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Using Geosemiotic Analysis to Explore Power and Interaction in ESL Classrooms

Janet L. Pierce

Franklin Regional School District, Murrysville, Pennsylvania, USA

<jpierce494@comcast.net>

Abstract

Studies of interaction in ESL classrooms have not taken into account how space and materials used in classroom impact interaction. This case study examines how three ESL teachers in two different school districts, four high school and twelve junior high ELLs and the two-classroom spaces co-construct the cultural and literacy practices of the classroom and the consequence of this interaction on the participants. Geosemiotic analysis provides multifaceted data collection and analysis of interaction over a seven-month period of time that examines participant interaction, and visual and place semiotics. Data collection included interviews, photographs, journals, and transcriptions of audio taped conversations within the ESL classrooms. Examination of data shows power constructs shape administrative classroom designation; consequent material use and space use by the ESL teacher, which in turn impacts the third culture created among the teacher and ELLs, with materials and space use itself.

Introduction

As an English as a Second language (ESL) teacher in the United States, I have taught in closets, boiler rooms, hallways and other teachers' classrooms. The spaces in which I have taught, have affected classroom language use, shaped discourse and social practices and shown power constructs within public school districts. These teaching experiences have led me to view space as well as placement and use of materials differently. For the 2007-2008 school year I conducted a study that shifted the traditional approach to studying interaction in ESL classrooms from a traditional paradigm to an ecological one. This ecological approach expanded my discourse analysis to include components of Scollon and Scollon's (2003) geosemiotic analysis framework that allowed a multifaceted data collection.

Geosemiotic Framework

In the process of establishing the criteria for this study, I examined studies of literacy practices in ESL classrooms (Gee, 2002; Oliver, 2002; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Additionally, I found that studies of discourse analysis and classroom interaction (Adger,

2001; Streeck and Mehus, 2005), of classroom space use (Chacon, 2005; Bissel, 2002), of impact of classroom use on student achievement (Duncanson, 2003), and how academic learning shapes identity (Wortham, 2006), did not examine how ESL teachers, ELLs and classroom designs interact. Interaction occurs when one agent (the ESL teacher and/or ELLs) acts or causes a reaction from another. The classroom design or materials themselves do not have agency, but the classroom design and materials shape how the ESL teacher and ELLs interact. I researched school districts with demographics similar to my own school district so that the findings might inform my own practice. As a result, I was examining school districts that had multiple ELLs of various cultural backgrounds, English proficiencies and languages in the same ESL classes. In this study, geosemiotic analysis framework (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) utilizes three elements (1) ESL teachers, (2) English language learners (ELLs), and (3) the materials and classroom designs. For the study I combined concepts from three different perspectives: cultural geography, sociocognitive and sociocultural perspectives through the use of Scollon and Scollon's Geosemiotic Analysis framework (2003), which examines the crossing of different peoples' cultures, their signs and meaning making.

A key construct of cultural geography is that culture is contained in real-life situations in temporally and spatially defined ways (Crang, 1998). Cultural geography examines the materials and ideas of a culture in order to see how cultures make meaning of space, form identities and use the semiotic systems important to their culture for meaning making. Since cultures are often political and contested (Crang, 1998; Bourdieu, 2001) I wanted to see if and how the various cultures of ELLs, of the ESL teacher and of the school district impacted interaction in the ESL classroom. For instance, spaces structure cultures by the way people enact their lives with the materials that pertain to their particular culture (Crang, 1998). In the United States classroom culture, the type of desks, books and materials a student uses for a social studies class differs from the materials and desks that are used for a science class and each culture represented in the school has different perceptions of how to use these different materials in the various classrooms (Pierce, 2009).

A sociocognitive perspective (Atkinson, 2002) supports conversation as being jointly constructed among those speaking and the topic of conversation in order to produce meaning for the individual. Therefore, meaning comes from the way a person understands and uses a society's products, practices and tools, which in my study were the materials in the ESL classroom.

