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AUTHOR	Greyling, W. J.
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ABSTRACT

A technique for second language teachers to use in predicting and directing classroom interactions is outlined. The technique, if-then predictions is based on theories of cognitive information processing. The if-clause of a prediction describes the scope of conditions for a certain behavior or experience specified in the then-clause. The teacher then tests these predictions during classroom activities. Procedures for generating if-then predictions are illustrated for a controlled composition exercise, and considerations are discussed. One consideration is the argument that the teacher may distort the experiential evidence to confirm the prediction. A strategy for avoiding this problem is to focus on the discourse patterns typical of different teaching approaches. It is shown that fluency-based and accuracy-based classroom work yield typical patterns of discourse participation, which provide evidence to confirm or invalidate predictions. It is argued that if such evidence is recorded and shared among teachers and researchers, common views of discourse patterns may emerge. (Author/MSE)

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT: IF-THEN PREDICTIONS AS DESCRIPTIONS OF PROCESSES IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

(A paper delivered at the 1993 South African Association of Language Teachers' conference held at the Pretoria Technikon, Pretoria, South Africa)

W.J. Greyling
Department of English
University of the Orange Free State
P.O. Box 339
BLOEMFONTEIN
9301
SOUTH AFRICA

e-mail: fgwg@rs.uovs.ac.za

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this paper is to outline a cognitive strategy (i.e. if-then predictions) which teachers may find useful in making decisions in the language classroom. Cognitive information processing views of human thought and action posit that behaviour can best be understood in the light of the individual's perceptions and interpretations of his/her experiences. For this reason, it is argued that the if-clause of a prediction contains references to the scope conditions for a specific behaviour or experience specified in the then-clause. Predictions derive from constructs governing teacher thinking and behaviour. Perspectives in language teaching are viewed as construct systems which may be used in making predictions about classroom processes. As a practical illustration of the procedure, if-then predictions are generated for a controlled composition exercise. Construct psychologists claim that the individual makes predictions in terms of constructs, and that these predictions are then tested against subsequent experiences. Critics argue that the individual may distort the experiential evidence with a view to confirming his/her predictions. One way of solving the problem is to focus on the discourse patterns that are typical of different teaching approaches. It is shown that fluency and accuracy work yield typical patterns of discourse participation for classroom participants. These discourse patterns provide tangible evidence for confirming or invalidating predictions. If such evidence is recorded, and made accessible to other teachers and researchers, intersubjective or shared views of the discourse evidence may emerge.

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this paper is to outline a cognitive strategy for decision-making during the pro-active phase of the teacher's planning of language lessons. This strategy involves making if-then predictions about the interactive phase of the lesson (see Gribling, et al., 1983: 50-69).

If-then predictions are used in several disciplines as a means of specifying both scope conditions in an if-clause, and an expected behaviour or action in a then-clause. For example, if-then predictions occur in the work of

communication researchers, such as Shimanoff (1980:76), who states that communication rules may be expressed in this particular format:

(1)

$R_{(24)}$:If (1) one is summoned and one hears that summons (2), then (3) one must (4) answer the summons (5).

Shimanoff (1980: 77) claims that a communication rule should be introduced by *if* (1) followed by a specification of the context in which the rule applies (2); such an if-clause should be followed by ***then*** (3), and a ***modal*** auxiliary (4) which introduces a specification of the ***prescribed behaviour*** (5).

In language acquisition research, O'Malley and Chamot (1992: 52) focus attention on learner strategies, and, amongst others, that such strategy applications may be represented as a production system in the if-then format. The if-clause specifies a condition, while the then-clause specifies one or more learner actions, for example:

(2)
IF the goal is to comprehend a concept in a written text, and I know the concept is not at the beginning, THEN I will scan through the text to locate the concept.

Conversation analysts, specifically Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson (1974), constructed their recursive rule-system for conversational turn-taking in terms of if-then predictions. In their system, the if-clause contains a reference to a speaker selection technique, and, specified in the then-clause, the expected behaviour of other participants in the interaction:

(3)

Rule 1 applies at the initial TRP of any turn:

Rule 1A: If current speaker selects next speaker, then the so-selected speaker, and no other, has the right to take the next turn-at-talk.

Rule 1B: If current speaker does not select the next speaker, then any other participant may self-select, and the first participant to do so will have the right to take the next turn.

Rule 1C: If current speaker does not select next speaker, and no other party self-selects, then current speaker may, but does not have to, continue with his/her turn-at-talk.

