Literary Discussions and Advanced Speaking Functions: Researching the (Dis)Connection

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Abstract: *This study investigated the discourse of class discussion in the advanced undergraduate Spanish literature course. Motivating this study was the need for research to determine how discussion in advanced undergraduate literature courses provides discourse opportunities to students to develop advanced language functions, as defined in the ACTFL Guidelines. Despite claims that literature classes play an additional role in developing language proficiency, this issue has not received serious research attention. In this study, classroom transcripts were analyzed for the following features: (1) discourse structure of the literary discussion; (2) the use of teacher questions; (3) verb tense distribution; and (4) student uptake. The analysis attempted to uncover how literary discussion afforded opportunities for students to describe, to narrate in major time frames, to use extended discourse, to share opinions and arguments, to explore alternatives, and to hypothesize—all advanced and superior level speaking functions. The study also included instructor and student interviews to determine their views of foreign language literature classes and to see if what was observed could be explained by the goals the instructor and students had expressed. The findings suggest that simply having a literary discussion does not ensure that students will be pushed to use the language in advanced ways even when faced with tasks requiring critical thinking and advanced language use. One issue that this study reveals is that, for students to experience speaking in the advanced ranges of proficiency, discussions must enable complex thinking in complex language. Other findings suggest that literature instructors should be aware of the discourse opportunities that arise in literary discussions, should make speaking expectations and advanced functions clear to students, and should monitor student language use during discussions.*

Introduction

This study investigated the discourse of class discussion in the advanced undergraduate literature course. Motivating this study was the need for research to determine how discussion in advanced undergraduate literature courses provides discourse opportunities to students to develop advanced language functions, as defined in ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking (Breiner-Sanders, Lowe, Miles & Swender, 2000). This study addressed an area in our profession that has not received serious research attention. In the past, studies in the context of literature instruction have focused on reading comprehension of cultural texts (e.g., Bernhardt, 1990; Davis, 1992; Fecteau, 1999; Kramsch, 1985). This line of research appears to be the most systematic and is connected to the larger second language reading research agenda. In the profes-

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sion's recent history, only one academic volume has addressed the potential of dialogue between second language acquisition research and the teaching of literature (Scott & Tucker, 2002). In this volume, one empirical study was published (Burnett & Fonder-Solano, 2002) that examined teacher beliefs in literature courses and how these beliefs shaped course organization and teaching practice. The only investigation to our knowledge related to class discussion in literature classes was a recent research study by Mantero (2002a, 2002b) on the discourse dynamics of literary discussion.

Although some claim, albeit anecdotally, that the study of literature in the collegiate curriculum is useful to developing foreign language proficiency, it is clear there is little research to provide evidence for this time-honored assumption. Conversely, numerous pedagogical articles and research studies on the use of literature in language classes have been published (e.g., Adair-Hauck & Cumo-Johanssen, 1997; Adair-Hauck & Donato, 2002a, 2002b; Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Carter & McRae, 1996; Kramsch, 1993; Lafayette, 1993; Lunn, 1985; West & Donato, 1995). Thus, although the use of literature in the foreign language class is routinely presented and investigated in a language teaching context, language acquisition in the context of the institutional discipline of teaching literature is not fully understood and has not been widely researched (Bernhardt, 2002; McRae, 1996).[1]

This imbalance in the research record needs to be addressed. If the study of literature is a useful context for developing language proficiency and cultural knowledge (and research and practice provide evidence for this claim), then there must be similar investigations of the literature class as a site for developing advanced language competence. We argue that these investigations are urgently needed for a comprehensive understanding of literature courses in the undergraduate foreign language major and their contribution to the development of language proficiency.

Although this study and the questions it poses may raise some concerns, it is not our intention to engage in a contentious debate on the pros and cons of literature study in the undergraduate education of foreign language majors. We acknowledge that the study of literature is an important component of a liberal arts education and a necessary part of the undergraduate foreign language curriculum. However, it is necessary to point out that—aside from its cultural, intellectual, and humanistic value—some have argued that studying literature has little to do with the acquisition of second language proficiency. This perspective, referred to as the nonessentialist position, questions the status of the literature course in the undergraduate foreign language curriculum. As the argument goes, the study of literature is nonessential to foreign language study and merely a remnant of a historical movement to justify the teaching of foreign languages in schools and universities. The nonessentialist position main-

tains that reading literature and conducting literary analysis have no psycholinguistic validity to support the claim that the study of literature contributes to developing language proficiency (see Widdowson, 1985 and Edmondson, 1995 for the debate on essentialist vs. nonessentialist perspectives). In this paper, however, we maintain that for undergraduate foreign language majors and for the liberal arts mission of foreign language and literature departments, the development of advanced language proficiency and the knowledge of literary traditions and analysis are not dichotomous educational goals. Rather, learning language and literature study are mutually constituting and supporting experiences. As Bernhardt (2002, p. 197) asserted, "each is an act of text construction and reconstruction based on the conceptualization of available linguistic and cultural data."