In contrast, a sociocultural perspective considers literacy and communication events in the interactive context of others (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto & Stuart-Faris, 2005) from an emic perspective within specific communities (Bloome et al., 2005; Streeck et al., 20005; Baumann & Duffy-Hester, 2002). Therefore, I decided to use microethnography to tell the story of three different ESL classes' interaction in two particular classrooms over a seven-month period through thick description (Geertz, 1973) to provide a multifaceted perspective of the interaction that takes place there (Pierce, 2009).

I used the three components of Scollon and Scollon's Geosemiotic Analysis framework: Goffman's (1971) Interaction Order, Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) Visual Semiotics, and Scollon and Scollon's (2003) Place Semiotics because there are discourses everywhere that

affect our actions (Scollon et al., 2003). In this study I examined how spoken, written and visual discourse portray the interaction of people, place, objects, tools and cultural and literacy practices (Gee, 2002) in the ESL classroom over a specific time period. My study examined how the ESL classroom discourse creates an ecosystem that recursively impacts interaction with consequences for ELL participation in talking, acting, or performing with text, others and literacy practices separately or together within specific classroom spaces with the teacher and materials being used. This article discusses the consequences of the interaction, showing how a geosemiotic analysis provides multifaceted data collection that explores power and interaction in ESL classrooms.

Methodology

I began examining the interaction in the ESL classrooms with discourse analysis (DA). Using discourse analysis unites data collection, analysis, and interpretation under the premise that language and literacy learning are social processes (Bloome et al., 2005) open to the dialogic interaction of the participants. This dialogic interaction (Bakhtin, 1982) shapes what then takes place in ESL classrooms.. I examined the discourse in three different ESL classes over a seven-month period in two different school district ESL classrooms. I expanded the discourse analysis through a Geosemiotic Analysis Framework because it offers a way to study ESL classroom discourse as a social and ecological totality considering the power, and interaction in ESL classrooms through multifaceted data collection with an emic perspective of the participants over the course of a school year.

Data collection included participant observations, field notes, transcribed audio recorded conversations, photographs of interaction between the ESL teacher, the ELLs and the materials used in the various places of the classrooms, as well as member checked data from photographs of interaction and from journals kept by the ESL teachers, and ELLs. Photographs depicting ELLs' faces have been digitally altered to protect identity. Since I worked with minors, I also obtained consent to participate and photograph forms from the students and their parents. Additionally, I interviewed the principal at each school district site. I used these administrative interviews to understand the urban plan of a school district and the allocation of materials and space used by an ESL teacher. These interviews provided the first evidence that there are indeed power-constructs starting at the administration level as to how rooms and materials are allocated (Pierce, 2009). I interviewed the ESL teacher and ELLs as to their perceptions of classroom space and material use at the beginning of the study, and at the end of the study to see if participant perception had changed. I combined all of the data to provide an in-depth analysis of the interaction of the participants with the classroom design or materials and material use in three ESL classrooms over time.

Through the course of the study I established common themes or components, which I ordered into a Geosemiotic Analysis Rubric of the C3 or third culture in the ESL classroom (Pierce, 2009). This third culture is where the participants' first language and culture interacts with the first language and culture of others to create each individual's second culture or C2 which in turn interacts with others continually to create the C3 (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002). It is a very interactive space. The components of the Geosemiotic Analysis Rubric (GAR) are listed in Table 1. These components kept the data collection focused throughout the study.

Geosemiotic Analysis Components

Interaction Order

In this study, I looked at how people show their involvement alone (as a single), with others (in a group or a “with”) and with materials through the way in which they use body gloss or body movement, move around the room, use materials (markers), and present themselves to others through the use of these items and their placement (embodiment). The way in which a person does activities or actions one at a time (monochronism) or through multitasking (polychronism) reveals how the participants work, and portrays information about how they work with others using the materials at hand in specific tasks (activity involvement). Activities like platform events, presenting material to others on a stage and the type of attention accorded to others to include them or not (civil inattention) can denote how participants do people processing and gatekeeping encounters. When I combine these components with what is seen in the sign system established within a classroom and in the photographs I took of the classroom, the semiotic aggregate of an ESL classroom comes into focus. A semiotic aggregate is a place where “specific discourses are enacted at specific times” (Pierce 2009, p. 57).