Rule 2 applies at all subsequent TRPs:

> If rules 1A to 1C have been applied, and current speaker exerts his right to take another turn, then at the next TRP, rules 1A to 1C re-apply, and so on recursively until speaker change occurs.
> (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974: 13)

Computer programmers also work with if-then statements which specify conditions in the if-clauses and executable computational procedures in the then-clauses (cf. Riley, 1987: 127-128).

The specific focus in this paper is on generating predictions for the step-by-step procedure in a controlled composition exercise, which is included as an appendix. A teaching procedure will be reflected in an if-clause, while the then-clause will refer to one or more of the following:

(i) a classroom process defined in terms of specific theoretical views from ESL,
(ii) a specific teacher action or experience, and
(iii) a specific learner action or experience.

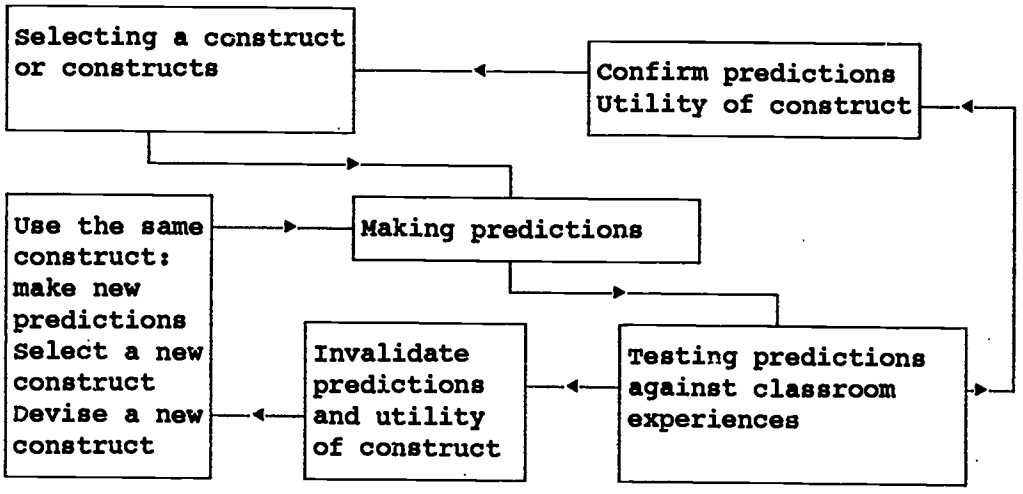
The following diagram summarises the elements of both if- and then-clauses:

(4)

IF-clauses ⟶	THEN-clauses
Scope conditions:	**Specification of:**
Teaching procedures Teaching activities Teaching method or approach	A classroom process Teacher activity/experience Learner activity/experience

Moreover, these predictions will be confirmed or invalidated by referring to classroom discourse emanating from the implementation of the procedure. The teacher's interpretation of classroom experiences will not only act as evidence for confirming or invalidating predictions, but will also provide the basis for generating new constructs or activating different sets of constructs. Diagrammatically the process may be described as follows:

(5)



The reader is required to read the appendix before going on to the next section.

The pattern to be followed in subsequent sections is the following: (1) Identifying a construct system. (2) Making predictions. (3) Classroom discourse as a source of validational evidence.

MAKING AND TESTING PREDICTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

In generating predictions, the teacher may activate the fluency-accuracy construct (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983: 98; Brumfit, 1984: 52, 57). For example, accuracy work may be defined as any classroom activity or interaction which emphasises the correctness of language (Harmer, 1983: 202), and which has a metacommunicative focus in emphasising language usage (Stubbs, 1976: 83; Widdowson, 1978: 12-15). If the teacher were to select teaching techniques typically associated with the traditional method approaches, he/she might generate the following prediction:

(6) If I used teaching procedure X, then I would be adopting the usage-orientated and metacommunicative focus of accuracy work.

Subsequently, the teacher may embark upon the interactive phase of the lesson during which such a prediction may be confirmed or invalidated.

Moreover, there are typical discourse features associated with accuracy-based work. The following excerpt of data is from an accuracy-based grammar lesson:

(7)

[In this excerpt the teacher dominates the interaction, controls information, and talks about language. The abbreviations are the following: el = elicitation; nom = nomination; rep = reply; acc = accept]

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Which is the describing word in the following sentence: "We have a blue car"?	el	The word 'blue' miss.	rep	Yes, that's correct.	acc
eliciting	Why do you say so?	el	Miss, because the word 'blue' tells us more about the car.	rep	The word tells us more about the car.	acc

(Greyling, 1987: 287; For similar analyses see Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Sinclair & Brazil, 1982.)