What is needed, however, is empirical research to examine this linkage rather than a polemical debate defending either side of the issue.

The Need for Research into the Language–Literature (Dis)connection

In an article documenting major directions of the foreign language teaching profession, Davis (2000) concluded that the year 1967 marked the beginning of a separatist era for language instruction and literary studies. Through his analysis of the Northeast Conference Reports from 1954 to 1998, Davis discovered that 1967 was a watershed year that divided our profession into the teaching of language and the teaching of literature. In that year, the Modern Language Association (MLA) founded the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and thus marked symbolically and professionally a clear division of responsibility between language instruction and literary studies (see also Bernhardt, 1995, for a further discussion of this division). In her capstone chapter in the same volume, James reflected upon Davis's findings and asserted that this historical and professional rift was indeed a catastrophic phenomenon. The catastrophe, in her view, was not that literature was removed from basic language courses, nor because it ceased to be the primary objective of much language teaching, but because literature teachers at the universities . . . began their disastrous withdrawal from a sense of responsibility for language teaching, choosing to believe that this could be done at the lower levels and that students would come to them with language competence as a foundation and could then be taught literature. (2000, p. 247)

The situation described by Davis and James has been recognized as an important professional issue through initiatives, such as the MLA Teacher Education Project (1999). According to Fein (1999) and Kadish (1999), the language–literature dichotomy in our profession exists in most research universities and, thus, the profession needs to accept and confront some realities. Many undergraduate

students in literature courses have not yet developed the linguistic capacity or range of vocabulary to read and discuss literary texts in the target language. The expectation for linguistically prepared students of literature has been tempered by the realization that students, even at advanced stages of literature study, remain language learners until the end of their undergraduate majors (Byrnes, 1998; Byrnes & Kord, 2002). In short, literature instructors must address linguistic issues or be confined to present shallow literary exercises of plot recall (Fein, 1999), to conduct class in English, or to have discussions only with international students or heritage language learners in the course.

The solution to this issue is not easy, given that the preparation of future literature instructors and the in-service professional development of university literature faculty rarely, if ever, address issues of additional language acquisition. Individuals centrally concerned with the teaching of literature do not receive, either in their graduate training or beyond, substantive knowledge of second language acquisition or language learning pedagogy to sufficiently address the challenges of integrating language and literature.[2] This situation does not suggest, however, that all literature programs are indifferent to issues of language acquisition or relegate the responsibility for teaching language exclusively to instructors in lower level courses. Indeed, restructured programs exist that make use of a language-based pedagogy in literature courses (see Barnes-Karol, 2000, 2003; Brynes & Kord, 2002; Kramsch, 1993; Murti, 1993; Tesser & Long, 2000, for excellent examples). Where the discussion on the language and literature connection has not led, in our view, is to the need for systematic classroom-based research studies that illuminate the dynamics of a literature course and its relationship to language development. In turn, these studies will provide empirical evidence for informed pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for curricular innovation in literature courses.

The lack of attention to language issues in literature courses was clearly visible in the volume resulting from the MLA's teacher education project, *Preparing a Nation's Teachers* (Franklin, Laurence & Wells [Eds.], 1999), in which only two chapters were devoted to this topic. Moreover, the chapters did not recommend solutions to the problems discussed above based on an understanding of second language acquisition theory and research or on theories of learning and development. Rather, they suggested traditional pedagogical practices, well-known in the literature classroom, albeit with some modifications—lecture and *explication de texte*—as the way to allow "students to gradually build the vocabulary, the linguistic facility, and the self-confidence to discuss the text." (Fein, 1999, p. 395) This observation is not to denigrate these suggestions or the good intentions of instructors committed to resolving the language–literature gap. Rather, it underscores the need for research-based conclusions rather than specula-

tion and anecdotal observation. Thus, research evidence is necessary to support claims for pedagogical interventions and to test assertions, such as the ones above, that the study of literature contributes to the development of "linguistic facility" of undergraduate majors.

The purpose of this study was to examine the discourse of a literature class through the qualitative research lens of theory and practice.[3] From a theoretical perspective, we drew upon sociocultural theory (Donato, 2000; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Wells, 1999; Wertsch, 1985) and its focus on the discursive origins of competence in the conduct of human goal-directed action, here the goal of discussing literature while simultaneously experiencing advanced-level speaking tasks. For the purposes of this study, we maintained that the discursive conditions of the literature class created or inhibited opportunities for learners to participate in language interactions that reflect advanced levels of language functioning. From the perspective of practice, we limited our investigation to text-based discussion, a hallmark of the literature class, and one area where learners' functional competence may be pushed beyond their current level of ability.[4] Thus, this preliminary research opens the way to rational inquiry and future empirical research into the relationship and possible contribution of literature study to a student's functional competence in a foreign language.