Visual Semiotics

The materials and the photographs of the interaction of participants with the materials and each other in the classroom comprise the ESL classroom visual semiotics. This includes eye/body vectors showing where a person is focused, body movement (how and where the participants move around the room), information and material modality and salience (how participants perceive materials and information around the room and attribute importance to it), as well as material indexicality (what it references), inscription (what it is written with and upon) and code preferences (how information is delivered) in that semiotic sign system. Taking the concepts of the interaction order and visual semiotics and locating them in a specific time and place leads to the next component of the geosemiotic analysis of an ESL classroom aggregate, Place Semiotics.

Place Semiotics

Place Semiotics facilitates understanding how administrative decisions for ESL classroom, staff, and materials designation affect other considerations in the classroom design seen in the rubric. Place Semiotics includes examining the classroom design through the components of discourse in time/space (how discourse develops over time in various places and spaces in the ESL classroom); what code preference students use in journals, homework, and class work; emplacement of materials and the ensuing discourse; how participants used their bodies, items, perceptual spaces and personal distance to create social performance and personal fronts to others in the classroom; as well as the impact of item indexicality and placement upon the discourse and interaction in the classroom.

Recurring Themes

Once I had established a rubric, I then collected data in photographs, field notes, interviews, journal writing, audiotape transcripts of classroom discourse, and member checking of journal writing and photographs I had taken. As I collected data, I searched for the components that would help explain the power constructs, the discourse and the interaction that developed in

each ESL classroom. The components helped me consider the ESL classroom as a semiotic aggregate or over arching sign system with various interacting components enacted at specific times and places, which then helped me understand and explain what I saw happening throughout the school year in each ESL class. Within the study there were two sites, Site A and Site B. Site A involved one ESL class; Site B included two ESL classes. Within each class there were a number of participants that varied throughout the school year. Table 2 shows that participants in ESL classrooms changed over time in each school district. For instance, at Site A, Yo was in the class in the beginning but only sporadically at the end of the year. Site B had the greater changes, especially Period 8 with students coming in and out the class throughout the year.

Table 1. Geosemiotic Analysis Rubric (Pierce, 2009)

Geosemiotic Analysis Component	Descriptors
Interaction Order:	body gloss; embodiment; movement mapping; markers; personal fronts; civil inattention; monochronism/ polychronism; people processing and gatekeeping encounters; types of activity involvement; platform events; and singles/withs.
Visual Semiotics in materials, and participant interaction photographs:	eye/body vectors; body movement; information/ material modality; information salience and placement; material indexicality, inscription and information code preference
Classroom Design Place Semiotics:	discourse in time/space; code preference; inscription; emplacement; use of body, items, perceptual spaces and personal distance to create social performances and personal fronts; item indexicality; item placement issues.
Recurring Methodology themes:	field notes; interviews; journal writings; transcripts from audiotapes of classroom discourse; member checking of journal writing/photographs telling how participants, materials/place interact at each site.

Table 2. Site Participants' Attendance (Pierce, 2009)

Participants	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr
Site A Period 6							
Ms. K	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tu, Lu, JD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Yo	X	X	X	X			X

Participants	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr
Site B Period 7							
Ms. M	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HL, Jim, MJ	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
RS			X	X			
Fred				X	X	X	X
Site B Period 8							
Ms. M	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Em, Ty, D, S	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
RS		X	X	X			X
Ms. S				X	X	X	X
Katie, Sam				X	X	X	X
Draco						X	X

Findings

First, power constructs were made visible in this study. Through a comparison of data from my interview with the principal KW at Site A at the beginning of the year and a subsequent email from the teacher over the following summer when the principal, KW had departed the district, I learned that his high esteem for Ms. K, calling her the ESL Guru, had led him to allocate a room for Ms. K for many years. When he left the district, and a new principal came, this new principal did not accord Ms. K the same esteem and she lost her power, her room, and her way of working with ELLs was drastically changed. At Site B, the overarching need to provide instruction for ELLs and the relative newness of the principal at the Jr. high gave Ms. M some power to ask for another teacher to meet the needs of the students who entered halfway through the year. This changed class population and interaction patterns.

