoint slides available in the classroom environment and purposefully tailoring or designing the use of diverse multimodal resources to fit their specific purposes of explaining and clarifying meaning by incorporating such classroom artifacts. More specifically, it is revealed that classroom artifacts function in various ways, which includes foregrounding the relevant information, reminding interlocutors of the shared information as reference available anytime, providing the structure of classroom interactions, and letting the interlocutor orient to and specify the most important information related to speech. Environmentally-coupled gestures (specifically deictic) and embodied actions (e.g., eye gaze and body orientation) are also effectively employed for combining the meanings of classroom artifacts with speech and gaining joint attention to those materials. However, at the same time, it is revealed that at times ELF speakers cannot fully control the ways in which objects influence the structure of classroom discussion, which led to misunderstanding. In other words, it can be argued that classroom artifacts sometimes entail the autonomous power to function themselves. Such unexpected phenomena related to the power of classroom artifacts indicate that instructors and students need to be more aware of the functions of those artifacts and use them strategically, which should be also learned and given practice in actual classroom interactions.

Lastly from Chapter 7, it is found that “official hearers” or third-party participants including both instructors and students actively join in miscommunication sequences in precisely the right spot (i.e., right after the initial repair did not work among interlocutors involved) and try
to help resolve miscommunication by using various communicative strategies. In particular, students’ representation for their peers’ point of view clearly illustrate ELF speaker’s strong sense of collaboration, tolerance and responsibility to construct understanding among class members, which is considered a solid foundation for building the good atmosphere for class environment for learning in ELF. Such representation for their peers shows that other class members act like full-fledged co-participants in the accomplishment of resolving miscommunication rather than just observing the situations ‘passively.’ Furthermore, such third party participants’ assistance observed in these multilingual writing classrooms is effective in various ways, including face considerations among people initially involved in miscommunication, achievement of much deeper understanding through getting other people’s multiple interpretations, and construction of active participation patterns and positive identities in and through classroom interactions.

All in all, investigations of the functions of such multimodal, ecological resources in ELF interactions are still new. Thus further investigation is expected in the future. When we start to consider ELF speakers’ resourcefulness and creativity in orchestrating such multiple modes in addition to speech to achieve their communicative objectives, we can realize ELF speakers’ more complex communicative competence beyond those in the linguistic aspects. Yet, it should be noted clearly that my intention to focus on non-linguistic aspects for ELF interactional analysis is not to downgrade the important functions of verbal speech in ELF interactions. Instead, with a new definition of ELF, my point is that we need to treat ELF from a more holistic view and expand ELF interactional analysis by integrating other multimodal resources besides verbal speech without ignoring many meaning potentials affored from the classroom environment.

8.2.3. Contribution to ELF theorization and method of analyzing ELF interactions
After providing answers to three research questions and summarizing each chapter’s foci for data analysis, the theoretical knowledge that this study has contributed in the field of ELF in particular is discussed. The followings are three key issues: 1) the development of ELF multimodal analysis by providing a new definition of ELF; 2) the investigation of ELF interactions in a US university, in particular multilingual writing classroom contexts; and 3) the illustration or substantiation of miscommunication phenomena as a space for negotiation. First of all, as extensively discussed in Chapter 2, the variety of existing ELF definitions has created confusion and controversy, and several attempts to identify ‘unique’ linguistic features of ELF and to codify a stable ‘variety’ (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Jenkins 2000) based on the view of ELF as a distinct, independent language system from ‘native-speaker’ English are problematic. Therefore, following Moretensen’s (2013) and Seidlhofer’s (2011) “practice-based” conceptualization of ELF and also integrating perspectives from translingual practice (e.g., Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2007) and multimodal turn (Block, 2014), this study has developed a more inclusive, holistic definition of ELF and expanded the ELF interactional analysis by the employment of multimodal analysis. Thus, it goes beyond the existing ELF analysis of “non-linguistic means for clarifying matters” (Pitzl, 2010, p. 92) in terms of its definition and analytic method.

Secondly, as examined in Chapter 2, ELF interactional analysis, especially ELF academic discourse, has been mainly conducted in European (e.g., Björkman, 2013; Mauranen, 2012; Smit, 2010) and South Asian university contexts (e.g., Deterding, 2013; Kaur, 2011b, 2011c). Thus, the present study contributes to the emerging field of the investigation of ELF academic discourse by examining university classrooms in the U.S. Besides, multilingual writing classrooms are an intriguing context, which is a little different from other content-specific
courses such as technology, engennering, and hotel management. That is, writing instructions involve not only academic writing-related concepts but also linguistic and language learning aspects. This study clearly demonstrates miscommunication instances triggered by a mismatch of instructors’ and students’ interpretations about writing concepts such as thesis statements, which is unique in this writing classroom context.

Lastly, this study contributes to ELF interactional analysis of miscommunication moments by demonstrating the process of how ELF interactants resolve each unique instance of miscommunication in details, which shows it as a space for negating understandings and differences and building relationships. Despite the fact that miscommunication has been normally conceived as ‘negative’ phenomena in communication studies, as Pitzl (2005, 2010) rightly argues, successful interactional management of miscommunication can illustrate how effective ELF interactions are, and ELF interactional analysis needs to consider more that successful negotiation of meaning may contribute something “positive” to an interaction, namely on an interpersonal level. Along with the reconceptualization of miscommunication in ELF interactions, this study also contributes to what should be included as miscommunication in ELF interactional analysis, such as linguistic aspects, cultural components, conceptual or logical thinkings, and retrospective and pre-emptive aspects of miscommunication, which further complexifies and expands ELF pragmatic investigations.

8.3 Interrelationship between ELF research and ELT and the gap between them

From its initial stage of ELF research, English language teaching (ELT) and learning have been its major concern. For instance, Seidlhofer (2001) calls for linguistic descriptions of ELF, stimulated by considerations of English language pedagogy. Another great example is Jenkins’s (2000) ELF phonological research that attempted to identify a Lingua Franca Core that
ensures intelligibility among different varieties for teaching pronunciation, which is recently further extended and developed as pronunciation teaching materials based on ELF (see Walker, 2010). In short, the ultimate goal of ELF investigation has been to inform English language pedagogy based on empirical evidence emerging from ELF use and to fill in “a conceptual mismatch between outdated ideas about native-speaker privilege and the overdue acknowledgement of the reality of ELF” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 16). Although there have been a great number of debates regarding ELF approach that have attempted to codify a stable ‘variety,’ its recent examinations of discourse-pragmatic aspects of ELF interactions and ELF interactional “practice,” including the present study, have illuminated a number of effective communicative strategies actually used among ELF speakers in specific interactional contexts, which can be incorporated in ELF-based pedagogy in the future.

In fact, as Mauranen (2012) argues, many suggestions for taking ELF into account in pedagogy have been already proposed, some of which are built upon empirical ELF studies (e.g., Ranta, 2009). Nevertheless, the process of its application into ELT practice and teaching contents is not still adequate, and it has not imparted enough influence to actual pedagogical practice until now. One of the main reasons behind it is that English language practitioners are rather reluctant or express reservations about adopting ELF-based pedagogy (Jenkins, 2007). It appears that they have a misconception about ELF approach as an attempt to legitimize ‘incompetent’ version of English.