Advanced-Level Speaking Functions and the Literary Discussion

Our descriptions of advanced-level speaking functions were taken from the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking (Breiner-Sanders, et al., 2000). Additionally, we drew from superior-level functions given that performance at one proficiency level implies the ability to perform functions with varying degrees of success at the next higher level. For example, advanced high speakers handle tasks pertaining to the superior level but lack the ability to sustain performance at that level in terms of the quality and quantity of their speech. We also limited the speaking functions to those that we thought would arise during literary discussions. To this end, we opted for examining literary discussion for its potential to provide occasions for *describing, narrating in major time frames, using extended discourse, providing opinions and arguments, exploring alternatives, and hypothesizing*. Throughout the analysis, we refer to these functions, the extent to which the literary discussion offered discourse opportunities to perform at an advanced level, and the students' ability to use advanced functions when contributing to the discussion.

Study

This study closely analyzed one aspect of the literature class: teacher-directed target language discussions of literary texts. The overarching research question of the study

was "Does a senior-level literature course for Spanish language majors provide occasions during group discussion for participation in advanced speaking functions as defined in the ACTFL Speaking Proficiency Guidelines?"

Two questions relate to this topic: Does literary discussion in this class reflect functions of advanced-level speaking?, and, if yes, does the discussion offer opportunities that challenge a learner to perform and develop advanced-level speaking functions? To answer these questions, we analyzed the discourse of literary discussion in this class for four features: (1) the discourse structure of the literary discussion, (2) types of questions used by the teacher during discussion, (3) use of verb tenses, and (4) student uptake. These categories were established with a view toward uncovering whether the discussions provided opportunities for students to elaborate, narrate, hypothesize, describe, argue points, and defend opinions (all speaking functions described in the advanced and superior proficiency range). The course instructor was also interviewed on two different occasions. These interviews yielded important information about the instructor's expressed course goals and her perceptions regarding the role of literature classes. Several students were also interviewed to gain their perspectives on the goals of the course and on their own participation in this and other literature courses. All interviews were transcribed in their entirety and became important sources of data for the study.

The Qualitative Nature of the Study

Qualitative research explores social interaction as expressed in everyday life in varied settings, such as in foreign language literature classrooms. These, like other classrooms, are thus characterized as emerging and dynamic cultures (Brooks, 1993) within which academic content is taught and learned. Research in a qualitative paradigm, as is used in this study, is pragmatic and interpretive and is grounded in the lived experiences of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Findings from a qualitative study are typically emergent and revelatory rather than anticipated and predictive.

In this study, we were interested in the patterns of talk that transpired during a frequently recurring interactive practice (Hall, 1995), that is, discussions that revolved around literary texts in a university senior-level Spanish literature course. As such, we did not set out to design an experiment to manipulate variables in any way. Rather, we sought naturally occurring data sets to examine classroom talk using the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking as a framework for analysis. The criterion of generalizability is not relevant to this study. Rather, the transferability of findings, or the belief that everything that is studied is context bound, is the appropriate criterion required of qualitative studies. From the

readers' perspective, the ideas presented in this study may transfer to their own observations of literature courses. Thus, findings develop an internal conceptual understanding of the construct of "literature class and language learning" rather than generalize to an external population of all literature instructors, students, and university courses and seminars. From the researchers' perspective, patterns within and across data sets permit detailed descriptions and findings that potentially transfer from a given context to other possible contexts. Interviews of the instructor and several students who participated in the course served as important data sources to gather insights into events that occurred and their views on the purposes of studying literature in a foreign language classroom. The transcripts, interviews, and class notes were the sources of data used to triangulate findings and arrive at emergent ideas. Identification of recurring patterns in the discourse and interviews supplied the groundwork for constructing implications and recommendations in the conclusion.

Data Sources

Discourse data were gathered during a representative sample of class meetings of a senior-level undergraduate literature course entitled "Masterpieces of Modern Spanish Literature." The course, taught at a U.S. research university,[5] took place during the spring semester, 2000, and met on a Monday–Wednesday–Friday schedule from 2:30–3:20 p.m. for a total of 50 minutes each class meeting. The works used during the course included poetry, plays, and novels.[6]

After having gained entry into the course at the beginning of the semester through permission from the instructor and students, researchers observed the majority of the class meetings during the 15-week semester. These classes were audio recorded to capture as much of a class period as possible.[7] This process yielded 11 audio-recorded class meetings out of a possible 45 class meetings.[8] For the purposes of transcription and analysis, five days were selected from the latter half of the course for detailed discourse analysis (3/15, 3/20, 4/3, 4/5, and 4/21). We were interested in target language discussion on literary texts and we were assured that students were familiar with this genre after nearly a full semester of participation and practice. Additionally, we were assured, because of videotapes from the beginning of the semester and regular classroom observations, that these five days were representative and typical of discussion at other times during the term.

