

Conversation Analysis Tool as an Effective Means for Teaching the University Courses of English and World Literature

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Conversation Analysis Tool in the context of teaching world literature to senior students majoring in English philology. The authors present their experience of undertaking a three-month online course “Constructive Classroom Conversations: Mastering Language for College and Career Readiness,” hosted by Stanford University, and discuss the benefits of applying this tool at universities. The study describes the basic mechanisms of the Conversation Analysis Tool aimed at developing specific communication skills in students of English for Speakers of Other Languages. The central research question is whether this method is as feasible for teaching literature as it is for language classrooms. The authors demonstrate their takeaways from applying this technique in teaching world literature, namely, analyzing literary dialogues in different classroom activities. The research findings indicate that the Conversation Analysis Tool is an efficient method for the formative assessment of senior students in the world literature classroom. This technique helps students reveal the pragmatic features of fiction dialogues, the writer’s narrative intentions, and the reader’s expected reception. The suggested method also demonstrates students’ progress in the studied topics and identifies possible gaps in mastering the educational content. The significance of the study extends beyond the specified context, as the search for novel instruction techniques targeted at improving communication skills in the 21st-century globalized world is relevant for any educational sphere. Consequently, the research findings of this paper can be applied in different teaching settings.

Keywords: communication skills, Conversation Analysis Tool, formative assessment, literary dialogues, pragmatic features, senior students majoring in English philology, the University courses of English and World Literature

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Introduction

Conversation Analysis (CA) helps researchers to reveal and comprehend the structure of human communication. For this purpose, CA largely relies on the concepts of “turn-taking,” “turn organization,” “sequencing,” “word/usage selection and the overall organization of the occasion of interaction” (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002, pp. 4-5). The research problem addressed in this study is searching for novel instruction techniques targeted at improving communication skills in the 21st-century globalized world. The central research question of the article is whether this method is as feasible for teaching literature as it is for ESOL classrooms. Therefore, the research objectives of the paper are to apply CA in a new teaching context and provide methodological guidelines for its further use in other settings. The article is the first research endeavor to apply CA for revealing the pragmatic features of communication in fiction, to disclose the writer’s narrative intentions and the reader’s expected reception in teaching the university course of world literature, which justifies the significance and novelty of the study. It is anticipated that CA can be a useful tool of the formative assessment in literature classrooms, capable of improving learning outcomes, increasing students’ ESOL communicative competence and skills in literary analysis. This research will be of interest to ESOL and world literature teachers seeking new lesson planning insights and organizing classroom activities. Furthermore, the obtained results can be adjusted and incorporated in other teaching settings, including but not limited to Humanities and Social Sciences, and thereby this study is relevant.

Literature Review

At present, teachers actively apply CA in the ESOL instructional settings (Hakuta, Zwiers, & Rutherford-Quach, 2016; Havrylieva & Lysanets, 2017; Protoven & Lysanets, 2017). It has become “widely accepted as a research methodology into L2 use and acquisition” (Barraja-Rohan, 2011, p. 479). Indeed, this technique “enables researchers, teachers, and their educators to see the minutia of classroom practices and how they are done *in situ* at all points of instruction” (Fagan, 2012, p. 37). In other words, CA is an appropriate tool for the formative assessment of students’ progress, immediately identifying possible gaps in their knowledge. Hence, this methodology’s efficiency in language teaching is a well-established fact (Fagan, 2012; Koole, 2013; McCarthy, 1991; Seedhouse, 2005; Wu, 2013). Recent studies continue applying CA in a foreign language instructional setting (Hall, 2019; Hidayat, 2019; Nanni, Hooper, & Hale, 2018).