Student population, classroom size and allocation of materials also impacted instruction. At Site A, Ms. K had to have extra desks in her small room for her homeroom. This limited how she could arrange her desks. At the same time, her view of herself was as a teacher working individually with students to answer and meet their needs. As a result at Site A there were fewer platform events and the way students viewed themselves and Ms. K was different from the way the students at Site B viewed themselves in relationship to other students, the room and material use. In Figure 1, the findings from the data collection at Site A are displayed within the geosemiotic aggregate established at this site. The arrows show recursive interaction, with the three components of the analysis supporting each other in numerous ways.

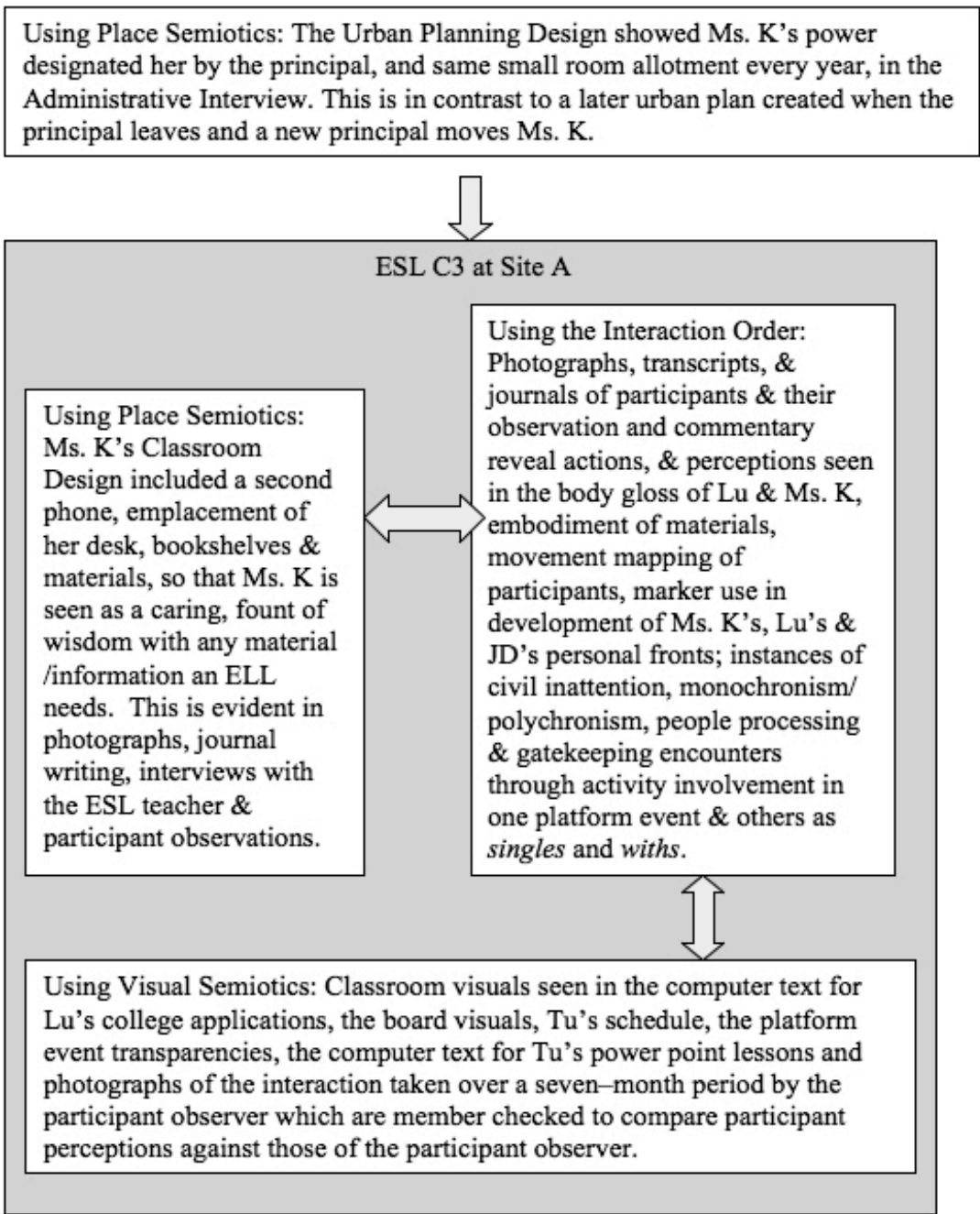


Figure 1. Geosemiotic analysis of Site A ESL classroom semiotic aggregate (Pierce, 2009).