The selected tapes were transcribed following a modified version of the conventions found in Green and Wallat (1981) for systematic transcription. Since the recordings were audio recordings, we were unable to describe nonverbal interaction; however, because of the nature of the study, this was not a serious limitation. The

researcher who sat in the classes was able to recognize all the participants' voices on the tapes and was able to assign names to transcribed utterances. On a few occasions, because some student contributions were not audible or were not comprehensible, question marks were added to the transcript to indicate an unknown source.

The Instructor

The instructor of this senior-level Spanish literature course was an associate professor of Spanish affiliated with her university for over 10 years. She completed a bachelor's degree in secondary education, a master's degree in elementary education, and PhD in Spanish literature. She had also taught Spanish at all levels of instruction, that is, from kindergarten to the doctoral level. Her area of literary expertise was 20th century literature of Spain. She was selected to participate in the study because of her enthusiasm for this research topic, and her accomplished teaching record recognized through two teaching incentive awards and a nomination by her students for the prestigious University Teaching Award program. Thus, for this study, we selected an accomplished literature instructor identified through student and university acclamation.

The Students

Eight students (five males/three females) were enrolled in the Spanish literature course and the majority of these students were Spanish majors. One graduating senior had been accepted into graduate school for the master's degree in Spanish literature at a major northeastern university and another had received a scholarship from the languages department to attend a program of her choice in a Spanish-speaking country during the summer 2000. Two of the students were heritage language speakers.

Findings

The Discourse Structure of the Literary Discussion

We were interested in determining to what extent class discussion provided opportunities to extend and elaborate utterances. As defined in the speaking guidelines, the advanced-level speaker demonstrates the ability to narrate and describe in paragraph-length discourse. If literary discussion pushes students to use advanced language functions, we should find examples of extended student turns and elaborated language use. Thus, our analysis depicts the teacher–student interactions during discussion and its effects on the *quantity* of language used by the students during their participation in the discussion.[9]

The following four examples were selected from the five days of class used in this analysis. These examples illustrate how the predominant discourse pattern of discussion inhibited elaboration of responses and prevented students from moving beyond isolated word-level and sen-

tence-level utterances to paragraph-level discourse, characteristic of advanced speakers. Specifically, we discovered that approximately 20% of the turns that took place followed a three-part sequence composed of teacher initiation (I), usually in the form of a question; student response (R); and teacher evaluation (E) or feedback (F)—referred to as IRE or IRF (Cazden, 2001; Mantero, 2000a, 2000b; Mehan, 1979; Wells, 1996, 1999). Research into classroom discourse has shown that the use of IRE is one of the most pervasive forms of interaction in American schools across all grade levels and in all subject areas (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Numerous studies have also found that when a teacher's response to a student's contribution is an evaluation, students are inhibited from further elaboration, explanation, and clarification. Because evaluation serves as an indicator to terminate the exchange, evaluative responses constrain rather than sustain the discussion.

Table 1 indicates the percentage of turns in five classes that were coded as IRE sequences. We arrived at this percentage by dividing the total number of turns in each class by the turns that were coded as an initiation, a response, or an evaluation. This procedure allowed us to determine the

Table 1

IRE SEQUENCES PER CLASS

Date	no. of IRE sequences	% of turns coded as IRE
3/15	12	.21
3/20	12	.27
4/3	15	.23
4/5	8	.20
4/21	10	.12

percentage of turns that were part of larger IRE exchanges.

When IRE exchanges were not used, accounting for the remaining 80% of the turns, teacher-elaborated commentary and reactions to student comments were observed. Thus, when the teacher was not providing direct instruction or lecturing, and interaction between students and teacher occurred, it followed a predictable pattern of IRE.

Example 1 illustrates the three-part IRE structure of discourse. The instructor asked the students to identify the recurrent question in the play *El Tragaluz*. In this example, the instructor was searching for the correct response ("Who is this?") to determine if the students knew this fact from the novel. A student responded with the correct answer (*"¿Quién es ése?"*), following a recast of the instructor's original question. The instructor reacted with a repetition of the student's response, and ended the three-part exchange with *"perfecto"* indicating her evaluation of the reply and the termination of the exchange.