The abovementioned technique has found an effective methodological implementation in the Conversation Analysis Tool (CAT), developed by Hakuta et al. (2016) in the online course for ESOL teachers “Constructive Classroom Conversations: Mastering Language for College and Career Readiness” (Stanford University Graduate School of Education). In particular, The CAT allows researchers to assess conversations according to three communicative Dimensions, “each scoring from four to one, where ‘four’ is ‘Strong Evidence,’ ‘three’ is ‘Inconsistent Evidence,’ ‘two’ is ‘Attempting Interaction,’ and ‘one’ is ‘No Evidence’” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 3). Each score must rely on appropriate rationale and takeaways. Dimension 0 focuses on the turn-taking process, registering the implementation of conversational turns as such. In ESOL teaching, Dimension 0 is “optional, since it applies only to elementary learners” (Havrylieva & Lysanets, 2017, p. 37). In terms of Dimension 0, the CAT relies on the following criteria: ‘Strong Evidence’ – all conversational turns are present; ‘Inconsistent Evidence’ – interlocutors produce half of the conversational turns (Hakuta et al., 2016). Meanwhile, ‘Attempting Interaction’ implies that few

conversational turns are present, and ‘No Attempt’ means that interlocutors failed to produce conversational turns” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 4). Thus, Dimension 0 explores whether all interlocutors contributed to communication and checks their ability and/or willingness to keep up a conversation.

Meanwhile, Dimension one explores “whether conversational turns “build on” and “build up” to develop an idea or ideas” (Hakuta et al., 2016). In this regard, the idea of “building on” involves the interlocutors’ ability to connect to their partners’ turns. In contrast, the concept of “building up” implies that “speakers should form or strengthen ideas” based on the previous turns in conversation (Havrylieva & Lysanets, 2017, p. 38). Hence, in terms of Dimension one, the CAT applies the following criteria: “‘Strong Evidence’ – half or more of conversational turns build on previous turns to effectively build up a clear and complete idea” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 5). Moreover, “‘Inconsistent Evidence’ means that half or more of conversational turns build on previous turns to adequately build up an idea, which may be incomplete or lack clarity” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 5). In addition, “‘Attempting Interaction’ implies that few conversational turns build on previous turns to build up an idea, and ‘No Attempt’ means that conversational turns are not used to build up an idea” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 5). As one can easily observe, Dimension one examines to what extent communication is cohesive.

In ESOL teaching, Dimension two demonstrates “how well the conversation fosters learning by focusing on the lesson’s objective” (Havrylieva & Lysanets, 2017, p. 38). Dimension two relies on the following criteria: “‘Strong Evidence’ – half or more of turns effectively focus on the communicative objective and intended results of the conversation” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 5). Meanwhile, “‘Inconsistent Evidence’ means that half or more of conversational turns sufficiently focus on the intended results of the conversation, but this focus may be superficial, or lack clarity” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 5). Further, “‘Attempting Interaction’ implies that few conversational turns focus on the intended outcomes of the conversation, and ‘No Attempt’ means that conversational turns do not focus on the intended results of the conversation” (Hakuta et al., 2016, p. 6).

The CAT by Hakuta et al. (2016) aims to develop several conversation skills in ESOL learners, which are also highly important for students in literature classrooms. These include: (1) the skill of *clarifying*, which “implies elaboration, explanation, and paraphrasing ideas” (Protoven & Lysanets, 2017, p. 150); (2) the skill of *negotiating*, which represents the abilities to evaluate and compare ideas; (3) the skill of *fortifying*, which “involves supporting ideas with evidence” (Protoven & Lysanets, 2017, p. 150). Developing these conversation competencies in analyzing literary dialogues in classrooms can significantly improve students’ speaking skills. Moreover, the CAT can serve as a useful formative assessment tool for a teacher.

Teachers can promote the development of these communication skills in different ways. These include prompts (i.e., open-ended and close-ended questions) and discourse moves, which are “specific conversational turns aimed at fostering and encouraging the development of specific ideas in the classroom” (Protoven & Lysanets, 2017, p. 150). In particular, the discourse moves involve such techniques as “*probing* (e.g., “What do you mean by that?”; “Can you tell more about that?” etc.), and *pressing* (e.g., “Can you give an example?”; “What evidence do you have?”

etc.)” (Protoven & Lysanets, 2017, p. 151). Other useful methods include *re-voicing* a student’s idea (e.g., “I understand your explanation, but did you mean to say that...?”), and *prompting peer-to-peer talk*, that is, stimulating other students to participate (e.g., “Can anyone add to (*Student’s name*)’s idea?”) (Protoven & Lysanets, 2017, p. 151).

