

113153

TDL 5

INVESTIGATING TEACHER - STUDENT INTERACTIONS
FOCUSING ON FORM: A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

by

Mark Hershey



Presented to the Graduate School of Payap University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
IN
TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

PAYAP UNIVERSITY, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND
July 26TH, 2007

**INVESTIGATING TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTIONS
FOCUSING ON FORM: A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

The members of the Committee approve the master thesis of Mark Hershey

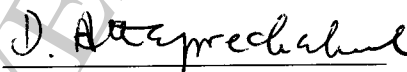
Dr. Graeme Ritchie
Supervising Professor



Associate Professor Dr. Jonathan Leather



Associate Professor Dr. Damrong Attaprechakul



Approval Date: September 24th, 2007

PAYAP UNIVERSITY

© by Mark Hershey

All Rights Reserved

PAYAP UNIVERSITY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was the result of many hours of thought, dialogue, and work. Without the support and guidance of a number of people it could not have been possible. My family deserves mention for their sisyphean patience, tolerance, and understanding. I would also like to thank the teachers at Payap for the high quality education they have provided me, far surpassing my expectations of what a master's program in teaching English would entail.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude towards Dr. Graeme Ritchie for his patient and subtle, yet incisive assistance. His help was invaluable and I cannot thank him enough for nudging me in interesting and more expansive research directions. I sometimes felt that our conversations were the material for a thesis within the thesis, as those conversations were rich in sociocultural influences, involving a dynamic process of co-constructing meanings and more competent levels of understanding. One interesting insight I gained from this study, which reflected back on the development of the thesis itself, was the notion of how subtle, yet vital the process of dialogic collaboration can be to concept formation. When I was not certain of the answer to a question I had, I would occasionally go to Dr. Ritchie's office to fish for his thoughts. Occasionally, those questions led to much dialogue and negotiation before any light would switch on. However, there were other times when in the process of asking the question, the answer itself would suddenly dawn on me. These incidents highlight the assertion of sociocultural theorists that collaboration and social presence is central to concept formation. The mediating process of collaborative dialogue pushes private speech and

troubleshooting to the surface of conscious thought, where new understandings can emerge.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Ritchie for the great energy and thought he put not only into his classes, which were invariably interesting and invigorating, but to the program as a whole.

I would also like to thank Dr. Jonathan Leather for his assistance, support, and especially perspicacious commentary as well. His teaching style always involved asking high quality questions which pushed me to think deeper about common assumptions in language learning and teaching as well as a number of my own previously rigidly held assumptions. Additionally, I appreciated that Dr. Leather always allowed students to think through questions and problems for themselves, never dominating the floor, never pushing dogmas or insisting on one right answer.

I would also like to thank Ajan Philip for his great enthusiasm in teaching and learning in this field. His optimism, energy, and enthusiasm were infectious which in turn usually created a wonderfully engaging and fun-filled classroom atmosphere. His classes in teaching reading were especially inspiring to me and as a result I have discovered that teaching reading is one of my favorite skill areas to teach in now.

Appreciation is also due for Dr. Jenjit Gasigjitamarong, whose suggestions for readings in the narrative were invaluable. The work of Kieran Egan, whom she introduced me to, was especially inspiring. Additionally, her love of literature was something we shared and led to some enjoyable conversations. Moreover, I found her suggestions for analyzing research papers to be very helpful.

Additionally, I would like to thank Htin Lin and Eddie Clark for their guidance and assistance in formatting.

Lastly, I would like to thank my classmates for their contributions to class discussions and their friendly camaraderie during both our separate and collective struggles.

PAYAP UNIVERSITY