Since Seidlhofer (2001) has pointed out the need for “closing the conceptual gap” (p. 133) between the current state of real world affairs, empirical research, and pedagogical practice, unfortunately, the existing gap has not been filled up yet. In particular, at the level of actual teaching practice, there has been not so much change regarding “how the language is formulated
as a subject in syllabuses and teaching materials” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 9). For instance, Mauranen (2012) observes that fields of English for specific purposes (ESP) and English for academic purposes (EAP) at a tertiary level, which are closely related to ELF academic discourse, still orient to the ‘native’ speaker as universal and valid models for teaching all students for academic purposes. More specifically, by and large, proficiency is measured depending on how closely learners approximate to ‘native’ speaker norms. And intelligibility is also construed as being intelligible to ‘native’ speakers and being able to understand them. Also, except Walker’s (2010) attempt of proposing ELF-informed teaching that focuses on developing accommodation skills on a phonological level, English language teaching materials have not reflected much influence from ELF research.

Nevertheless, I argue that the real audience for international academic communication in the current world is not ideal ‘native’ speakers but multilingual, ELF speakers with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It is a matter of fact that the number of non-native speakers of English worldwide outnumbers native speakers. Surprisingly, Beneke (1991, cited in Seidlhofer, 2011) estimated that 80 percent of all communication involving the use of English as a second or foreign language would not involve any ‘native’ speakers’ of English, which is probably even higher in the current world. Crystal (2012) also proclaims that about a quarter of the world’s population is either fluent or competent in English as a second or foreign language and that this number seems to be steadily growing since the early 2000s, in which it was approximately 1.5 billion people. In such a present situation, English has played an important role as a lingua franca among people over the world beyond the boundaries of ‘native’ speaker communities. Graddol (2008) has similarly suggested that English is becoming so widely taught in the classrooms and used in the business contexts worldwide, its instrumental importance being
expunging the sense of its historical origins in America and Britain. Considering all these current situations, the taken-for-granted assumption in the field of mainstream ELT and English learning that learners should aspire to be like native speakers should be critically re-examined.

Therefore, through integrating ELF interactional research findings, current educational systems seriously need to revise both pedagogical approaches and contents. For such purposes, ELF research that describes the type of communication taking place in university settings like the present study can provide useful information regarding what to prioritize in ESP and EAP classrooms and provide the support needed for multilingual students and instructors. For instance, this study can suggest that multilingual students and instructors in the classroom probably need more flexibility and adaptability in terms of employing their communicative strategies that incorporate various embodied, multimodal resources in order to make their intended meaning clear and explicit rather than achieving grammatical and phonological correctness. Furthermore, it may be true that ELF-informed pedagogy, which is a move away from native speaker norms, empowers the majority of English teachers worldwide, or so-called non-native English teachers because these multilingual teachers can better serve as a realistic model for multilingual students than monolingual teachers (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

8.4 What kind of communicative competence is necessary for ELF interactions?

ELF research over the last decade has found a few recurrent, unique characteristics of ELF communication that are potentially used as a basis on which to build meaningful ELT approaches. Specifically, recommendation can be made with regard to effective instructional behaviors and ways of helping students in handling with possible challenges encountered in intercultural communication settings where they need to use ELF.
First of all, the small number of misunderstandings that happen in ELF interactions implies that ELF speakers by and large are able to take steps towards overcoming miscommunication. It is probably because the pronounced orientation toward cooperation, which a number of ELF researchers (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Firth, 2009a, 2009b; House, 2003; Kaur, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Mauranen, 2006a, 2007, 2012; Meierkord, 1998, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2009b) have recognized, plays an important role. In other words, ELF interlocutors are keenly aware of the little that they may share and ready to face the potential difficulties in advance (Meierkord, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2004). In this light, cooperative strategies and collaborative attitudes, which lead to rapport building among interlocutors, may be worth emphasizing in preparing English language teachers and learners for communication in ELF encounters. However, this interpretation about ELF characteristics and pedagogical suggestion based on existing ELF research requires a special caution. As Mortensen (2013) rightly claims, it is not appropriate to simply generalize the nature of ELF interactions as cooperative and collaborative because of their very nature of complexity and diversity, which is uniquely situated in each ELF interactional context.

Nevertheless, I argue that many successful communicative strategies demonstrated in ELF pragmatic research can be teachable and at the very least the awareness of them can be raised. For instance, clarity is increased by enhancing explicitness through verbal and non-verbal channels and by using discourse devices like verbal repetition and rephrasing, which can be taught as important communicative strategies in ELF interactional encounters. Pragmatic devices such as back-channeling, minimal responses, hedging, and concerns of politeness serve primarily interactional needs, which can contribute to constructing the collaborative atmosphere and relationship among ELF speakers, which is also necessary to be integrated for English language
teaching. Seidlhofer (2011) provides a number of examples to encourage teachers to teach, including active listening, letting it pass, indicating understanding or non-understanding, regulating back-channeling behaviors, asking for repetition, paraphrasing, avoiding idiomatic phrases, using transparent expressions, being explicit, adding redundancy, and attending to non-verbal communication.

If other examples are added to Seidlhofer’s list based on the data analysis from the present study, they should be using silence and laughter for signaling non-understanding, doing phonetic repair, constructing humor, making non-understanding or misunderstanding very explicit so that other classmates can join it in for assistance, and combing ecological resources with verbal speech in order to make the meaning of speech transparent. In particular, as for communicative effectiveness necessary in academic ELF, Björkman (2013) powerfully concludes that pragmatic competence or function plays a more critical role than high fluency or form. In other words, the functional effectiveness matters. Lastly, most importantly, much work on ELF discourse demonstrates the central role of interactive negotiation or accommodation skills that enables ELF speakers to achieve intelligibility and communicative success while regulating diversity among them, which needs to be integrated for preparing students for international communication in English.

Tying these existing ELF interactional research findings with the analysis from the previous four chapters, the present study attempts to illuminate important functions of usually-ignored interactional resources employed among ELF speakers; namely, the functions of gestures and embodied actions, laughter, silence, classroom artifacts, and people in the classroom environment. Based on this data analysis, I claim that such multimodal, ecological resources available in the classroom environment are skillfully incorporated along with speech by ELF
speakers when they resolve or prevent miscommunication. The suggestions regarding how to incorporate such multimodal interactional resources effectively are the following. First of all, strategic organization of multiple modes is necessary. In other words, not ‘random’ but “right-time” organization and selective incorporation of “specific” information are required for interlocutors. Secondly, achieving joint attention to the most crucial information by mutual eye gaze is crucial. In other words, even if speakers coordinate meaning with multiple semiotic modes, the listener may fail to pay attention to the information that they intend to highlight without achieving mutual eye gaze, which leads to confusion or non-understanding. Taking into consideration all of these findings, I argue that it is necessary to expand the ELF speakers’ communicative strategy framework (e.g. Björkman, 2014) into more integrative one through adding multimodal and embodied dimension of communicative strategies of ELF speakers.