Apart from ESOL teaching, this method is also beneficial for cinematic analysis (Chepinchikj, & Thompson, 2016), and studies on psychology and social interaction (Meredith, 2019; Meredith, 2020). Furthermore, scientists have focused on the feasibility of CA in the development of doctor-patient interaction and facilitation of medical communication (Drew, Chatwin, & Collins, 2001; Maynard & Heritage, 2005; Ong, Barnes, & Buus, 2020; O’Reilly, Kiyimba, Nina Lester, & Muskett, 2020; Wu, 2020). Indeed, future physicians need to develop communicative skills and acquire the so-called “narrative literacy” to elicit relevant details from encounters with patients (Lysanets, Bieliaieva, Znamenska, Nikolaieva, Efendiieva, & Hutsol, 2018, p. 182). Moreover, CA proved to be effective in teaching specialized medical subjects to international English-speaking students (Hryshko, 2017). Hence, CA is a highly productive method with a strong potential for successful implementation in various spheres of research.

Having studied the present context of this technique, the authors of this study revealed that CA has not yet found a detailed application in world literature classrooms. At the same time, Hugo Bowles has defined applying CA to literary dialogues as “a new avenue of research” (Bowles, 2011, p. 166). However, no substantial studies followed upon the publication of this remark in 2011. Therefore, the researchers decided to apply this method in their instructional setting, namely, in teaching literary analysis to senior students majoring in English philology, and thus to fill this research gap.

Methods

The underlying method of this research is the CAT, developed by Hakuta et al. (2016), and further elaborated by the authors of this study. The researchers adopted the CAT to their teaching context by selecting literary dialogues from different prose writings and testing them via the CAT in the classroom activities. The authors conducted their research with the fifth year students majoring in English philology, who had already mastered the literary analysis techniques, including such modern methods as narratology and reception theory, and the major literary trends and styles in the history of world literature. Therefore, the target learners were well-prepared for an in-depth pragmatic analysis of communication in fiction. The researchers applied the flipped classroom instructional strategy, according to which students examined the training material at home and thus were supposed to grasp the basic principles of the CAT before their literature lesson. In the classroom, students were given several literary dialogues and evaluated them using the CAT. The material for classroom discussion was selected according to excerpts’ conversational capacity and the learning objectives of the lesson. The dialogues also corresponded to students’ syllabi and extra-curricular readings in world literature.

In this research, the authors used Dimension 0 to evaluate interlocutors’ readiness to communicate in literary dialogues. Meanwhile, Dimension one reflects how interlocutors cooperate in their interaction. Further, the researchers applied Dimension two to evaluate the coherence of literary conversations. It demonstrates whether interlocutors manage to achieve

consensus. Thus, this study used Dimensions 0, one, and two to determine the pragmatic features of literary dialogues, i.e., the writer's narrative intentions and the reader's expected reception. In addition to applying the abovementioned Dimensions, the researchers scaffolded students' communication skills using strategic grouping, the fishbowl model, and class discussion.

Results

At first, the authors divided students into groups, and each team was allocated a literary dialogue from the selected reading material. The analyzed pieces of world literature included excerpts, exemplifying different types of conversations between characters: (1) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) by Lewis Carroll, (2) *The Little Prince* (1943) by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, (3) *Nothing Lasts Forever* (1994) by Sidney Sheldon, and (4) *Verbal Transcription – 6 a.m.* (1932) by William Carlos Williams. During the class, the researchers used visual means to scaffold students' learning. These included graphic organizers and charts representing the Dimensions and scores in the CAT. After reading an excerpt, each group of students evaluated Dimensions 0, one, and two. After assigning a particular score in Dimensions 0, one, and two for each excerpt, students supported their findings with evidence and explanations.

The excerpts under consideration are given below. The researchers divided the literary dialogues into conversational turns to facilitate the process of students' analysis. **The first excerpt** was taken from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) by Lewis Carroll: Turn 1: "Have some wine"<...> Turn 2: "I don't see any wine," she remarked. Turn 3: "There isn't any," said the March Hare. Turn 4: "Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," said Alice angrily. Turn 5: "It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited," said the March Hare. Turn 6: "I didn't know it was your table," said Alice; "it's laid for a great many more than three." Turn 7: "Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter <...> Turn 8: "You should learn not to make personal remarks," Alice said with some severity; "it's very rude." Turn 9: "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?" (Carroll, 1866, pp. 96-97).