In this grammar lesson the emphasis is on talking about the structure of language, and few would disagree that the emphasis is on the metacommunicative dimension, and that the teacher controls learner initiative. In fact, it could be argued that the teacher has embarked upon an initiative-minimising initiation. The teacher employs a known-information question, and exerts tight control over turn-taking and turn-content. The teacher initiation elicits a single-utterance learner response, and subsequently the teacher provides form-focused feedback. These discourse patterns are also evident in the following excerpt of data:

(8)

[In this excerpt the teacher deals with word-formation (i.e. comparative and superlative forms). The abbreviations are the following: el = elicitation; nom = nomination; rep = reply; acc = accept; IR_g = Learning space (group work)]

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Right. We say the peaches are tasty; and we say that the pie was ...?	el	tastier	rep	Yes.	acc
eliciting initiate	And our rule for the spelling here is we cross out the y and we add?	el	(chorus): i-e-r	rep	Right.	acc

(Greyling, 1987: 295)

If these features are typical of accuracy work, then the teacher may generate predictions for step 1 of the procedure. This step of the procedure seems to be consistent with the metacommunicative focus of accuracy work:

(9)

<u>Step 1</u>: Teach the students the conjugated forms of the following verbs and tenses, and pay attention to contexts of use: (i) <u>Regular verbs</u> such as complain; answer; insist; visit; enjoy; commence; and continue. (ii) <u>Irregular verbs</u> such as go; take; tell; come; and stand. (iii) <u>Tenses</u> - verbal patterns and contexts of use of the simple present; present perfect; past perfect; simple past; and past continuous.

Therefore, the following predictions can be generated for step 1 of the procedure:

(10) <u>IF</u> step 1 is implemented, <u>THEN</u>
- (10.1) the emphasis is on accuracy work, specifically the learners' conscious knowledge of verb structure, tenses and their contexts of use,
- (10.2) a metacommunicative or usage-orientated focus is adopted,
- (10.3) the teacher manages information and controls turn-content,
- (10.4) the teacher will engage in initiative-minimising initiations in interacting with learners,
- (10.5) the learners will provide single-utterance responses to known-information questions, and
- (10.6) the teacher will provide form feedback in which learner responses are either evaluated or accepted.

Steps 2 and 3 of the procedure will allow the language practitioner to make predictions similar to those in (10).

Similarly, it may be argued that fluency work refers to any classroom activity which demands of learners to function in the target language in the same way as they would in their mother tongue if they were to participate in real-life interaction. The phrase 'fluency work' invokes several concepts, amongst others, that learning experiences should

(a) simulate authentic and real-life communication (Clarke, 1989: 73-74),

(b) develop communication skills which will be useful outside the classroom,

(c) emphasise the centrality of message focus in completing communicative tasks (Johnson, 1987: 59-60; Morrow, 1981: 52),

(d) involve the use of communication-gap activities (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 140; Prabhu, 1987: 46-47), for example, information gaps, reasoning gaps, opinion gaps, and the like,

(e) replicate the unpredictability of turn content found in ordinary conversation (Widdowson, 1978: 22-32; Hoey, 1992: 66), and

(f) practise the four dimensions of communicative competence, namely, the grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competences (Widdowson, 1978: 22-32; Canale, 1983: 5-14).

Moreover, there are typical discourse patterns associated with fluency-orientated work. For example, in the next excerpt of data from a fluency-based lesson, it is evident that the teacher maximises learner initiative, elicits multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges, and provides content feedback (see Harmer, 1983: 202) in which the effectiveness of the learners' messages is evaluated (see the response column):

(11)
(Students are required to engage in an information-gap activity in which the giving and carrying out of instructions are practised.)

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
directing	Come, let's take a look at what's happening at the lego ...let's hear you explain to him.You may not show him - and he may not see it either. He has to explain.	dir dir dir	**Pupil 6**: Take the long yellow block and place it two knobs from the right on the black block. **P7**: NV **P6**: Take the block that looks like a spanner and put it two two knobs away from there **P7**: NV **P6**: There must be two knobs left on the other side. **P7**: NV **P6**:Have you got it? **P7**: Yes.	dir dir rea dir inf dir rea inf rea ch ack	Did you notice how clever he is? He asked him a question: Have you got it like that? And if it is not so then they know that they have to do the explanation all over again. That's good. That's very good.	ev acc

If these features are typical of a fluency-based approach, then it seems that steps 6 and 7 of the procedure in the controlled composition exercise may elicit these typical features:

(12)
Step 6: Without using the re-written text, students have to tell their partners about the text they rewrote. **Step 7**: While learners are listening to their partners, they should ask clarifying questions whenever necessary.