Example 1

	T	VAMOS A TERMINAR CON EL POBRE MATEO CON TODOS SUS PROBLEMAS
I	T	¿CUÁL ES LA PREGUNTA EN EL TRAGALUZ?
	Ss	no response
I	T	¿HAY CIERTA PREGUNTA REPETIDA EN LA OBRA?
R	S	¿quién es ése?
E	T	¿QUIÉN ES ÉSE? PERFECTO

Immediately following this exchange, the instructor posed another question to begin the onset of another IRE exchange:

Example 2

I	T	Y ¿QUIÉN HACE ESA PREGUNTA?
R	S	el padre
E	T	EL PADRE EL PADRE . . . BIEN

As in the first example, the student responded correctly with *"el padre"* followed by instructor evaluation—*"bien."* These two examples, illustrating approximately 20% of the types of teacher–student exchanges across five days of instruction, inhibited elaboration on the part of the student, reduced responses to word-, phrase-, and sentence-level utterances, and served primarily to evaluate factual recall of story detail.

Example 3 further illustrates the discourse-constraining effects of IRE. Here the class discussed the motivation of the novel's protagonist for openly criticizing the Royal Academy of Science in Spain. This topic of discussion offered the potential to express opinions, arguments, and counterarguments—all advanced to superior language functions. What is striking in this exchange, however, is how the teacher's use of IRE excluded these functions from surfacing in the discussion. The IRE pattern dominated the discussion over several turns, preventing students from exploring in extended utterances the topic of motivation.

Example 3

I	T	Y HASTA AHORA, ¿CUÁL ES EL ÚNICO ÚNICO MOTIVO QUE SABEMOS POR PARTE DEL NARRADOR?
R	S7	fama^ (rising intonation)
I	T	¿QUÉ ES LO QUE LE LE LE MOTIVA?
R	S7	fama de ser el persona que encontré la cura de cancer
R	S3	sí
E	T	EXACTO
	S3	(incomprehensible)
	S1	debe tener la la um Nobel Prize^

	T	EL PREMIO NOBEL EXACTO UM AHORA ESO PUEDE SER ALGO POSITIVO
I		¿LES PARECE QUE UH QUE LE INTERESA MUCHO MÁS LA FAMA PERSONAL O EL BIENESTAR DE LA HUMANIDAD?
R	S3	personal
R	S1	fama personal
E	T	(CHUCKLES) ESTE ES EL PROBLEMA ESTE ES EL PROBLEMA BIEN

In this example, the instructor used three questions to search for the correct response, *"fama personal,"* leading to her terminal evaluation. S7, one of two heritage language speakers in class, offered a full-sentence reply and justification, followed by teacher approval, *"exacto."* Appropriating lexical items embedded in the teacher's question, S3 responds with a single adjective *"personal"* and S1 adds the noun *"fama"* to S3's one-word response. What is interesting, however, is that exploring the topic of personal fame versus humanitarian service has been eclipsed by the goal of responding accurately. Comprehension checking is clearly visible in the discourse revealed with the use of two IRE sequences. The focus on a convergent answer resulted in abbreviated student utterances rather than opinion, justification, and elaboration (i.e. an actual discussion on the protagonist's motive).

It is clear that the instructor attempted to engage students in critical discussion of important issues. However, divergent thinking was subverted by these IRE exchanges, as seen in Example 3. When critical thinking emerged, it was produced in largely word-, phrase- and sentence-level constructions by the students. Evaluation of responses shaped student utterances into staccato responses even when the discussion provided topics for elaborated personal points of view. Example 4 illustrates how an engaging topic requiring hypothesizing is truncated by the use of teacher evaluation. With the exception of S3, a heritage language student, all contributions to the topic of humanitarian service versus personal notoriety are word- or phrase-length utterances.

Example 4

	T	UM PUEDE SER QUE SERÍA UN SEGUNDO BENEFICIO ESO DE DE AYUDAR A LA GENTE PERO QUE MÁS LE INTERESA ES LA FAMA Y EL PREMIO.
	S3	pero así igual como presidente que aquí que eso no es porque quiere ayudar el país eso es porque el nombre 'yo soy presidente del estado' [S3 is a heritage language student]
	T	EL PRESTIGIO, EL PODER
	S3	el poder

T   EXACTO

S2 ¿ese ese libro recibió mucho mucho crítica?

T   UUUU SÍ

S2 porque parece que está está abusando el el ciencia contemporáneo, ¿no?

T   REALMENTE ESTÁ CRITICANDO ABSOLUTAMENTE TODO

S3 la economía

T   ECONOMÍA UH EL ESTADO DE LA ACADEMIAEN ESPAÑA

Evaluations of opinion do not provide students with opportunities to produce extended commentary on the literary issue under discussion. When an instructor asks students to interpret an event (e.g., *Puede ser que sería. . .*), instructor evaluation of personal points of view emerges in the discourse (*"exacto"* to S3's response of *"el poder"*). It appears, therefore, that simply "having a discussion" or asking for student opinions in literature courses does not categorically guarantee a discourse opportunity for extended utterances. Nothing intrinsically beneficial to advancing proficiency arises in a literary discussion, if this discussion is routinely cast in three-part triadic discourse culminating in teacher evaluation and lecture.[10] Rather, the teacher's orchestration of the discussion is what enables the practice of advanced language functions, a point we will address in the conclusion.