After the in-group evaluation and the fishbowl discussion, students assessed this excerpt as follows: in terms of Dimension 0, the score is "Strong Evidence" (4) – all conversational turns are present. For Dimension one, the score is "Attempting Interaction" (2) – few conversational turns build on previous turns to build up an idea. In terms of Dimension two, the score is "Attempting Interaction" (2) – few conversational turns focus on the intended results of the conversation. For each score, students provided evidence according to the CAT method, thus scaffolding their fortifying skills. For instance, students explained which turns in the dialogue demonstrated "Attempting Interaction" in Dimensions one and two, which parts were off-topic and irrelevant. Students reported that turns from Alice (turns 2, 4, 6, 8) always build on and build up her partner's ideas, whereas turns from the March Hare and the Hatter (turns 1, 3, 5, 7, 9) are self-contradictory and inconsistent. Indeed, turns 1, 5, 7, 9 each time suggest an entirely new topic for discussion, dismissing the interlocutor's answers.

The second excerpt was taken from *The Little Prince* (1943) by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: Turn 1: "Good morning <...> Your cigarette has gone out." Turn 2: "Three and two make five. Five and seven make twelve. Twelve and three make fifteen. Good morning. Fifteen and seven make twenty-two. Twenty-two and six make twenty-eight. I haven't time to light it again. Twenty-

six and five make thirty-one. Phew! Then that makes five-hundred-and-one million, six-hundred-twenty-two-thousand, seven-hundred-thirty-one.” *Turn 3*: “Five hundred million what?” *Turn 4*: “Eh? Are you still there? Five-hundred-and-one million – I can't stop... I have so much to do! I am concerned with matters of consequence. I don't amuse myself with balderdash. Two and five make seven...” *Turn 5*: “Five-hundred-and-one million what?” *Turn 6*: “<...> I have no time for loafing. The third time – well, this is it! I was saying, then, five-hundred-and-one million...” *Turn 7*: “Millions of what?” *Turn 8*: “Millions of those little objects,” he said, “which one sometimes sees in the sky.” *Turn 9*: “Flies?” *Turn 10*: “Oh, no. Little glittering objects.” *Turn 11*: “Bees?” *Turn 12*: “Oh, no. Little golden objects that set lazy men to idle dreaming. As for me, I am concerned with matters of consequence. There is no time for idle dreaming in my life.” *Turn 13*: “Ah! You mean the stars?” *Turn 14*: “Yes, that's it. The stars” (De Saint-Exupéry, 1945, pp. 41-43).

As one can observe, this excerpt contains yet another vivid example of the author's deliberate confusion of the dialogue. After the in-group evaluation and the fishbowl discussion, students assessed this excerpt as follows: in terms of Dimension 0, the score is “Strong Evidence” (4) – all conversational turns are present; for Dimension one, the score is “Inconsistent Evidence” (3) – half or more of conversational turns build on previous turns to adequately build up an idea, which may be incomplete or lack clarity; in terms of Dimension two, the score is “Inconsistent Evidence” (3) – half or more of conversational turns sufficiently focus on the intended results of the conversation, but this focus may be superficial or lack clarity. For each score, students provided evidence according to the CAT method and compare excerpts one and two, thus scaffolding their negotiating skills.

The third excerpt was taken from *Nothing Lasts Forever* (1994) by Sidney Sheldon, which features a conversation between a physician (Paige Taylor) and a father of a six-year-old patient: *Turn 1*: “Mr. Newton?” *Turn 2*: “Yes.” *Turn 3*: “I'm Dr. Taylor. I was just in to see your little boy. He was brought in with abdominal pains.” *Turn 4*: “Yes. I'm going to take him home.” *Turn 5*: “I'm afraid not. Peter has a ruptured spleen. He needs an immediate transfusion and an operation, or he'll die.” *Turn 6*: “We are Jehovah's Witnesses. The Lord will not let him die, and I will not let him be tainted with someone else's blood. It was my wife who brought him here. She will be punished for that.” *Turn 7*: “Mr. Newton, I don't think you understand how serious the situation is. If we don't operate right away, your son is going to die.” *Turn 8*: “You don't know God's ways, do you?” *Turn 9*: “I may not know a lot about God's ways, but I do know a lot about a ruptured spleen. He's a minor, so you'll have to sign this consent form for him.” *Turn 10*: “And if I don't sign it?” *Turn 11*: “Why...then we can't operate.” *Turn 12*: “Do you think your powers are stronger than the Lord's?” *Turn 13*: “You're not going to sign, are you?” *Turn 14*: “No. A higher power than yours will help my son. You will see” (Sheldon, 1994, pp. 161-162).