The above steps in the procedure allow one to make the following if-then predictions:

(13)

IF steps 6 and 7 are implemented, **THEN**

(13.1) the emphasis is on fluency work, specifically learner involvement in an information-gap activity which practises learners' strategic competence,

(13.2) a communicative or use-orientated focus is adopted,

(13.3) the teacher will engage in an initiative-maximising initiation with a view to structuring learner-learner interaction,

(13.4) learners will produce multiple-utterance learner-learner exchanges in overcoming a communication gap, and

(13.5) the teacher will provide content feedback in which he/she accepts and/or evaluates the effectiveness of the learners' messages.

Generating predictions has only partial and limited usefulness. The proof of the pudding has to be in the classroom experience, specifically the discourse patterns that are mentioned in the predictions. Let us consider data collected from a first-year tutorial class in which the controlled composition exercise was used.

(14)

[The abbreviations are the following: T = tutor; m = marker; ms = metastatement; el = elicitation; nom = nomination; rep = reply; acc = accept]

Exchange type	Opening move (Initiation)	Act	Answering move (Response)	Act	Follow-up move (Feedback)	Act
eliciting	Right. Let's start. Today we are going to take a brief look at some verbs before we tackle a controlled composition exercise. What are the parts of the verb 'complain'? (T writes verb on the board)	m ms el nom	(bids) Complain complained complained	rep	Yes. (T writes on board)	acc
eliciting	And how about 'to go'?	el nom	(bids) Go went gone	rep	(T writes on the board.) That's right.	acc
eliciting initiate	What's the main difference between these sets of verbs?	el nom	Complain takes an -ed ending while go changes entirely.	rep	O.K.	acc

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It is clear that with the implementation of step 1, all the processes referred to in the then-clauses (10.1 - 10.6) occur: the emphasis is on accuracy, a metacommunicative or usage-orientated focus, teacher control of information and turn-content, initiative-minimising initiations, single-utterance learner responses to known-information-questions, and form-focused feedback by the teacher. Similarly, the following excerpt of data indicates that if steps 6 and 7 are implemented, the processes and discourse patterns referred to in the then-clauses (13.1 - 13.5) are in evidence:

(15)

19 T: Right
Ladies and gentlemen, I would like you to listen to this particular pair. And I want student 1 to tell student 2 what her controlled composition is all about and I would like student 2 uhm ... to ask a clarifying question or two. You may start.

20 S3: (to S4) Uh ... the title of my story is an odious comparison ... it's about this man that goes to a rabbi and says that he can't stand the way he lives because they are nine people in one room. So the rabbi tells him to go back ... to go home and take their goat and put it in the same room that these nine people live in and he must come back after a week. So the man comes back after a week and he says he can't stand it because the goat is filthy ...uhm life is worse than it was. So the rabbi tells him to go home and take the goat out of the room and come back in a week's time as well. So the man comes back in a week's time and he says that life is beautiful now because it is only the nine of them living in this family room.

21 T: No clarifying questions, but I would like you to do yours...Convey information to her and I would like you to listen for a short-circuit.

22 S3: Am I allowed to stop her?

23 T: Yes, you may.

24 S4: Alright, my story is about a trying day in medieval times ... is the title ... it's about a public torturer who has a terrible day ...uh first of all, he is very worried about his garden because there is no rain and his garden is drying out, and then he goes back to his ... uh workplace and he finds out that his assistant uh ... has killed the fire/

25 S3: Which fire?

26 S4: The fire they use to torture the ... the people they have ... to warm the instruments in and the fire has gone out, so now he has to stay later and then he looks out the window there's a cloud ... the cloud that was supposed to wet his garden is gone and finally to end off his miserable day, he burns himself with a pair of pincers (pronounced 'pinchers') that was warming in the fire.

27 T: Uhm hu ... thank you very much ...uh yes you did ask a clarifying question...so yes that was good.

In turn 19 the teacher embarks upon an initiative-maximising initiation and elicits learner-learner exchanges in pair work context (see turns 20, 24, 25 and 26). The emphasis is on fluency work, specifically learner involvement in an information-gap activity which practises strategic competence (see the short-circuit in turn 25). In turns 21 and 27 the teacher provides content feedback. These excerpts of data may be regarded as discourse validating the predictions in (10) and (13).