8.5 Context-dependent nature of ELF interactions

When considering the possibility of applying the findings from the present study into pedagogical implications, it should be done with caution. That is mainly because there is an unresolved question regarding how unitary ELF usage is in different interactional contexts. As Mortensen (2013) rightly argues, the contextual factors that shape ELF encounters need to be taken seriously since ELF encounters are multilingual, multicultural, and multinormative speech events shaped by a considerable number of contextual factors. For example, it is highly unlikely that an informal ELF communication on the street somewhere or dormitory settings (e.g., Matsumoto, 2011, 2014; Meierkord, 1998, 2002) would be similar to what ELF speakers do in academic classroom settings. Also, we cannot automatically assume the same situations even in academic ELF interactions, for instance the present study in an U.S. university and other ELF
academic interactions in Europe. The findings in this study should be contextualized within the
genre of teacher/student interactions in writing classrooms.

As introduced in Chapter 2, Canagarajah (2007a), Firth (2009a), Kaur (2011b), and
many others similarly point out that diversity is at the heart of ELF interaction. Specifically, ELF
is “intersubjectively constructed in each specific context of interaction” and its form “negotiated
by each set of speakers for their purposes” (Canagarajah, 2007a, p. 926). Thus, the requirements
for successful and effective communication and needs of specific communicative strategies
should be always considered with reference to each interactional context and locally-relevant
norm, which are supposed to be negotiated among interlocutors on the spot. As McKay (2009)
emphasizes, appropriate language use is open to negotiation and totally dependent on context. In
other words, we cannot consider communicative strategies as successfully working for every
ELF interactional context.

Therefore, it is naïve to generalize what is identified as ELF speakers’ communicative
strategies effective in the multilingual writing classrooms in the U.S. university as relevant to
other ELF settings and domains. However, through employment of a CA analytic approach, it is
possible to offer analytical generalization (Yin, 2003) instead of empirical generalization. Put
otherwise, these communicative strategies identified in multilingual writing classrooms in the
U.S. can be generalizable as “descriptions” of what other ELF speakers can do given the same
array of interactional competence as ELF speakers in the present study (Perakyla, 2004). One can
argue that this study’s descriptions of ELF speakers’ communicative strategies provide
pedagogical implications that are transferable to other pedagogical contexts, for instance similar
academic writing classrooms in other institutions in the U.S. or even other countries.
In order to enhance adaptability and transferability, however, I argue that more and more ELF interactional research should be conducted in diverse multilingual contexts so as to allow comparison between different ELF interactional contexts, and to show similarities and divergences from other ELF research findings so that we can find out some general trends and common communicative strategies. Equally true is that studies investigating rather monolingual or homogenous classroom interactions (e.g., in the context where instructors are so-called native speakers of English) should be compared with the present study in order to identify possible unique features of ELF speakers’ communicative strategies situated in multilingual classrooms. This study can serve as a specific case of ELF academic discourse situated in multilingual writing classrooms in an American university, which can also demonstrate diversity in ELF academic discourse situated outside of the Europe and further expand studies of ELF academic discourse. We have to also study how native speaker students and teachers might negotiate miscommunication in order to assess how unique these strategies are to ELF users.

8.6 Limitations of this study

The present study theoretically suggests a new potential of multimodal orientation to ELF interactional analysis and empirically provides an in-depth analysis of ELF speakers’ actual process of dealing with various miscommunication phenomena in an academic context, both of which contribute to research fields of ELF and miscommunication. Yet, I have also acknowledged that this study entails several limitations. First of all, closely related to the previous section about “context-dependent nature of ELF and its interactions,” this study cannot simply generalize its findings to other ELF interactional contexts regardless of non-academic and academic ELF discourse. Instead of its generalizability, this study rather attempts to demonstrate the complexity and uniqueness of each miscommunication phenomenon and detailed process of
resolving and preventing miscommunication among ELF speakers in specific academic contexts in the U.S. In particular, through incorporating ethnographic information along with stimulated recall interviews, this study was able to project *multiple* realities that might exist in miscommunication phenomena depending on different viewpoints available from participants.

Secondly, this study does not provide any numerical or quantitative information, such as how many instances of miscommunication phenomena arose in total, what kinds of causes most often triggered miscommunication in these multilingual writing classrooms, and what kinds of communicative strategies were used most often among these ELF speakers. Such information about the frequency based on quantitative analysis and the explanation about how the data excerpts chosen for this dissertation are representative of the entire corpus of classroom interactions might be crucial in order to identify overall interactional patterns among these ELF speakers in multilingual writing classrooms. Future research is necessary to provide such information about the general trend in order to easily make a comparison with other findings of ELF pragmatic research conducted in different interactional settings. However, I find such rather mechanical counting based on ‘static’ categorizations cannot provide detailed and concrete information about ELF academic discourse in general and even sacrifices the complexity and diversity of each miscommunication phenomenon. In fact, according to Mortensen (2013), the use of English that emerges in ELF interaction is inherently complex, variable, and diverse. That is why I rely on the power of sequential analysis that can clearly reveal and document significant multilingual teacher and student actions as *they* are and actual process in which they resolve miscommunication and achieve mutual understanding collaboratively.

Thirdly, this dissertation clearly restricts the amount of data excerpts analyzed. This concentration of the data can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. Specifically, owing to the
nature of microanalysis of oral interactions, which requires detailed examination of continuous sequences of interaction, the method of investigation necessarily imposes a limit on the amount of data that can be carefully handled by a single researcher so as not to compromise the quality of the analysis. Also, based on my regular classroom observation, I carefully selected and transcribed the “critical moments” or “a point of significance, an instant when things change” (Pennycook, 2004, p. 330) specifically related to miscommunication. In other words, this study prioritizes the “quality” of data transcription and analysis of “critical” moment of miscommunication phenomena rather than the ‘amount.’

Lastly, this study is not able to demonstrate direct connections between the classroom interactions and students’ writing, which has been discussed by a number of writing and composition scholars (e.g., Hyland, 2008; Weissberg, 1994, Williams, 2008). They argue that discussion about writing in the writing classroom can improve the overall quality of writing or at least in draft-to-draft changes. Future research should seek to employ multiple types of data such as several drafts of writing and individual interviews with students about their writing process to substantiate the analysis and show the clearer relationship between class discussion and writing, which is one of intriguing research areas that need further investigation. In short, the component of “writing” in the present study can require further inquiry regarding the possible impact of classroom discussion about writing-related concepts on students’ understanding and incorporating in their written drafts.

8.7 Concluding remarks

To conclude, on the basis of findings from ELF pragmatic research, including the present study, I argue that English language teaching is advised to pay much more attention to actual interactional needs among multilingual students and shift our goals towards more
achievable ones and to focus increasingly on communicative strategies necessarily in ELF interactional contexts. Although ELF speakers may have widely different linguistic and cultural characteristics and personal experiences, they can generally communicate each other successfully through employing a variety of verbal, multimodal, and ecological resources. In other words, this fact complexifies the common assumption that intercultural communication among ‘non-native’ English speakers is always ‘problematic’ and causes miscommunication simply because of cultural and linguistic differences and ‘imcompencies’ of interactants involved.