This dialogue represents an obvious ideological barrier between the physician's worldview and that of the patient, which significantly impedes their communication. Immediately after this conversation, Dr. Taylor decides to operate without the father's consent, violating the law to save the child. After the in-group evaluation and the fishbowl discussion, students assessed this excerpt as follows: in terms of Dimension 0, the score is “Strong Evidence” (4) – all conversational turns are present. For Dimension one, the score is “Strong Evidence” (4) – half or more of conversational turns build on previous turns to effectively build up a clear and complete idea. In terms of

Dimension two, the score is “Attempting Interaction” (2) – few conversational turns focus on the intended results of the conversation. For each score, students elaborated, explained, and paraphrased their ideas, thus demonstrating their clarifying skills.

The fourth excerpt was from *Verbal Transcription – 6 a.m.* (1932) by William Carlos Williams. This short story presents a unique unilateral communication between an alarmed wife, whose husband has suffered a heart attack, and an ambulance physician. In particular, the physician’s narrative figure completely dissolves in the woman’s desperate speech. The author deliberately removes the physician’s turns from the conversation: *Turn 1*: “The wife: About an hour ago. He woke up, and it was as if a knife was sticking in his side. I tried the old reliable, I gave him a good drink of whisky, but this time it did no good. I thought it might be his heart so I... Yes. In between his pains he was trying to get dressed. He could hardly stand up but through it all, he was trying to get himself ready to go to work. *Can you imagine that?* Rags! Leave the man alone. The minute you’re good to him he... Look at him sitting up and begging! Rags! Come here! Do you want to look out of the window? *Oh, yes.* That’s his favorite amusement – like the rest of the family. <...> We have to lean out as if we were living on Third Avenue. <...> *Yes.* We have quite a menagerie. *Have you seen our blue-jay?* He had a broken wing. We’ve had him for two years now. He whistles and answers us when we call him. <...> And a canary. *Yes.* You know I was afraid it was his heart. *Shall I dress him now?* This is the time he usually takes the train to be there at seven o’clock. Pajamas are so cold. Here put on this old shirt – this old horse blanket, I always call it. I’m sorry to be such a fool, but those needles give me a funny feeling all over. I can’t watch you give them. Thank you so much for coming so quickly. I have a cup of coffee for you already in the kitchen” (Williams, 1984, pp. 102-103).

After the in-group evaluation and the fishbowl discussion, students assessed this excerpt as follows: in terms of Dimension 0, the score is “Inconsistent Evidence” (3) – interlocutors produce half of the conversational turns. Nevertheless, the conversation is quite understandable even though the physician’s turns are lacking. Therefore, for Dimension one, the score is “Strong Evidence” (4) – half or more of conversational turns build on previous turns to build up a clear and complete idea. In terms of Dimension two, the score is “Strong Evidence” (4) – half or more of the turns effectively focus on the communicative objective and intended results of the conversation. Table 1 summarizes students’ evaluation of the literary dialogues using the CAT in each Dimension.

Table 1. *Students’ scores for literary dialogues*

Dialogues	Dimension 0	Dimension 1	Dimension 2
Excerpt No. 1	4	2	2
Excerpt No. 2	4	3	3
Excerpt No. 3	4	4	2
Excerpt No. 4	3	4	4

The researchers used Table 1 at the end of class as a visual basis to reach relevant concluding remarks and to achieve the broader learning objective of the lesson.