Question Types

The second analysis that we performed concerned the use of the instructor's questions during literature-based discussions. Here we look more closely at the initiation phase of an IRE sequence. The use of questions as cognitive tools for activating critical thinking and verbal elaboration of ideas has been investigated extensively in the literature (e.g., Cazden, 2001; McCormick & Donato, 2001; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wells, 1996, 1999, to name a few). We selected questions as a way to determine whether the instructor asked students to state an opinion, cite conditions, narrate, describe, or explain, as described in the advanced/superior ranges of oral proficiency. Additionally,

because questions have the power to stimulate thought and discussion, we hoped to find question types that encouraged divergent thinking and sharing of ideas unknown to those in the class, including the instructor.

We reviewed the transcriptions, noting all instances of instructor questions, and coded them as display, information, or clarification questions—the only three types of questions that were used over five days of analysis. We also tallied the number of each question type for each of the five classes. *Display questions* are defined as those questions to which the instructor already knows the answer (Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979). Typically, this type of question is asked as a form of assessment to determine if students know factual information in the text (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). By contrast, *information questions* are those that solicit information unknown to the instructor, such as a student's opinion about a character's actions, an interpretation of an event, or textual evidence for an assertion. *Clarification questions* are those that ask students to explain what was said (e.g., "Excuse me, could you explain your point a little bit more?"). Of these three types of questions, display questions would most likely not elicit performances required of advanced-level speakers. Table 2 classifies the questions used by the teacher across five days of instruction.

As Table 2 indicates, the instructor asked the students 118 questions across the five class meetings. These data show a clear preference by the instructor for display questions. Ninety-six of the questions (81%) during the five days of discussion were display questions. This large percentage clearly indicates the instructor's attempt to determine whether students knew specific information located in the literary pieces under discussion. This finding is also consistent with the instructor's goal for the course—building comprehension of the text—as we will present later in this article.

Example 5 illustrates the constraining effects of display questions on promoting discursive abilities at the advanced level. In this example, we observe how answers to display questions moved the instructor's (rather than the students') discourse forward. As was found in the Mantero

Table 2

INSTRUCTOR'S QUESTION TYPES ACROSS FIVE DAYS OF INSTRUCTION

Question Type	Date 3/15	3/20	4/3	4/5	4/21
Display questions	17 (.73)	22 (.88)	25 (1.00)	16 (1.00)	26 (.89)
Information questions	6 (.26)	3 (.12)	0	0	1 (.3)
Clarification questions	0	0	0	0	2 (.7)

Note. Total of 118 questions in 5 days.

study (2001b), student responses to display questions were often followed by extensive instructor commentary on their answers. We also found that responses to display questions provided the teacher with an invitation to take the floor, rather than an opportunity for student contributions to the discussion. Example 5 illustrates this point.

Example 5

T   OKAY, ¿SE ACUERDAN DE DE CÓMO LA EXPLICACIÓN QUE DAN EL Y ELLA AL PRINCIPIO DE LA OBRA? ¿REALMENTE ESTÁ OCURRIENDO LA ACCIÓN DE MARIO Y VICENTE?

Ss   no
Ss   ??
S?   proyec- es una proyección
T   EXACTO BIEN ES UNA HISTORIA DEL PASADO UH LITERALMENTE RECREADA A TRAVEZ DE PROYECCIONES OK NO TOTALMENTE DISTINTO DE LA TELEVISIÓN EN QUE LA ACCIÓN QUE VEMOS HA OCURRIDO EN ALGÚN LUGAR EN ALGÚN MOMENTO PERO NO ESTÁ OCURRIENDO EN LA PANTALLA.

In this example, the instructor asked the students a rhetorical question to prompt recall of the explanation given in the opening of the work, followed by the question "Is the action of Mario and Vicente really occurring?" Students responded *"no"* to this second question and one student built on the class's negative reply by explaining that the action was "a projection." The instructor responded with an evaluation of the accuracy (*"exacto"*) of the student's answer and commented upon the notion that the past is a projection in this novel. In her reply, the instructor explored the literary device present in this work; however, at no time did the students discuss the use of projection to recreate the past in *El Tragaluz*. By assuming responsibility for the explanation of the literary device, the instructor ostensibly prevented the students from offering their own opinions and interpretations of the text. What we observe in this episode also corroborates Mantero's (2001b) finding in the literature class that he analyzed. He described classroom discourse in the literature class as largely teacher centered and student supported. More specifically, student responses to display questions served as venues for the teacher to position herself or himself as the authority and to lecture. The analysis of questions also supported previous arguments on the limiting effects of IRE on student exploratory talk. That is, the use of initiating questions seeking convergent answers resulted in teacher evaluation and lecture, rather than mental exploration and verbal elaboration by the student. One issue that this finding revealed

was that, for students to experience speaking in the advance ranges of proficiency, questions need to enable complex thinking in complex language beyond mere display of short factual knowledge.