At Site A, Lu and Ms. K's body gloss denoted closeness, an understanding that had grown through the three years Ms. K has taught Lu. Lu's title as the "computer queen" is linked to her use and proximity to the computer she uses in class. Journal writings, photographs and transcripts corroborate this idea and the ones to follow. The one platform event showed how Lu interacts with the others in the class, as the more proficient speaker, clearly comfortable speaking and asking questions. Yo showed his proficiency in an indirect way as he maintains a larger distance from the teacher, rarely coming to Ms. K's desk for help. JD facilitates

around the room, working with Ms. K at times and helping others, a role she clearly seeks throughout the year. During the platform event, when the teacher and Yo search for an overhead for Yo to talk about, JD helps Ms. K look for something Yo would be interested in talking about, while Tu talks to me and Lu laughs and talks to no one in particular. Roles change when Ms. K decides to focus on teaching Tu how to create and use PowerPoint™ presentations. In this instance, Lu is accorded civil inattention through the gatekeeping and people processing Ms. K. uses toward Lu in order to keep the focus on Tu and her own needs. A photograph taken at a peak moment of this interaction depicts the gatekeeping process done by the positioning of people and the turning of backs away from Lu seen in Figure 2. The teacher is seated next to Tu with JD standing looking over Ms. K's shoulder and Lu sitting behind everyone with her head tilted down.



Figure 2. Lu, the computer Queen is left in the background as a gatekeeping measure (Pierce, 2009)

Comparing data from multiple sources allowed me to hear what Tu and Lu felt in the situations I have described. In their journals, Tu noted that she allowed Lu to speak out and interrupt her when she was using the overhead, because Lu was funny. Lu realized she was being rude and speaking too much in the overhead discussions, but still admitted she liked to do the talking even though she felt it was hard for her to do so in English (Pierce, 2009). Transcript analysis showed that instances of civil inattention accorded to Lu brought a sarcastic response—“Oh, yeah”—when Lu felt she was being excluded (Pierce, 2009, p. 157). The photographs of items and their placement behind Ms. K's desk or on shelves above the computers in the room supported how Ms. K viewed herself as a mother figure, and fount of wisdom, with numerous resources at her fingertips to help her students (Pierce, 2009). Figure 3 shows Yo's maintenance of personal distance, Ms. K's fount of wisdom, and mother figure evident in her personal front with Lu as well as how Tu and JD uses items in the room to further their L2 learning. Ms. K's use of personal items given to her from former ELLS are used to show her as caring are seen in the background behind her and the shelves above Tu and JD.



Figure 3. Site A Semiotic Aggregate of social distance, personal fronts, material use (Pierce, 2009)

At Site B, power constructs reveal Ms. M has some power, by the way in which the principal states in his interview that he has not changed room allotment from that set aside for a previous ESL teacher since he is new to the district and recognizes the wisdom of letting the ESL teacher have a space of her own to meet the needs of their growing number of ELLs (Pierce, 2009). At this site, it is not necessarily Ms. M's expertise but the growing population and the newness of the principal which dictate and shape the power. What the teachers see as the role of a teacher also differs slightly from Ms. K's view of herself as an ESL teacher.

Early in the study, Ms. M described herself as a facilitator in her journal. She designed her classroom so that ELLs could "move around to access materials, be able to see her, the board, the materials they are using and each other" (Pierce, 2009, p. 171). She also felt it important ELLs understand what they are learning and why they are learning it. To this end she wrote daily and later, weekly objectives for each of her classes on the board in different colors. This inscription and both her perceptions and the ELLs' differed widely at times. The modality key for students was temporal need and customs, not color modality for student recognition of what was written on the white boards. ELLs looked at the board when they felt they needed to or established patterns of classwork made it prudent to read what was written (Pierce, 2009).