Discussion

The specific learning objectives of the lesson were: (1) to examine the selected pieces of world literature, (2) to study the author's intentions and the reader's expected receptive capacity, (3) to practice literary analysis using the CAT, (4) to enhance students' ESOL proficiency in general, and (5) to improve their skills of clarifying, negotiating and fortifying ideas in English in particular. The broader learning objective was to demonstrate possible associations and interrelations between the physical nature of dialogue (i.e., the graphic and acoustic embodiment) and its pragmatic capacity. To this end, the authors applied the fishbowl model: each team presented their ideas in front of fellow students. After each "fishbowl" group had some discussion, other students contributed their feedback. For this purpose, the researchers used the following prompts: "What is your opinion? Why?"; "To what extent do you agree/disagree with your fellows," etc. In each case, the authors fostered the communicative skills of negotiating, fortifying, and clarifying ideas. Students were supposed to elicit information from these excerpts and to understand the author's narrative intentions based on this information.

For class discussion on the first excerpt, the researchers used the following prompts: "Why does the author apply this technique?"; "What effect is it expected to exert on the reader?"; "What role does the author assign to the reader in this dialogue?" and discourse moves (e.g., prompting peer-to-peer talk: "Can anyone add to (*Student's name*)'s idea?"). In the course of classroom discussion, the authors elicited the necessary conclusions from students, such as the author's intentions ("to disrupt the fundamentals of logic and achieve the comic effect of nonsense"; "to undermine the stable identity of the modern man and unveil the absurdity of the society," etc.), and the reader's expected receptive capacity ("to enter the author's game in deciphering the symbolic space and constructing the meaning"). All these pragmatic features herald the advent of the Modernist era. Students concluded that this excerpt is perhaps one of the most vivid examples of the author's experimental play with logical laws through deliberate narrative non-cohesiveness and incoherence of literary dialogues. In general, students had virtually no difficulties in achieving the learning objectives of the lesson.

For the second excerpt, the researchers used the following prompts: "Why does the author apply this technique?"; "What effect is it expected to exert on the reader?" and discourse moves (e.g., prompting peer-to-peer talk: "Can anyone add to (*Student's name*)'s idea?"). Students made relevant conclusions about the writer's intention ("to juxtapose the innocent and unspoiled world of childhood to that of grown-ups"). They also comprehended the reader's possible reception ("to perceive the absurdity and cynicism of the world of adults and the contemporary society," "to understand and remember what things are essential in life," etc.). Students found it difficult to identify the similarities and differences between these excerpts in terms of their pragmatic features. Therefore, the authors used several prompts ("Were these two dialogues equally ineffective?"; "Which characters attempted to sustain a conversation?," etc.) and discourse moves (e.g., probing: "What do you mean by that?"; "Can you tell more about that?"; pressing (e.g., "Can you give an example?"; "What evidence do you have?"; re-voicing a student's idea (e.g., "I understand your explanation, but did you mean to say that...?"). Further, students explained, which turns in the dialogue demonstrated "Inconsistent Evidence" in Dimensions one and two. Students correctly identified that the turns from the Little Prince (turns 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13) serve as a "pivot" of communication and keep the entire conversation to the point, no matter how the interlocutor tries to stray from the subject (turns 2, 4, 6), ignoring the protagonist's questions (turns 4,6). Hence,

unlike the previous dialogue, the second excerpt is more consistent, and the Little Prince eventually achieves his pragmatic goal (finds out that the businessman is counting stars through reiterative inquiries).

To facilitate discussion for the third dialogue, the following prompts were used: “Why does the physician challenge the father’s decision?”; “Why did the author present this conversation?”; “What would you do in Dr. Taylor’s place?” and the like. To support their scores with evidence, students identified the off-topic turns (turn 6), and turns that completely digressed from the subject of conversation (turns 8, 10). To foster the skill of clarifying ideas, the authors used the discourse move of probing (“What do you mean by...?”; “Can you clarify the part about...?”). Further, the researchers applied pressing (“Can you be more specific?”; “What does that mean?”; “What do you mean by...?”; “Can you elaborate on the...?”; “Can you clarify the part about...?”; “How is that important?” etc.). The discourse move of re-voicing a student’s idea was also useful (“To paraphrase what you have just said, you think that...”). Thanks to these prompts, the researchers elucidated several new terms, such as deontology, bioethics, and informed consent, by providing their English definitions and explaining their meaning. After several prompts, students clarified their answers (“turns 8, 10 contain rhetorical questions”; “the conversation did not achieve its objective because the physician did not manage to persuade the father to sign the consent form,” etc.). During class discussion, students reached relevant conclusions: the physician breaks the law because she prioritizes her patient’s life above everything and cannot let the boy die because of his father’s religious commitments. Hence, the writer intended to demonstrate a difficult moral choice that a physician may face in their professional practice. As a result, the reader sympathizes with the protagonist and contemplates the relevant issues of bioethics, religion, and humanism.