Of course, George Kelly (1955) would argue that several constructs have been used in generating the predictions in (10) and (13). At this juncture, it is important to clarify the concept 'construct' and the procedure for identifying constructs. Kelly (1955: 8-9, 12) defines a construct as follows:

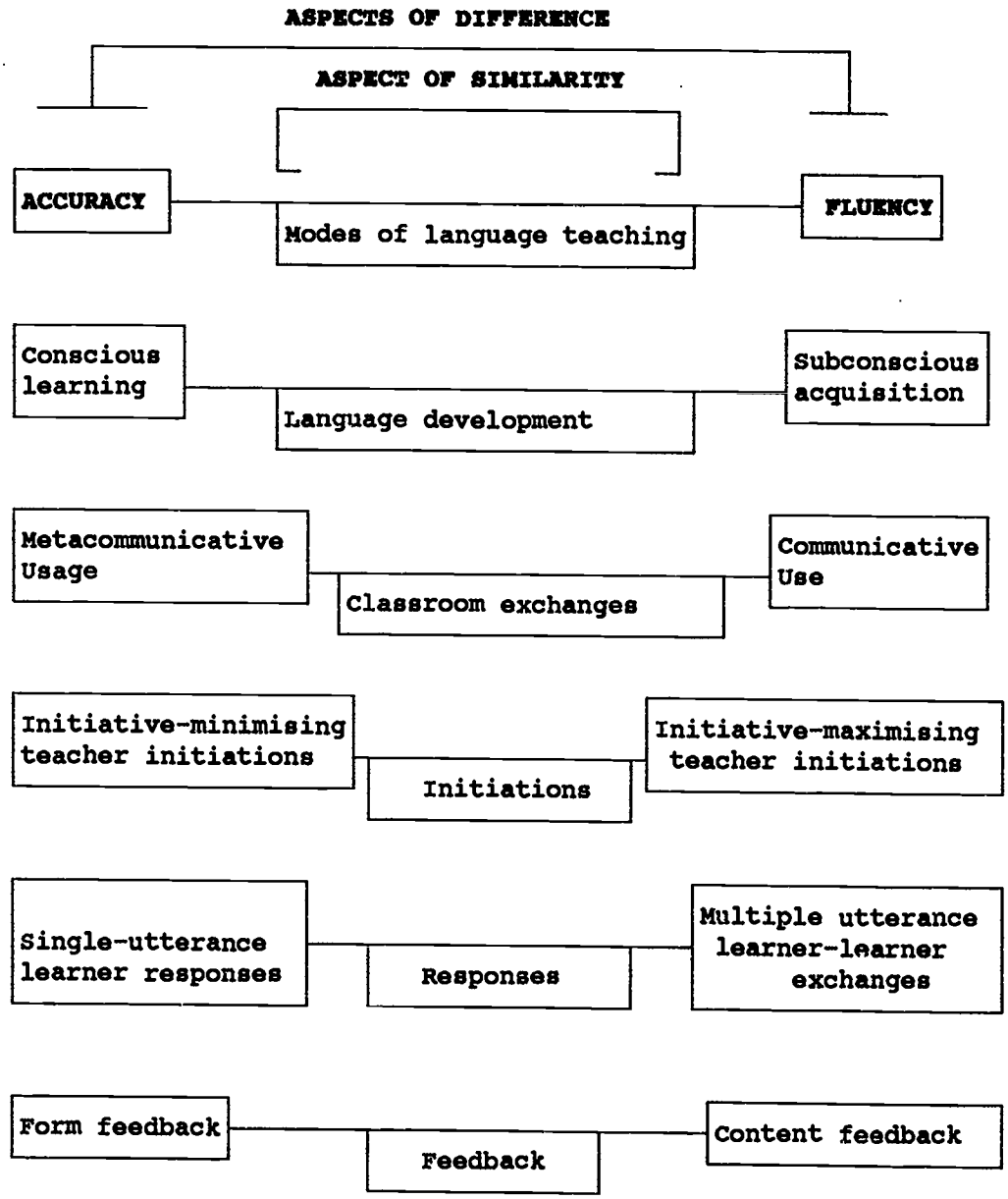
> Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templets which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed ... Let us give the name constructs to these patterns that are tried on for size. They are ways of construing the world ... we consider a construct to be a representation of the universe, a representation erected by a living creature and then tested against the reality of that universe. Since the universe is essentially a course of events, the testing of a construct is a testing against subsequent events. In other words, a construct is tested in terms of its predictive efficiency.

Kelly (1955: 59-61) states that a construct is dichotomous, and that the procedure for identifying the poles of such a construct is the following:

> If we choose an aspect in which A and B are similar, but in contrast to C, it is important to note it is the same aspect of all three, A, B, and C, that forms the basis of the construct ... In its minimum context a construct is a way in which at least two elements are similar and contrast with a third.