Taking into consideration ELF and its communication, what is essential for being a “good communicator” is not probably achieving native speakers’ norms, as observed in the data analysis. For example, when a multilingual student coordinated her idiosyncratic word with laughter for raising explicitness of something idiosyncratic, it still functioned effectively without the need of repair. Instead of approximating to native speaker’s norms, what is more important for successful ELF communication is developing intercultural sensitivity, metalinguistic awareness, and accommodation skills, which enables us to effectively participate in intercultural communication. In other words, such successful communicators know how to flexibly appropriate and adapt their own linguistic and cultural patterns in terms of accents, word choices, grammatical patterns, and employment of nonverbal elements depending on specific interactional contexts, purposes, and interlocutors. To give an example, communicative adjustments include adjusting one’s ears to new phonological patterns rather than imitating native speakers’ (Jenkins, 2000). Furthermore, such adjustments expand the levels of word choices (e.g., Pitzl, 2009) and grammatical patterns (e.g., Björkman, 2008a, 2008b, Cogo & Dewy, 2006; Hülmbauer, 2009) as well.
Besides accommodation skills, several researchers (e.g., Jenkins, 2009; McKay, 2002) have suggested that language awareness raising and intercultural language teaching that aim for intercultural communicative competence are necessary for ELT. In fact, as for linguistic and cultural awareness and attitude, there might be “unique privilege of non-native speakers” (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996, p. 210). Bakhtin (1981) even sees “outsideness” as a necessary and desirable quality for developing greater understanding of others and of others’ cultures, which might contribute to ELF speakers’ collaborative and tolerant attitude toward different languages and cultures. Thus, rather than being ‘learners’ who try to approximate to ideal ‘native’ speakers, students need to become the flexible multilingual individuals who can adapt to ELF communicative circumstances or accommodate to variability in order to live harmoniously with more varied Englishes. Particularly, as Björkman (2011, 2013) and Jenkins (2011) similarly suggest, such multilingual individuals should be someone who is pragmatically competent rather than approximating to native speakers’ norms. Furthermore, symbolic competence, or what Kramsch (2006, 2008) has proposed as the ability of learners to negotiate meanings in multimodal discourse such as spoken, written, visual, and electronic, might be necessary for ELF speakers as well. In order to promote such an alternative teaching and learning perceptive, ELF research needs to further develop in-depth description about academic ELF practice, namely to demonstrate how ELF speakers actually use English in the classroom. Such characteristics of ELF usage through ELF descriptive research might suggest which communicative processes, features, and strategies for achieving understanding might be given stress for potential usage in English language pedagogy.

In short, I argue that ELT should focus more on developing students’ communicative and interpersonal strategies, which include how to do conversational repairs and produce
clarification requests while considering politeness and face. In other words, what is learnt in the classroom should be usable as a resource of future communicative needs in ELF since learners can become ELF users even outside the classroom. It should also stress the importance of “attitudinal resources,” which might include “patience, tolerance and humility to negotiate differences” (Canagarajah, 2007b, p. 236). Furthermore, as Canagarajah (2013) suggests, rather than thinking what teachers can offer multilingual students, teachers should set up the classroom as a space for social negotiations and ecological affordances in which multilingual students can bring their own dispositions and competences related to English language use already developed outside the classroom. In other words, multilingual instructors and students collaboratively communicate and learn each other from their differences, and there is not always necessary to find common values first among them. Through such socialization and negotiation processes in multilingual classroom contexts, students can further develop negotiation and accommodation strategies and pragmatic competence, which can be applied outside the classroom meaningfully. Such collaborative pedagogical practice enables us to communicate harmoniously with people with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the current multilingual and multicultural world.

Besides a shift of English language pedagogy for multilingual students, the present study also has a few important suggestions for language teacher education. First, this study demonstrates the need of language teachers’ developing a mindset and awareness of the nature of intercultural communication in the classroom. In particular, language teachers should be ready to deal with miscommunication phenomena, which is the normal part and space necessary for negotiating understandings and differences. Second, the present study clearly demonstrates language teachers’ effective use of multimodal interactional resources along with speech as part of
communicative strategies for negotiation. In other words, English language teachers, possibly including other language teachers as well, should be trained to incorporate various non-verbal and verbal interactional resources strategically for making their meaning explicit to their students. Finally, it is shown that language teachers must have a willingness to engage in “listening” to multilingual students in order to understand them. This notion of listening might be related to what Ratcliffe (1999) defines as “rhetorical listening.” Ratcliffe intentionally flips the word “understanding” to argue that one should “stand under” (p. 207) a text to let its difference flow over one’s reading and interpretation. With this notion combined with my analysis, I argue that language teacher education has to highlight the importance of listening as much as speaking, and encourage teachers to move out of their self-centeredness in assuming only their norms as relevant. They have to be willing to negotiate the diverse cultural and linguistic values their students bring with them.

The three suggestions above can be a small but a big step forward to preparing language teachers for dealing with complex, multilingual classroom interactional needs. In fact, these suggestions somewhat overlap with what Kubota (2013) has found necessary as competencies for transnational corporate communication in other languages than English. In particular, Kubota demonstrates the importance of non-linguistic qualities, including personal characteristics, communicative and fundational dispositions, and cultural knowledge. This probably indicates that raising awareness and disposition toward understanding differences based on willingness to communicate and mutual accommodation is an important element for successful intercultural communication through not only English but also other languages.

Finally, the present study has demonstrated how ELF speakers align mind-body-world resources for communicative success. It has also illustrated how a consideration of multimodal,
ecological resources can add to that ELF interactional research field. In other words, it shows how the strategies that ELF speakers adopt for communicative success can be realized by nonverbal, multimodal, ecological means as well. In fact, ignoring these nonverbal, ecological resources from ELF intercultural communication is unwise as gesture, other embodied tools, non-verbal vocalization, and material objects are so deeply intertwined with speech and as ELF speakers skillfully coordinate multiple semiotic resources simultaneously for raising explicitness, making meaning transparent, and resolving miscommunication. Thus, this study will contribute to shifting the prevailing emphasis on the linguistic component of ELF communicative competence to develop a more holistic analysis of ELF speakers’ meaning making practices, which hopefully serves as a platform for developing a multimodal orientation to the ELF research field. I strongly argue that a variety of interactional resources such as gestures, embodied actions, laughter, silence, or objects in the classroom ecology should be systematically examined in ELF interactions along with verbal speech in order to understand how ELF speakers achieve communicative success in a holistic manner beyond shared linguistic norms.
APPENDIX A

Teacher M’s Syllabus

ESL 015: Composition for American Academic Communication II

Summer 2013

Instructor: M Office: 8b Sparks (814-863-7054)
Course Section: 201 Office Hours: 1:25-1:45 M-F
Course Meetings: M-F 2:20 -3:35 pm Email: send via Angel/Edmodo
Course Location: 08 Thomas Skype: …. (by appointment)

Course Description

Welcome to ESL 015. This course is for undergraduate students who are intermediate-advanced level non-native speakers of English. In this course you will learn about the common practices of American academic writing including choosing research topics and conducting library research; summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting; making claims and providing support; and following American conventions for citing source material. In addition, you will learn a variety of techniques for improving your papers through peer reviewing, revising your papers to improve their organization and content, and editing your writing for common grammatical errors. You will also practice specific strategies for reading and critiquing scholarly research and other kinds of writing. The overall goal of this course is to provide you the reading and writing skills required to be successful in academic reading and writing tasks throughout your university experiences in the United States.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, each learner will be able to:
I. Write different kinds of essays that meet the needs of different audiences and purposes. Effective essays will show strong focus, effective organization, sufficient development, and overall cohesiveness through transitions and repeating key words.