All teachers, Ms. K at Site A, Ms. M and Ms. S at Site B, felt the room had limitations. In her journal and evidenced in the photographs that recorded the concept, Ms. M stressed the need to see the room as having no walls so students can access information and materials in the room and outside the room. This issue of material indexicality was interesting, because this influenced how she presented materials within the room, changing bookcases and desks around, changing televisions when their actions, availability and working condition did not suit her instructional needs. In three instances, this impacted the classroom design. First, at the beginning of the year her traveling bookcase as I referred to it by the end of the year, was located beneath a bulletin board that showcased student work. She wanted students to move to get the materials they used in class. Then she moved the bookcase closer to the desks, near the front of the room, and later back to the other side of the room when she was not using the bookcase as much. Additionally, desks were moved around according to the use of materials and according to teacher perceptions of self. Thus desks were facing the front white board for

the most part, but with their arrangement in different styles, depending upon what class activity the students had. If they were working on their invitation and holiday cards while watching television, they were in rows so students could move around to get their materials they needed for their cards while watching television at the back of the room. Later when that television no longer worked, students faced the front with a portable television. Once, Ms. M arranged the desks in an inverted U shape so she could walk between the two longer prongs of the U shaped desk arrangement, to help different students as they worked. When she realized she would have her back bent over facing away from some students she quickly changed the arrangement. Student perception of how they worked and the materials they used were evidenced in their journal writings as each student inscribed journals in different ways, marking their territory and space through where they wrote, how they wrote, and what they said orally and in writing. When Darco Star entered the period 8 ESL class at SiteB near the end of the year he claimed his own identity with his pen name Draco Star emblazoned over RS's former journal minus her own writing. In comparison, David, became known as the storyteller, as he told what he did in the ESL class through stories and illustrations, always inviting me to come into the class and see things for myself. These journal inscriptions and code preferences are shown in Figures 4 and 5, respectively. The multifaceted data collection allowed me to glimpse more fully how students felt about themselves, others, their learning and their surroundings.

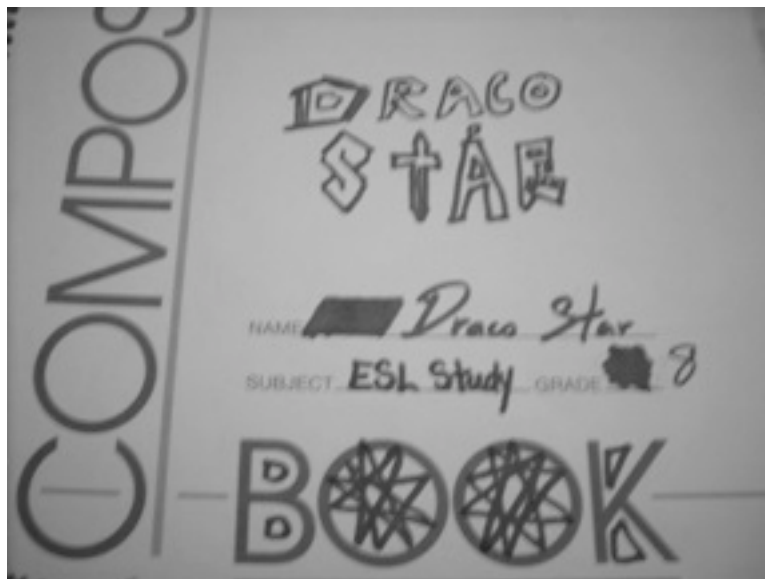


Figure 4. *Draco claims the journal as his own.* (Pierce, 2009)



Figure 5. David the storyteller illustrates a point he is making in his journal (Pierce, 2009)

At Site B, RS, never became one with the group, her language proficiency necessitating movement from one class to another. At Site B, RS stood off by herself, looking up vocabulary on her translator, working as a single who never connected with other ELLs. One photograph depicted in Figure 6 shows her standing by herself in a corner of the room using her translator to figure out something, working as a single. Her isolation is evident in her personal distance to others in the picture.