If excerpts (7), (8) and (11) are compared, and the preceding theoretical perspectives are used as a basis for defining these dichotomous constructs, then the following construct network seems to have been used:

(16)



The fluency-accuracy dichotomy may be seen as a superordinate construct subsuming several subordinate constructs in an hierarchical relationship. Kelly (1955) refers to this hierarchical organisation of constructs as a construct network.

Brumfit's interface position is founded on a cyclical teaching sequence involving both fluency and accuracy work. Brumfit (1984: chapter 4) emphasises that the teaching sequence should be cyclical, with periods of fluency teaching followed by periods of accuracy teaching. Finocchiaro and

Brumfit (1983: 98) comment as follows on such a cyclical design:

> For fluency work to be successful, the teacher should explain to students why it is being encouraged and why they will benefit from not being corrected all the time. At the same time, teachers should provide specific sessions when correction of widely occurring errors (perhaps by traditional procedures) will be made, and - above all - teachers must ensure that good spoken and written models of English are provided. Without such models and opportunities for correction, fluency practice runs the risk of producing nothing but a fluent classroom pidgin.

Research findings in ESL and second language acquisition research seem to suggest that language practitioners should adopt the interface position rather than the more radical 'no interface' of Krashen and others. Readers are referred to Alexander (1992: 48-49), Beretta (1991: 493-511), Doughty (1991: 431-469), Lightbown & Spada (1990: 429-448), Long (1983: 359-380), Rutherford (1987), and Sharwood-Smith (1981: 159-168) whose perspectives and conclusions seem to confirm the meaningfulness of adopting the interface position between accuracy and fluency work.

Now these perspectives allow the practitioner to make predictions about the steps in the procedure, in particular step 8.

(17)
Step 8: While the teacher listens to individual pairs he/she should list errors, but should not focus on them immediately. These errors should be dealt with in the accuracy phase.

The following predictions may be made:

(18)
IF step 8 is implemented, **THEN**
(18.1) the emphasis is on identifying learners' communicative needs to be dealt with in a subsequent accuracy lesson,
(18.2) the teaching procedure is consistent with the interface view of fluency and accuracy,
(18.3) the teacher will delay learner correction in order not to destroy the communicative nature of steps 6 and 7 of the exercise, and
(18.4) the teacher's tolerance of learner errors will be consistent with views on error correction in the communicative approach.

Critics will argue that life is not a melodramatic black-white situation, and that the excerpts quoted from accuracy and fluency data are the extremes. Kelly (1955) would see the accuracy-fluency construct as dichotomous, but would add that several possibilities exist in between the two poles. Kelly (1955: 142) illustrates these possibilities in terms of binary mathematics.

Let us say that the accuracy pole is represented by 0000 and the fluency pole by 1111 (i.e. 16 steps). The continuum of possibilities in between the two poles will then be all the possible combinations of 0's and 1's. These would be the following:

(19)

ACCURACY	0000	
	0001	
	0010	
	0011	0 = accuracy = 20 0's
	0100	1 = fluency = 12 1's
	0101	
	0110	
	0111	
	1000	
	1001	
	1010	
	1011	0 = accuracy = 12 0's
	1100	1 = fluency = 20 1's
	1101	
	1110	
FLUENCY	1111	

Let us consider steps 5 and 10 of the procedure in the controlled compositions:

(20)
Step 5: Student 1 has to complete controlled composition 1, and student 2 controlled composition 2. **Step 10**: Provide students with the original texts so that they may carry out self-evaluation.

One of the reasons for selecting a controlled composition exercise is that learners are expected to restore a mutilated text to its former status. The response generated by a student will require far more initiative than responding to a known-information question such as those in excerpts (7), (8) and (14). In fact, the student is going to have to produce a text, utilise knowledge of word-formation and syntax, re-establish the inter-sentential links among sentences, and restore the author's message. The student is practising both grammatical competence and discourse competence (i.e. both accuracy and fluency). Moreover, the student then has to self-evaluate the accuracy of his/her rendition of the text. Again the emphasis is on the correctness of the passage (i.e. accuracy) as a coherent set of propositions

(i.e. fluency). The following predictions can be made for these steps in the procedure:

(21)

IF the teacher implements steps 5 and 10 of the procedure, THEN
(21.1) the emphasis is on both fluency and accuracy work, specifically learner involvement in restoring a mutilated text (i.e. accuracy) and its message (i.e. fluency),
(21.2) the learning experience will focus on both the metacommunicative and communicative dimensions,
(21.3) the teacher will use an initiative-maximising initiation to create the conditions for learners to restore the mutilated texts to their former status,
(21.4) learners will be required to produce an extended text, and
(21.5) the teacher provides a hand-out of the original texts so that learners may engage in form feedback (i.e. accuracy of form) and content feedback (i.e. focus on the message).