II. Work through his/her writing process effectively. This means the ability to generate ideas, plan and draft essays, revise essays, and identify and self-correct grammatical errors, as well as to give and take feedback through peer-review.

III. Use critical reading skills to interact with academic texts. These skills include the ability to identify main points and details, determine audience and purpose, orally summarize, and analyze a given text.

IV. Use outside source material effectively and ethically through summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing sources appropriately.

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**Course Textbook**


**Additional Materials**

- In this class we will be using a website called *Edmodo* for several projects. You will need to create an account on this website (I will demonstrate this in class and provide help).
- I may also use our ANGEL site to share additional readings and handouts. ANGEL can be accessed at: [https://angel.psu.edu](https://angel.psu.edu)
- Please bring loose-leaf paper to each class for in-class writing assignments.

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**Course Requirements**

All assignments will be submitted electronically (unless otherwise noted). Assignments should be double-spaced and use 12 point Times New Roman font. I will hand out detailed grading rubrics for each of the major paper assignments as the course progresses.
I. Preparation and Participation (10%)
   To get full points for preparation and participation, you must participate fully in class
discussions, in-class exercises, and peer review sessions. You must also bring the
required materials (books, homework, etc…) with you to every class.

II. Response Papers (15%)
   Response papers may be short responses to particular readings, personal reflections, or
other assignments which help you prepare for class discussion or for major writing
projects. I may also assign some grammar exercises as needed. I will grade response
papers on how well you followed the writing prompt and also on the depth and
completeness of your writing.

III. Essay Rough Drafts (10%)
   As part of the composing process, I will read and comment on rough drafts all of your
formal essays. While these essay drafts are not graded, you will receive points for
turning them in on time and complete.

IV. Extended Definition Essay (15%)
   In this essay, you will choose a controversial or interesting word either in English or in
another language you know, and give a definition of it using examples and outside
sources (2-3 pages).

V. Critique Essay (15%)
   In this essay, you will summarize and then critique an article or essay by developing an
opinion about it – agreeing, disagreeing, or both. You will support your opinion with
evidence from both the article itself and from your own experiences (3-4 pages).

VI. Annotated Bibliography (10%)
   For this assignment, you will work individually or with a group to research a topic that
interests you. You will use the library and other resources to collect sources about the
topic. You will then summarize (annotate) each source to create a reference list.

VII. Argumentative Essay (25%)
   For this essay, you will develop an opinion about the topic you have researched, and use
the sources from the annotated bibliography to support your opinion. This essay should
have a strong thesis statement, persuasive strategies including counter-arguments, and at
least four sources (5-8 pages, plus references).

Grade Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness:

Coming to class, being prepared for class, and actively participating is essential to your success in this course. You may have up to three absences without any consequences to your grade. However, every class you miss beyond three will result in a 2% drop in your final grade. Make sure to plan absences accordingly, and speak to me in advance if you anticipate this being a problem for you. Three tardies (arriving more than five minutes late) will count as one absence.

Classroom Distractions:

When you come to class, I expect you to behave in a professional way that shows respect to me and to your classmates. If you arrive late, please enter quietly. Mobile phones, laptops, and other devices must be used only for academic purposes during class time. I will end class on time, so please wait until the class is completely finished to pack up your belongings.

Late Assignments:

Unless otherwise specified, assignments should be turned in electronically via ANGEL dropbox by the deadline marked on the class schedule – usually, this will be by midnight. I will accept late work up to one week after the original due date, but a full letter grade will be subtracted for each day the assignment is late. Any assignments turned in more than one week after the original due date will receive an F.

Enrollment & Withdrawal
You are responsible for making all decisions regarding your enrollment status in and any Financial Holds for Penn State courses. Should you decide to withdraw from this course, you must either (1) drop via eLion or (2) complete an official “add/drop” form and submit it to your advisor by University deadlines. If you are failing the course and do not officially withdraw, you will receive a final grade of F.

**Academic Integrity & Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using someone else’s words, ideas, and/or data in your work and treating it as your own by either not citing it or by citing it inappropriately. Plagiarism is a very serious issue in the American university system. Within Penn State, the College of Liberal Arts has the following policy regarding academic honesty and plagiarism:

“Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.”

(https://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Deans_Area/Preparingyoursyllabus.shtml)

Questions about academic integrity can be referred to Ashley Tarbet at aet143@psu.edu or (814) 865-1070.

If, at any time, you have a question about whether what you are doing is plagiarism or not, please ask me. I want to help you figure out how to use source materials ethically (it is, in fact, one of the major goals of this class!). You will not be penalized for any evidence of plagiarism if you come to me asking for help with using your sources.

**Disability Access Statement:**
“The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible.” (http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Deans_Area/Preparingyoursyllabus.shtml)

Questions about disability access can be referred to Jennifer Morris at jxm2@psu.edu or (814) 863-5538.

Statement of Nondiscrimination:

“The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state of federal authorities. The Pennsylvania State University does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.” (http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/syllabus/policy)
Instructor: L  
Office: 312 Sparks

Course Section: Section # 9  
Office Hours: T 11:00-12:00

Course Meetings: T & R  8:00-9:15  
Phone: xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Class Location: Life Sciences Bld 12  
Email: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Course Description

The goal of this course is to help you develop the reading and writing skills you need to participate successfully in academic reading and writing tasks at an American university. In this course you will practice academic writing, which includes summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, organizing your ideas, doing basic library research, supporting your claims with good forms of evidence, and preparing citations. You will participate in all stages of the writing process, which means that you will brainstorm, draft, revise, give and get feedback through peer review, and proofread. You will also learn and practice useful reading skills and strategies to support your research and writing activities.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

• Use the writing process effectively. This means that you will be able to generate ideas, plan and draft essays, revise your writing, and identify and correct major grammatical problems. You will also be able to give and take guided feedback through peer-review.
• Write different kinds of essays that meet the needs of different audiences and purposes. Your essays will demonstrate that you understand the concept of audience, genre, and voice.
• Use critical reading skills to get information from academic texts. You will be able to identify main points and details, determine audience and purpose, summarize, and respond to written English texts.
• Use academic vocabulary related to course readings accurately and appropriately.
• Use outside source material effectively and ethically through summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and citing sources appropriately.
• Write clear and comprehensible sentences and paragraphs that form coherent and cohesive texts.
• Identify and correct common grammatical and mechanical errors, and know how to seek further help from sources outside of class.

Required Textbook


Additional Materials

• A notebook or paper for in-class writing assignments.
• We will regularly use ANGEL. Assignments and important activities will be posted on ANGEL at https://angel.psu.edu

Course Requirements

Attendance & in-class participation  5%  A  95-100
Peer reviews & HW  5%  A-  90-94.9
Journal entries  10%  B+  87.9-89.9
Reading assignments & responses  10%  B  83.33-87.8
B-  80-83.32

Major Writing Assignments (total 70%):

• Extended definition text  10%  C+  75-79.9
• Comparison/Contrast Poster  10%  C  70-74.9
• Analytic Essay  20 + 5% for 1st draft  D  60-69.9
• Argumentative Essay  20 + 5% for 1st draft  F <59.9

Total: 100%

The Penn State grading scale does not allow the option of awarding grades of C-, D+ or D- grades.
Course Policies

Preparation of HW and written assignments

All major assignments must be prepared digitally. Some classwork activities may be completed in handwritten form.