Figure 6. RS works as a single (Pierce, 2009)

At the same time, discourse analysis provides another facet of information that substantiates the semiotic aggregates depicted in photographs. At Site B during period 8, Ty's immaturity and insecurity were evident in his constant challenges, recorded in transcripts as he questioned Ms. M's directions and what others said to him. This caused friction with others

so that one student noted in conversation with me and in his journal, that he kept his distance as unobtrusively as he could so that he would not upset Ty and himself at the same time (Pierce, 2009). These observations emerged over time as I visited the classrooms and got to know the teachers, students and their situations. In Table 3 we see a summary of the geosemiotic components and their distribution within the discourse in time and space.

Table 3. Summary of Site A/B Geosemiotic Analysis of Discourse in Time and Space (Pierce, 2009)

Analysis Component	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March
Seating Choice, Emplacement, Room Design	A/B	A/B		B		
Body Gloss	A	A	B			
Activity Involvement	A	A	B		B	
Marker Use, Personal Front Development		A	A			
Information Modality		A/B	A			
Platform Events		A	A/B			
Movement Mapping		A	A			
People Processing /Gatekeeping	B	B			A	A
Embodiment Discourse	B	B			A	A
Code Preference / Inscription	B	B				B
Social Performances				B		

The data in Table 3 shows how the items in each of the geosemiotic components, Interaction Order, Visual Semiotics and Place Semiotics developed over time at each site. Where students sat, how materials were placed and used within the classroom design played an important part in understanding the interaction at Site A in the beginning of the year. At Site B there was more change when a new teacher came and students were moved around in different rooms and activities in January.

Body gloss or movement was more evident in the beginning of the year at Site A than at Site B, evidenced by the understandings between Ms. K and Lu concerning glamour shots for college applications. Ms. M's use of her hands to show how she thinks; eating words was an attempt to help ELLs understand the idiom food for thought. With more students at Site B than at Site A, activity involvement was evident sooner at Site A, then Site B. Students at Site A used markers to develop their personal front more than students at Site B. Information modality was a factor students at both sites acknowledged. More platform events were noted at Site A than Site B, despite classroom size. Was this due to class and population size and needs or teaching styles? Classroom design had a definite impact on how students moved around the room at Site A in comparison to Site B. There were people processing and gatekeeping encounters at both sites, but teachers at Site B had to deal with how to control and interact with students sooner than at Site A. This was due in part to the ELL population, the teaching style and the activities. The embodiment of discourse was evident sooner at Site B than A as well. Code preference in journals was definitely an issue at Site B but never at Site A. Was this due to the students' personalities or age? Site B students were mostly younger students still seeking their identity. "Social performance in platform events and during the classroom interaction shows how participants use body gloss and body language to portray their personal front as well.... [For example, at site B] Jim moves around the room to sharpen his pencil, to sign out to go get a drink while RS and HL stand off by themselves to work as a single. All of these [examples] are social performances distributed over time and space in the ESL classroom" (Pierce, 2009, p. 259).

Conclusion

This geosemiotic analysis showed that ESL teachers and ELLs use the ESL classroom as an ecological totality, so that the materials, and the room help structure the interactions that take place within it in a recursive manner. Thus, the dialogic interaction causes (a) change in the room design at Site B, and (b) change to the relationships and activities enacted in the ESL classroom over time at both sites. As a result, the ESL classroom becomes an ecological totality, a place and space that shapes the interaction and instruction that occurs in it in a recursive manner specific to the participants, time and place. The first ESL teacher, Ms. K's classroom design and use of materials to promote her personal front structured subsequent ELL movement to her for help or to the computers or to other ELLs if they needed help or wanted to work with another student. The second and third ESL teachers, Ms. M and Ms. S, used materials to structure instruction and subsequent interaction with ELLs in ways that impacted the cultural and literacy practices in the classroom. Ms. M continually moved materials around according to how she perceived the effectiveness of their placement and their impact on her personal front or the work to be done. Ms. S found she had little control over the classroom design since she had come in to help the first teacher. All she could do was vary some of the materials and activities, occasionally moving desks around to aid communication (Pierce, 2009).