The Use of Major Time Frames
A characteristic of an advanced speaker is the ability to narrate and describe events in all major time frames (past, present, and future) in paragraph-length discourse. To determine if class discussion contained major time frames, we examined the range of verb tenses that students employed during their discussion with the instructor. Discourse reflecting a range of verb tenses would indicate the presence of various time frames (e.g., narration in the past, description in the present) and functions (e.g., hypothesizing using counterfactual utterances). Conversely, a failure to see a range of verb tenses would indicate limited opportunities for students to practice temporal relationships or possibly the students' lack of control of the Spanish tense-aspect system.

We examined the corpus of transcribed discussions turn by turn and counted all inflected verbs in Spanish produced by the students. We did not count verb or phrase repetitions; these were counted as only one instance of an inflected verb. We also did not concern ourselves with the accuracy of the verb form constructed in a specific tense. For example, if a student uttered *"Carlos tuve . . . tuve . . . tuve un buen amigo,"* we counted the inflected verb as one instance of a verb in the preterite tense and ignored the repetition of the form and the inaccurate subject–verb agreement.

As shown in Table 3, the total number of inflected verbs produced by students in the corpus was 488. The majority of inflected verbs in five days of instruction, or 393 (81%) verb forms, were in the simple present tense while only 44 (9%) were in the preterite tense. The present progressive was used a total of 20 times, some 4.09% of the total, followed by the imperfect, which students used only 13 times, representing 2.7% of verb forms produced by the students during discussion. Students used the present perfect tense 8 times (1.6%), the future tense 6 times (1.2%),

Table 3

USE OF VERB TENSES ACROSS
FIVE DAYS OF DISCUSSION

Tense	no.	%
Present	393	81
Preterite	44	9.0
Present Progressive	20	4.09
Imperfect	13	2.7
Present Perfect	8	1.6
Future	6	1.2
Imperfect Progressive	4	0.8

Note. Total 488 inflected verbs produced by students.

and the imperfect progressive only 4 times (0.8%). It is clear from the percentages of tense use that the range of time frames was limited and that the predominant tense used was the present. A closer analysis of the transcription also reveals that preterite tense use was largely concentrated in a single class (14 out of 44 total uses) where the instructor asked *"¿Cómo se murió?"* prompting the students to follow the time frame established in the instructor's question. Other uses of the preterite tense were dispersed across the five days in isolated teacher questions and student answers.

Literary discussions are a potential area for experiencing discourse in major time frames (e.g., What happened to the protagonist? What do you think will happen next in the novel? How will the problem be resolved? Why did this situation occur? What would you have done if you had been in this situation?). What we found, however, was the dominant use of the present tense over all others. One possible explanation for this finding is students' use of historical present for narrating past actions. We have evidence, however, that shifting to present tense for past narration was not the case. The more plausible explanation for the dominance of the present tense is the students' inability to control tense and aspect. Evidence for this interpretation was found in the corpus when analyzing discussions that require the use of a verb tense other than the present tense or present historical narration. It was found that the students shifted unexpectedly to the present tense when other time frames had been established and were required in their responses. Example 6 illustrates the students' inaccurate tense shifting.

Example 6

T:	¿CÓMO SE SALVÓ? *(referring to Antonio in the novel)*
S2:	el el accidente o algo un freak
T:	OKAY SE SALVÓ OH OKAY
S2:	que cuando cayó no murió porque normalmente [??] morir
T:	UH HUH
S1:	al fin de todo eso él dice que 'sin mi nariz no soy nada'
T:	(Laughing) BUENO SU PROFESIÓN ES SER HOMBRE NARÍZ EM?
S1:	pero todo lo que pasó ??? pensar "oh, mi naríz."
T:	(whispers something to a student here)
S2:	y y es es irónico como se habla… [Here the instructor makes a humorous remark concerning the symbolism of the character's nose.]
S3:	Oh, I caught that
S2:	pero es irónico cómo se habla cómo el de la experiencia con con la Bella allí al final

Como su su imagen de sí mismo y como ella está enlocada' con con con ello y [??] (chuckles)

In the discussion about how Antonio saved himself in the novel, the time frame shifts unpredictably from the past to the present. This shift takes place in both student and instructor contributions and, it could be argued, that both students and instructor used the historical present in this discussion. However, upon closer analysis, we observed an inaccurate change of tense to the present tense. Although at the sentence level the use of tenses in the discussion is appropriate, when viewed in the context of the ongoing discourse, the shifting appears aberrant and indicates lack of tense-aspect control. Further, this exchange took place on the last day of the course (4/21) indicating that semester-long participation in these literary discussions did not appear to contribute to helping students control tense-aspect relationships.