Your essays should be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font and double spaced and submitted to the designated ANGEL drop box as well as the turnitin.com drop box.

Classroom Distractions

Everyone uses digital accessories these days to help them in their coursework. You are welcome to bring laptops, iPads, cell phones, etc., to class, but you are expected to use them only as much as they help you participate in our class activities. I may request you to turn off, or put away, such devices at any time.

Late Assignments & Extra Credit

Turn in your assignments on time. Every day a major assignment is late brings down your grade by 2 points. Smaller assignments and HW that is not turned in will be graded as 0 points.

Extra Credit assignments (1 point each)

EC Option #1  Go to the Palmer Art Museum and find a painting or other piece of art that you really like. Write 500-750 words about the artwork and your response to it. (Do NOT google the artwork, the artist, or the museum; write from your own experience of the artwork.) Due October, 30.

EC Option #2  PSU campus has many concerts, shows, performances, and sports events all year. Many of them are cheap or free. Find out about an event that interests you, attend the event, and write 500-750 words about it: describe what happened, and also about your response and/or participation. Due November, 30.

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED

Attendance & in-class participation (5% of your total grade)

Come to class on time; participate in the activities; do the assigned readings and HW before class; bring your textbook and HW papers to class; contact the instructor, if you know that you
will have a problem attending on a certain day. You will be assigned various tasks, such as an office hour consultation with the instructor; a library orientation workshop; a visit to a campus activity, etc. These tasks are required!

You may be absent 3 times without losing any points from your grade. I will take 2% off your final grade for every class that you miss over this number.

_Peer reviews & other HW (5% of your total grade)_

A good writer knows how to read and revise a text. In this class, you will have a chance to work closely with your classmates in giving, and receiving, peer feedback to make your revising better. This is a required part of the class and I will help you develop your peer reviewing skills.

Sometimes you will be assigned HW outside of the writing assignments or reading textbook. These assignments must be completed before class, and you are responsible for bringing them to class with you.

_Dialogue Journal entries (10% of your total grade)_

In addition to the 4 major writing assignments, you will be required to write 7 informal, communicative texts, usually in the form of a dialogue journal to a classmate. You and your journal partners will read and respond to each other’s journal entries. The journal entry assignments are designed to help you develop ideas for your writing; understand the readings better; organize information for better communication; and practice using sentence structures and lexical items that are useful for your writing.

_Reading assignments & responses (10% of your final grade)_

This is a class for writing and critical reading. We will read several essays in the textbook, and you will find readings during your library research. When a reading is assigned, at least one response activity will also be assigned; you must complete this response activity and bring it to class. Some responses may be assigned for the Journal entry; these do not have to be brought to class.

_Major Writing Assignments (70% of your total grade)_

- _Major Assignment ONE: Extended Definition (10%)_

  **Focus:** sentence & paragraph structure; choosing good illustrative information; domain-specific vocabulary; organization of text; identifying and writing for an audience

  **Description:** Choose an important concept or object from your field of study (your major) and write an extended definition of what it is, what it means, how it is used or how it functions, etc.
You may gather information from library sources, the internet, your own experience, and other people. This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 600-700 words.

- **Major Assignment TWO: Comparison/Contrast Poster Presentation (10%)**
  
  **Focus:** Organization of text; use of research information; presentation skills
  
  **Description:** Choose a topic, as guided by your instructor, and organize information about it using visual design elements to clarify the comparison or contrast you make. You will present the poster or ppt in class, and submit a summary of the information as well. Length: one poster or 12 ppt slides; 4 minute-presentation; 500-700 word text

- **Major Assignment THREE: Analytic Essay (20% + 5% for 1st draft)**
  
  **Focus:** Use and citation of research information; textual organization; choice of good supporting examples and arguments
  
  **Description:** Choose a topic relating to plagiarism, academic dishonesty, scientific fraud, identity theft, cybercrime, or some other issue that is related to the issue of trust, and do basic library research about the WHO, WHAT, WHY and WHERE of the problem, including the social impact and potential solutions.
  
  This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 1200 words

- **Major Assignment FOUR: Argumentative Essay (20% + 5% for 1st draft)**
  
  **Focus:** Development of research question; use of research information; citation and reference formatting; development and support of arguments and evidence; oral presentation skills
  
  **Description:** Develop a research question about a contemporary controversial topic, do basic library research about it; organize and write an essay that takes a position on the controversy and argues for one point of view over another. Ideas for this essay will be suggested and discussed by the instructor and the students, and final choices will be made from a selected list of topics. Present your final topic in a brief oral presentation in class.
  
  This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 1200-1600 words.

**PSU Policies**

**Enrollment & Withdrawal**

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If you are failing the course and do not officially withdraw, you will receive a final grade of F. Please talk to me if you have any questions about this process.

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> Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.”

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color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.” (http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/syllabus/policy)
I appreciate your taking time for filling in this questionnaire. If you find any question unclear, please let me know.

1. Which country do you originally come from?

2. What is (are) your native language(s)?

3. What language(s) do you speak besides your native language(s)? How long have you learned each language?

4. Where have you mainly learned English?

5. How long have you been in the U.S.? Is this your first semester at this university?

6. How do you feel about your speaking and writing ability in English in general?

7. What aspects of learning English do you find the most difficult for you? And why do you think so?

8. Why do you take this ESL writing course? What is (are) your goal(s) for this course?

9. Have you taken any academic writing course at high school or language school? If so, what kind of concepts have you learned (e.g., thesis statement, paragraph structure, and counter-argument)?

10. Finally, in your opinion, what do “good writing” and “good academic writing” look like?
APPENDIX D

Instructor Questionnaire

1. Which country do you originally come from?

2. What is (are) your native language(s)?

3. What language(s) do you speak besides your native language(s)? How long have you learned each language?

4. How long have you taught ESL classes in the U.S.? Also, please briefly describe your previous teaching experiences in other contexts if you have.

5. Do you have any experience of living in countries other than your native country for more than one year? Please describe the length of stay and countries.

6. What kind of feedback do you like to provide in order to develop your students’ writing? Do you have any preferred way(s) of giving feedback? Please share your opinions regarding providing written and oral feedback for students’ writing.

7. What do you think about the roles of classroom interactions in writing classrooms? How do you see a possible relationship between classroom interactions and writing?

8. Do you use nonverbal components (e.g., body and hand gestures, eye gazes, postures, and multimedia resources for teaching such as PowerPoint) in your writing classrooms? If so, what kind do you intentionally employ? How do you see the roles in writing classrooms?

9. Have you felt/experienced any miscommunication (misunderstanding and non-understanding) with your students in ESL015 classes? If so, can you share some common instances of miscommunication that you remember?

10. Finally, what do you identify the most challenging issue(s) when you teach this writing course? Also, what do you think the most important thing(s) that you want your students to acquire through your ESL015?
APPENDIX E

Peer Review Sheet of Teacher L

Argumentative Essay Peer Review Sheet

Writer

Name:______________________________________

• My purpose
  is:______________________________________________________________________

• The main point I want to make in this text is:
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

• One or two things that I would appreciate your comments on are:
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

Reader

Name:________________________________________________________________

• After reading through the draft one time, write a summary of the text. Do you agree with
  the writer's assessment of the text's main idea?
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
Introduction

- Is there an introduction?