CONCLUSION

It has to be observed that individual teachers will select different constructs and make divergent predictions which are consistent with their interpretations of both theory in English Language Teaching, and their classroom experiences. The question is whether teachers are aware of their construct systems. Classroom discourse often provides tangible evidence of these construct systems in action.

The individual teacher too, would, in Kelly's view, be able to extricate himself or herself from construct systems and meanings that are no longer useful. Indeed, Kelly's adherence to the philosophical notion of constructive alternativism allows the individual to re-interpret events and experiences in terms of new constructs. Construct psychologists claim that in our subjective experience many alternative constructions of a single event are possible (Kelly, 1955: 15; 1958a: 66; 1961: 95 - 96, 99; 1963: 64 - 65; Cf. also Hergenhahn, 1984: 283). Kelly (1955: 15) states his philosophical position as follows:

> *We assume that all of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision and replacement.* This is a basic statement which has a bearing upon almost everything that we shall have to say later. We take the stand that there are always some alternative constructions available to choose among in dealing with the world. No one needs to paint himself into a corner; no one needs to be completely hemmed in by circumstances; no one needs to be the victim of his biography. We call this philosophical position *constructive alternativism.*

Constructive alternativism forms the basis of Kelly's individuality corollary. However, his commonality and sociality corollaries allow different individuals to communicate (see Kelly, 1955: 55-56; 90-94). If some degree of uniformity did not exist among different individuals' construct systems, communication would have been problematic. In fact, the processes of triangulation and generating intersubjective views of classroom data would have been impossible.

Finally, teachers have to know why they do what they do. Generating and testing if-then predictions against experiential evidence from their classrooms might just be useful as a strategy in preventing their becoming what some researchers refer to as 'victims of unprincipled imitation' (Lawton, 1981: 7-8; Seliger & Long, 1983: vii-viii; Stevick, 1986: 53; Stubbs, 1986: 6-7; Van Lier, 1988: 5). Generating and testing such predictions may easily be synchronised with the teacher-counselling model suggested by Bowers (1987: 138-179). If-then predictions provide a focus for the diagnostic, consultation and remedial phases of the Bowers model, which is also concerned with developing teacher perceptions of classroom processes.

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Appendix: Using teaching procedures to predict learner and teacher activity in the ESL classroom

1. **Introduction**. Study the following procedure before predicting learner and teacher activity in the ESL classroom:

2. **Procedure**. **Step 1**: Teach the students the conjugated forms of the following verbs and tenses, and pay attention to contexts of use: (i) **Regular verbs** such as complain; answer; insist; visit; enjoy; commence; and continue. (ii) **Irregular verbs** such as go; take; tell; come; and stand. (iii) **Tenses** - verbal patterns and contexts of use of the simple present; present perfect; past perfect; simple past; and past continuous. **Step 2**: Using teacher-directed question-answer-evaluation sequences, teach students the meanings and forms of the different derivations of the following words: complain; radiant; insist; filth; enjoy; torture; productivity; arrival; severity; completion. **Step 3**: Explain the procedure for completing a controlled composition: **Example**: Using the clues listed below, reconstruct the original text. The words in bold and underlined are finite verbs, and they are followed by a clue pertaining to the tense into which the verbal forms have to be changed. Pay attention to word-formation, syntax, and concord. You may insert joining words, but you may not change the sequence of the listed clues:
a/voice/on/telephonic/**be**/**overhear** (Simple Past)/to/said/:/"/me/**could**/**heard** (Simple Present)/your/until/yours/**began** (Simple Present)/to/talked/,/then/ mine/**cannot**/**understood** (Simple Present)/a/word/your/**said** (Simple Present)
(Feedback: A voice on the telephone was overheard to say: "I can hear you until you begin to talk, then I cannot understand a word you say."
Step 4: Divide students into pairs. **Step 5**: Student 1 has to complete controlled composition 1, and student 2 controlled composition 2. **Step 6**: Without using the re-written text, students have to tell their partners about the text they rewrote. **Step 7**: While learners are listening to their partners, they should ask clarifying questions whenever necessary. **Step 8**: While the teacher listens to individual pairs he/she should list errors, but should not focus on them immediately. These errors should be dealt with in the accuracy phase. **Step 9**: Explain the procedure for self-evaluation. **Step 10**: Provide students with the original texts so that they may carry out self-evaluation. **Step 11**: Students have to script dialogues for steps 6 and 7 of the procedure. Provide an example of the format. **Step 12**: Students are given copies of both controlled compositions (plus the feedback) so that they may complete the text they did not complete in class.