Additionally, this study has implications for pedagogy and TESOL. For pedagogy:

1. It underscores the need for teachers to be aware of how they teach best, how to use the materials they do have in the space they have been given in ways that support their

vision of instruction and enhance L2 learning regardless of cultural differences. This study also shows that it is important to educate teachers so they are cognizant that their classroom design impacts their instruction and the way the students see them as a teacher. Awareness of multiple ways to teach and use materials will facilitate L2 learning by providing more ways for ELLs to comprehend, practice and learn meaningful English and feel comfortable learning English. When ESL teachers understand how surroundings situate literacy practices, and cause a dialogic interaction that is impacted by the semiotic aggregates of the participants in the ESL classroom, they can take that into consideration in their classroom design, like Ms. M did as she moved desks and the traveling bookcase around the room.

2. A part of understanding the ESL classroom totality is, knowing what the ESL teachers envision as their role as a teacher. Ms. K's limited room space and subsequent room design fell in accord with her vision of herself as a mother figure, providing wisdom and information to ELLs on an individual basis. Her low numbers supported that role. Ms. M's concept of herself as a facilitator with a plethora of materials she can move around, trying to keep her room and the learning student-centered was supported by the way the ELLs viewed her room as full of stuff. Both room designs and roles as teachers offer exemplars for other districts to consider.
3. Within the room design itself- seating choice and item emplacement and activities such as platform events impact interaction.
4. Body gloss and marker use help ESL teachers and ELLs develop their personal fronts toward others as they show their activity involvement in platform events and as singles and withs in the ESL classroom.
5. How ESL teachers, and ELLs understand information modality on bulletin boards, white boards and chalkboards differs according to need.
6. Activity involvement and participant movement affect people processing and gatekeeping encounters that take place in social performances and platform events.
7. Code preference for inscription in journals and classroom writing reveals how embodiment of discourse impacts the cultural and literacy practices in the ESL classroom. Due to the recursive manner of interaction in the ESL classroom, the interaction caused the ESL teacher and ELLs' personal fronts and subsequent cultural and literacy practices to change and develop over time.

For TESOL, it is important to note that there are indeed power constructs within a school district that have far reaching consequences, room assignments change, as do the roles the ESL teacher may have with ELLs. What does this study mean in regard to second language acquisition theory?

1. Seating choice and room design impact how ELLs choose where to sit, what items to use and how they feel about their actions which may help teachers learn how to create that lower affective filter, to make learning more comfortable.
2. Knowledge of how personal distance and body gloss are used by ELLs and the ESL teacher may help the ESL teacher better understand that body language is cultural and may differ according to the ELL and the ELL's culture, impacting how others perceive what an ELL presents though body gloss and marker use.

3. Information modality impacts how much information the ELLs will understand in an ESL classroom, therefore the repetition of the information in a variety of forms may make it more understandable to ELLs.
4. The room design and activities such as platform events and item emplacement, which impact movement, may also change how ELLs participate and their comfort level.
5. Code preference for inscription in journals and classroom writing underscores how embodiment discourse impacts ELLs' feelings and performance of their cultural and literacy practices in the ESL classroom.

Through this study, I found that the ESL classrooms I studied and in which I work are habitus, or places and spaces that exert power and control, as Bourdieu (2001) describes. How the ESL teacher unpacks her bag of second language acquisition and second language teaching theory and embraces her room design can make a world of difference to the ELLs who enter into that space which structures cultures (Crang, 1998) or the C3 as they learn English and make sense of their world. The iconography of places in education including the way the educational culture of our time gives import to the signs and markers of a school (Crang, 1998) does indeed affect each ELLs' learning English in a dialogic, recursive manner. The identity kit formation reveals how ELLs view teachers through the use of space and materials as well. This research demonstrates how complexly situated ESL instruction is within a school district.

About the Author

Dr. Janet L. Pierce has taught ESL for over 20 years. During that time she learned firsthand the importance place and space has on instruction. She has a Ph.D. in English-Composition & TESOL from Indiana University of Pennsylvania examining the impact of geosemiotics on ESL instruction. Additionally she has taught workshops on how to write ESL curriculum, how to teach ELLs in regular classrooms and taught teacher education courses for PA ESL Specialist Certification. She currently is the ESL teacher and ELL Coordinator for Franklin Regional School District in Murrysville, PA.

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