- Does it include any attention getter? Does the attention getter include a general overview of the topic/background information and explain importance of the topic?

- Does the introduction include a thesis statement? Underline it.

  - Does the thesis statement include a claim? Pro-arguments? Counter-arguments? What are they? Write them down.

  - Are a claim, pro-, and counter-arguments in logical relationships? Determine the type of the claim and explain the logic between the claim and pro- and counter-arguments?

- Is the thesis statement articulated clearly? Is it comprehensible?

- Is the thesis specific? Does it include vague words, e.g., some, a kind of, many people, etc.?
• Does the thesis statement need work?
   Explain.______________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Body

• Is the body of an essay structured? What structure pattern do the body paragraphs follow?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

• Do the body paragraphs stay focused on the thesis? Is there any stray information/not linked to the thesis statement in any of the paragraphs?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

Pro Idea Paragraphs

• Does the writer state one PRO idea in the topic sentence?________________________
• Does the writer give a reason why the PRO idea is valid?
   __________________________________________________________________________
• Does the writer give at least two specific pieces of evidence to verify the PRO idea?________________________
• Does the writer elaborate on/explain the evidence?____________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
• Does the evidence relate directly to the pro- idea?___________________________________________
• Is the evidence strong and irrefutable?

• To what extent does the analysis of the evidence convince you? Why?

Refutation Paragraphs

• Does the writer state one CON idea in the topic sentence?

• Does the writer specify the CON idea (why do opponents think like that?)

• Does the writer problematize the CON idea to make it appear shaky and possibly untrue? Explain

• What linguistic expressions does the writer use to problematize the CON idea? Write them down?

• Does the writer signal her/his shift to her/his claim?

• What linguistic expressions does the writer use to do that? Write them down?

• Does the writer refute the CON idea?
• Is the refutation convincing? Explain.

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Conclusion

• Is there a conclusion? Does it review the points stated in the thesis? Does it restate the thesis refining it in light of the evidence presented in the essay?

_____________________________________________________

• Does the writer explain how her/his claim affects, or can affect the reader and/or society? ____________

Analysis and Support

• To what extent does the analysis of the evidence convince you? Why?

_____________________________________________________

• Where is the essay you are least convinced by the writer’s argument or point? Why?

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

• What could be done to improve this part of the essay?

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

• What additional analysis and interpretation of selected passages would strengthen the argument? Explain.

_____________________________________________________
Grammar and Mechanics

• Does the writer use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling?

• Are there any issues with any of these elements that make the writing unreadable or confusing?

Finally, what grade would you give this essay? Why?
APPENDIX F

Handout for Argumentative Essay Requirements of Teacher M

What should I do for this essay?

For this essay, you will select a research question that interests you. You will use the library (databases etc.) to research this question, learning as much about it as you can. Finally, you will write an argumentative essay, with a clear thesis statement, that uses at least four sources in order to support your opinion about the research question. A bibliography is required for this assignment (5-8 pages, or 1200-1600 words plus bibliography). An argumentative essay attempts to change the reader’s mind, to convince the reader to agree with the point of view or opinion of the writer.

Further details about the essay:

1. Your claim/thesis should be arguable (talk with me and make sure it is a good one before you start working on the first draft).
2. The claim should be well supported with reasons and (concrete) evidence.
3. Your essay should include at least 3 arguments and two refutations to counter-arguments.
4. Make sure which reasoning pattern (inductive/deductive) and structural development (general to specific or specific to general) do your paragraphs (body) follow.
5. The essay should be coherent (use transitions).
6. It should be 1200-1600 words not including the references.
7. You should try to use at least one type of appeal in the essay (logos, ethos, pathos).
8. Should follow the citation style you have chosen consistently.
9. You should submit your drafts first in turn-it-in and report the overlap percentage in each drafts while turning them in the Angel dropbox.
10. Overall, your argumentative thesis should take a side of an issue and propose a course of action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Your Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness of Intro &amp; thesis</strong> (starts with matching background to thesis and provides the preview of the whole article)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strength of Arguments</strong> (uses research-based supporting arguments from scholarly sources;</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
balances logos, ethos, and pathos, provides examples and details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength of Counter-Arguments And Refutation (mentions opponent’s viewpoints and refutes them with research-based evidence etc.)</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness of Conclusion (matches what was promised in the intro, proposes a course of action)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics &amp; Documentation (uses appropriate grammar; uses the citation style consistently in both body and bibliography; documents all the sources)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Formatting (formatting of margins, title, font sizes, spacing, and so forth)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Comments
APPENDIX G

Handout for Argumentative Essay Requirements of Teacher L

Argumentative Essay

Focus: Development of a research question; use of research information; citation and reference formatting; development and support of arguments and evidence; oral presentation skills

*Description:* Develop a research question about a contemporary *controversial/debatable* topic, do basic library research about it; organize and write an essay that *takes a position on the controversy* and *argues* for one point of view over another. Ideas for this essay will be suggested and discussed by the instructor and the students, and final choices will be made from a selected list of topics. *Present your final topic in a brief oral presentation in class.*

This assignment will be drafted, reviewed, and revised. Length: 1200-1600 words.

*Your essays should be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font and double spaced and submitted to the designated ANGEL drop box (as the attachment) as well as the turnitin.com drop box.*

**Example topics**

Retrieved from: [http://www.writefix.com/argument/topics.htm](http://www.writefix.com/argument/topics.htm)

1. Damage to the environment is an inevitable consequence of worldwide improvements in the standard of living.
2. Are famous people treated unfairly by the media? Should they be given more privacy, or is the price of their fame an invasion into their private lives?
3. Are our zoos cruel to wild animals?
4. Are women better parents than men?
5. Are zoos necessary for education?
6. Does modern technology make life more convenient, or was life better when technology was simpler?
7. Does travel help to promote understanding and communication between countries?
8. Education is the single most important factor in the development of a country. Do you agree?
9. Foreign language instruction should begin in kindergarten. Do you agree or disagree? Use specific reasons and examples to develop your essay.
10. The destruction of the world’s forests is inevitable as our need for land and food grows. Do you agree?
11. Human beings do not need to eat meat in order to maintain good health because they can get all their food needs from meatless products and meatless substances. A vegetarian diet is as healthy as a diet containing meat. What is your opinion?

12. If children behave badly, should their parents accept responsibility and also be punished?

Guidelines

Retrieved from http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/05/

The argumentative essay requires you to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner. It means you should take a stand on the issue under consideration and make a case for it.

The structure of the argumentative essay is held together by the following.

A clear, concise, and defined thesis statement that occurs in the first paragraph of the essay.

In the first paragraph of an argument essay, you should set the context by reviewing the topic in a general way. Next you should explain why the topic is important or why readers should care about the issue. Lastly, you should present the thesis statement. It is essential that this thesis statement be appropriately narrowed.

Clear and logical transitions between the introduction, body, and conclusion.

Transitions are the mortar that holds the foundation of the essay together. Without logical progression of thought, the reader is unable to follow the essay’s argument, and the structure will collapse. Transitions should wrap up the idea from the previous section and introduce the idea that is to follow in the next section.

Body paragraphs that include evidential support.