Student 1: Controlled composition 1: odious/compare
in/budapest/a/man/**go** (Simple Present) to/rabbi/and/**complain** (Simple Present) /"/life/**be** (Simple Present)/unbearable/there/**be** (Simple Present)/nine/of/we/ live/in/one/room/what/**can**/me/**do** (Simple Present) /?/"/the/rabbi/**answer**/ (Simple Present)/"/**take** (Simple Present) /you/goat/into/the/room/with/your/ "/the/man/**be** (Simple Present)/incredulous/but/rabbi/**insist** (Simple Present) /**do** (Simple Present)/as/you/**be**/**tell** (Simple Present) /and/**came** (Simple Present)/back/in/a/week/"/a/week/later/man/**came** (Simple Present)/back/half/ dead/"us/**cannot**/**stood** (Simple Present)/it/the/goat/**be** (Simple Present)/ filth/"/the/rabbi/**tell** (Simple Present)/he/"/**gone** (Simple Present)/home/ and/**let** (Simple Present)/the/goat/out/and/**came** (Simple Present)/back/in/a/ week/time/"/a/radiant/man/**visit** (Simple Present)/the/rabbi/week/later/"/ life/**be** (Simple Present)/beauty/rabbi/us/**enjoy** (Simple Present)/every/ minute/there/**be** (Simple Present)/no/goat/only/the/nine/of/we/"/

Feedback: Odious Comparison. In Budapest a man goes to the rabbi and complains, "Life is unbearable. There are nine of us living in one room. What can I do?"
The rabbi answers, "Take your goat into the room with you."
The man is incredulous, but the rabbi insists. "Do as you are told and come back in a week."
A week later the man comes back, half dead. "We cannot stand it. The goat is filthy."
The rabbi tells him, "Go home and let the goat out. And come back in a week's time."
A radiant man visits the man a week later. "Life is beautiful, rabbi. We enjoy every minute. There is no goat, only the nine of us."
- The Reader's Digest December 1978

Student 2: Controlled composition 2:
a/try/day/medieval/time/
the/publicly/torture/**hurry** (Simple Past)/home/irritate/frame/mind/the/day/
has/**be** (Past Perfect)/for/he/one/length/rounds/of/annoy/when/his/**commence**
(Simple Past)/he/duty/that/morning/already/**exasperation** (non-finite verb)/by/
think/that/if/dry/**continuation** (Simple Past)/the/productivity/of/he/tiny/
patch/of/ground/**will**/**being**/completion/**ruin** (Future in the Past)/him/
be/**aggrieved** (Simple Past)/find/that/far/more/than/he/fairness/shared/of/
recent/arrival/batch/of/herecy/**have**/**been**/**allot** (Past Perfect)/he/during/
midday/break/for/refresh/he/dream/assist/**have**/**allow** (Past Perfect)/furnace/
to/went/out/bring/upon/torture/own/head/a/severity/censure/for/
consequence/delayed/in/the/afternoon/glance/occasion/through/narrowly/window/
him/**be** /**mortification**/(Simple Past)to/saw/that/the/promise/rain-cloud/which/
may/yet/**has**/**saves** (Past tense form)/he/cabbage/**be**/**disperse** (Past Continuous)
/;/and/then/to/crowned/all/just/as/him/**be**/**finished** (Past Continuous)/for/
day/him/**has**/**catch** (Past Perfect)/holding/of/pair/pincers/trifle/too/nearly/
the white-hot/ending/and/**sear** (Simple Past)/he/hand/

Feedback:

A trying day in medieval times.

The public torturer hurried home in an irritable frame of mind. The day had been for him one long round of annoyances. When he commenced his duties that morning, already exasperated by the thought that if the drought continued, the produce of his tiny patch of ground would be completely ruined, he was aggrieved to find that far more than his fair share of a recently arrived batch of heretics had been allotted to him. During the midday break for refreshments his dreamy assistant had allowed the furnace to go out, bringing upon the torturer's own head a severe censure for the consequent delay. In the afternoon, glancing occasionally through the narrow window, he was mortified to see that the promising rain-clouds, which might yet have saved his cabbages, were dispersing; and then, to crown all, just as he was finishing for the day, he had caught hold of a pair of pincers a trifle too near the white-hot end and seared his hand.
- **Punch**, March 1922.