For the fourth dialogue, the researchers decided to scaffold all three communicative skills. Students demonstrated their clarifying skills by explaining how exactly the author reflects the character’s stressful condition (“by applying the Modernist stream of consciousness method”; “by using the technique of narrative ellipsis”). After that, students provided definitions for the terms “stream of consciousness” and “ellipsis” in English. Next, students suggested the physician’s possible questions and described his actions to match the woman’s turns. The authors checked students’ fortifying skills by asking them to prove that this conversation was successful (“the woman reacts to all questions and statements from the physician”; “they ultimately achieve the intended result of communication, namely, transportation of her husband to the hospital”). Finally, students practiced their negotiating by comparing excerpt four with the previous three dialogues in terms of the CAT scores, the author’s intentions, and the reader’s reception. The researchers used the following prompts: “Why are the physician’s turns absent?”; “What is the role of silence in the narrative structure of this conversation?”; “Why does the author apply this technique?”; “What effect is it expected to exert on the reader?”; “What role does the author assign to the reader in this dialogue?” and discourse moves (e.g., prompting peer-to-peer talk: “Can anyone add to (*Student’s name*)’s idea?”).

Students reached conclusions consistent with their literary theory readings, as provided by the curriculum. For instance, in class discussion, they concluded that the physician’s narrative “silence” in the dialogue gives the reader a certain extent of receptive freedom in constructing the narrated scenes. It induces the reader’s receptive potential and invites them to co-create the story.

Consequently, the reader obtains a certain degree of responsibility in deciphering the author's message and revealing the receptive capacity of the text. The author invites the reader to assume the physician's role and fill in the narrative gaps with their receptive potential.

At the end of class, the authors elicited students' relevant concluding remarks, necessary for achieving the broader learning objective of the lesson. Table 1 demonstrated that a strong Dimension 0 does not necessarily imply coherent and successful communication (excerpts one-three). Meanwhile, a robust Dimension one can be a feasible basis for Dimension two (excerpt four). A weak Dimension one is likely to result in a low Dimension two score (excerpts one and two). However, a strong Dimension one does not guarantee the consensus between interlocutors. It can be due to possible communicative barriers, such as ideological differences (excerpt three).

Moreover, an inconsistent Dimension 0 can serve the author's particular artistic intention, such as an elliptic receptive effect of a literary text (excerpt four). At the same time, it still may ensure robust Dimensions one and two. Thus, the authors achieved the broader learning objective of demonstrating that the physical presence of communication and its cohesion may not be a prerequisite for its pragmatic capacity.

Conclusion

The research problem addressed in this study was searching for novel instruction techniques targeted at improving communication skills in the 21st-century globalized world. The central research question of the article was whether this method is as feasible for teaching literature as it is for ESOL classrooms. The research proved that the CAT could be an efficient method for the formative assessment of senior students in the world literature classroom. This technique serves as a feasible "litmus paper," representing students' general ESOL communicative competence, their negotiating, clarifying, fortifying skills, and their abilities to conduct the literary analysis of the text. The suggested method demonstrates students' progress in the studied topics and identifies possible gaps in mastering the educational content. It also reveals the pragmatic features of fiction dialogues, the writer's narrative intentions, and the reader's expected reception. Applying the CAT in the world literature classroom improves students' learning outcomes and enhances their English language proficiency, allows teachers to achieve their instructional objectives effectively, and, in general, fosters a beneficial communication-oriented educational setting. It is necessary to test the CAT on other examples from world literature to refine this technique and derive even more instructional benefits. The results of the study will contribute to the development of language and literature syllabi at universities. The findings can also be useful for other academic settings, improving the teaching content in different areas and outlining new methodological directions for lesson development and delivery.

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