Each paragraph should be limited to the discussion of one idea. It is important to note that each paragraph in the body of the essay must have some logical connection to the thesis statement in the opening paragraph. Some paragraphs will directly support the thesis statement with evidence collected during research. It is also important to explain how and why the evidence supports the thesis (warrant).

However, argumentative essays should also consider and explain differing points of view regarding the topic. Depending on the length of the assignment, students should dedicate one or two paragraphs of an argumentative essay to discussing conflicting opinions on the topic.

Evidential support (whether factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal).

The argumentative essay requires well-researched, accurate, detailed, and current information to support the thesis statement and consider other points of view. Some factual, logical, statistical, or anecdotal evidence should support the thesis. However, you must consider multiple points of view when collecting evidence. It is unethical to exclude evidence that may not support the thesis.
A conclusion that does not simply restate the thesis, but readdresses it in light of the evidence provided.

The conclusion must be effective and logical. Do not introduce any new information into the conclusion; rather, synthesize the information presented in the body of the essay. Restate why the topic is important, review the main points, and review your thesis. You may also want to include a short discussion of more research that should be completed in light of your work.

The five-paragraph essay

A common method for writing an argumentative essay is the five-paragraph approach. This is, however, by no means the only formula for writing such essays. If it sounds straightforward, that is because it is; in fact, the method consists of (a) an introductory paragraph (b) three evidentiary body paragraphs that may include discussion of opposing views and (c) a conclusion.

Thesis Statement

An argumentative piece of writing must begin with a debatable thesis or claim. In other words, the thesis must be something that people could reasonably have differing opinions on. If your thesis is something that is generally agreed upon or accepted as fact then there is no reason to try to persuade people.

Types of claims

Claims typically fall into one of four categories. Thinking about how you want to approach your topic, in other words what type of claim you want to make, is one way to focus your thesis on one particular aspect of your broader topic.

1. Claims of fact or definition: These claims argue about what the definition of something is or whether something is a settled fact. Example:
   
   What some people refer to as global warming is actually nothing more than normal, long-term cycles of climate change.

2. Claims of cause and effect: These claims argue that one person, thing, or event caused another thing or event to occur. Example:
   
   The popularity of SUV's in America has caused pollution to increase.

3. Claims about value: These are claims made of what something is worth, whether we value it or not, how we would rate or categorize something. Example:
   
   Global warming is the most pressing challenge facing the world today.

4. Claims about solutions or policies: These are claims that argue for or against a certain solution or policy approach to a problem. Example:
   
   Instead of drilling for oil in Alaska we should be focusing on ways to reduce oil consumption, such as researching renewable energy sources.
**Which type of claim is right for your argument?** Which type of thesis or claim you use for your argument will depend on your position and knowledge of the topic, your audience, and the context of your paper. You might want to think about where you imagine your audience to be on this topic and pinpoint where you think the biggest difference in viewpoints might be. Even if you start with one type of claim you probably will be using several within the paper. Regardless of the type of claim you choose to utilize, it is key to identify the controversy or debate you are addressing and to define your position early on in the paper.
APPENDIX H

Transcription Conventions

The audio- and video-recorded materials were transcribed according to the following notation system, whose core was originally developed by Gail Jefferson for the analytic research of conversation (cited by Atkinson & Heritage, 1999). Furthermore, I specifically utilize a special transcription notation that I have adopted from Smotorova and Lantolf (2013): {      } to show the synchronized vocal and non-vocal action, which is related to gesture strokes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Represents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[</td>
<td>overlapping utterances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>latched utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(. )</td>
<td>micro pause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.0)</td>
<td>timed (e.g., 2-second) pause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>extended sound or syllable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>falling intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>,</td>
<td>continuing intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>rising intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>animated intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>cut-off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;word&lt;</td>
<td>speech at a pace quicker than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;word&gt;</td>
<td>speech at a pace slower than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>smile voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeah</td>
<td>emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY</td>
<td>speech much louder than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦Um◦</td>
<td>speech quieter than the surrounding talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((walks toward))</td>
<td>non-vocal action that is not synchronized with verbal, details of conversational scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{raises his arm}</td>
<td>non-vocal action that is synchronized with verbal speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>unrecoverable speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over</td>
<td>gestural stroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RH</td>
<td>right hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH</td>
<td>left hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BH</td>
<td>both hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB</td>
<td>blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>projected screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→</td>
<td>feature of interest to analyze</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

Sample Questions for Stimulated Recall Interviews

1. Do you remember this moment of class interaction?
2. What were you trying to do at this time?
3. What were you intending to say to .... at this time?
4. How were you feeling at this moment?
5. What can you see was happening during this video?
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Press.


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Amsterdam: John Benjamins.


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Nevertheless, it is not simple to differentiate users and learners clearly since it is expected that language learning can take place on all occasions when language is used. From an ELF perspective, however, the basic orientation should be on language in use.

Similarly, studies on the intercultural communication (e.g., Bailey, 2004; Gumperz, 1982; Scollon & Scollon, 2001[1995]) often attribute miscommunication to cultural differences and consider the link between culture and misunderstanding as a ‘pre-given.’ For instance, Scollon and Scollon (1995) argue that “When we are communicating with people who are very different from us, it is very difficult to know how to draw inferences about what they mean, and so it is impossible to depend on shared knowledge, and background for confidence in our interpretations” (p. 22).

ELFA is a corpus of academic encounters only. On the other hand, another ELF corpus, or The Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE; www.univie.ac.at/voice) includes more varieties of talk, such as speech events from professional and leisure domains as well as educational domains.

Nevertheless, any social interaction involves various types and multi-layered levels of power relations. In spite of the fact that ELF interactions relatively ensure power equality among interlocutors, in the academic classroom contexts, other social relations and identities such as institutionally assigned roles of instructor or student influence on how interactions are shaped. It is because language practices, especially social interactions, are a primary means of making, instantiating, and maintaining social identities.

This does not mean that ELF aims to exclude native speakers of English from its analysis. In fact, as the recent trend, the conceptualization of ELF has included native speakers of English as well and it claims that native speakers also need to negotiate appropriate norms with other speakers in context. However, it is important to note that native speakers are included in ELF only when non-native speakers are the majority in its interaction (Mauranen, 2012). Thus, it is considered that in ELF interactions native speaker norms should not be dominant as default.

This includes the original course syllabus prepared in the beginning of each semester and the newer version(s) revised in the middle of the semester.

This number excludes the amount of additional written assignments, such as journal entries or peer commentaries, and includes only that of drafts of major written assignments. The amount of drafts for each essay varied depending on each instructor’s requirement.

The identification of gesture stroke and catchment is extremely hard. Therefore, my own interpretation was consulted and confirmed by another person who has expertise in gesture in order to increase the accuracy of my transcription and interpretation.

All the students’ names appeared in this study are pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the participants.

The parts in italic are highlighted as especially relevant for data analysis.

There are a number of misunderstandings related to ELF. Besides it, it is mistakenly assumed that ELF interactions exclude native speakers of English, that ELF is claimed to be a ‘new variety,’ and that ELF research is proposing recurrent patterns and features as a ‘monolithic’ model that can replace other models for teaching.
VITA

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The Pennsylvania State University
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The Pennsylvania State University