Uptake

In our analysis, we found several examples of discussion topics where the opportunity to push students toward advanced and superior speaking functions was possible. What we discovered, however, was that, even though the topic and content of a discussion provided an occasion to discuss a text at the advanced level (e.g., defend an opinion, hypothesize, explain) students did not uptake appropriate speech functions modeled explicitly by the teacher.[11] The term *uptake* was introduced by Lyster and Ranta (1997, 1998) and is used to refer to the revoicing of a correct language form or function after instructor modeling or recasting of the student's utterance (Cazden, 2001). The idea that students need to notice salient forms and functions in the input, attend to them, compare them to their language production, and incorporate them in subsequent utterances is fundamental to progress in second language acquisition. Consistent failure to uptake forms and functions may indicate a lack of growth in developing one's proficiency.

Student uptake can only occur when literature instructors are vigilant to the ongoing discourse, are aware of the language functions being used, and are attentive to ensuring that students attend to and incorporate these forms and structures into their contributions (i.e., uptake). In the data, several missed opportunities for student participation in advanced-level speaking tasks were found. More precisely, as the following examples will show, the literary discussion presented an ideal arena for using an advanced-level function. However, students bypassed these advanced functions while still maintaining participation in the discussion. Although instructor and students focused on meaning and constructed understanding together, they did so at an intermediate-level while circumventing more advanced ways of speaking about the topic.

In the following example, the instructor asked a question

requiring students to construct hypotheses to explore alternate endings to the novel. The students used present tense, or no verb at all, to respond to the teacher's question despite the fact that the question framed the discussion in the past perfect subjunctive and conditional perfect. The instructor responded in turn to the meaning of the discussion and accepted the inappropriate verb forms in the hypothesis.

Example 7

    T   ESPERE UN SEGUNDO
         SI ESTA OBRA **PUDIERA HABER TERMINADO** CON UN FIN ALEGRE, EH? COMO QUER MOS TODOS COMO PARA LA BELLA ¿QUÉ **HABRÍA PASADO?**
    S2   ella (??) va con Poco
    S1   con Poco
    S4   con Poco
    T   AL AL TROPICANA
    S5   sí

In this exchange, the instructor introduced a hypothesizing function, calling for the use the conditional perfect, as indicated with *"¿Que habría pasado?"* (What would have happened?). S2, S1, S4 understood the question and were able to respond, but no student uptook the verb form to incorporate it into their own responses, using rather present tense of the verb *to go* and the prepositional phrase *"con Poco."* What is interesting is that the instructor did not remodel or recast the utterance to push the students from semantic to syntactic processing (Swain, 1995) or provide the implicit cue to attend to verb tense use. Curiously, the teacher uptook the student's use of the prepositional phrase and *"al Tropicana"* in her contribution to the discussion. In the lines that follow, we note that the instructor continued to ask for alternate explanations using the conditional perfect *(habría sido)* to determine what *would have been* the ideal arrangement.

Example 8

    T   PARA EL POCO, ¿CUÁL **HABRÍA SIDO** EL ARREGLO IDEAL?
    S1   con Vanessa
    S2   oh las dos
    S4   o con la primera chica
    S2   las dos
    T   EXACTO, BIEN

We observe that S1, S2, and S4 responded with verbless phrases that were accepted and ironically confirmed as correct by the instructor.

An additional example taken from the same day of class illustrates the lack of student uptake, and the instructor's acceptance of utterances that were incorrect and inap-

propriate in the context of the discussion. In this example, the instructor asked the students if the novel *had ended* in Antonia's favor, in what situation *would she find herself.* The students' responses neither explored alternate possibilities nor showed elaborated thinking and justification for their responses. As in the above examples, students simplified the language, used prepositional phrases, and failed to construct a hypothesis using the conditional perfect tense for expressing counterfactual utterances.

Example 9

    T   ELLA SI **HUBIERA TERMINADO** LA NOVELA A SU GUSTO, EN QUÉ SITUACIÓN **ESTARÍA?**
    S2   con Damián
    S1   con Damián
    T   CON DAMIÁN

In their responses, neither S1 nor S2 uptook the instructor's use of the conditional in *estaría,* and both students responded with an ellipsis. In turn the instructor echoed their elliptical answer indicating approval of their interpretation and, at the same time, tacitly endorsing a minimal response to a question that potentially required critical thinking, evidence, and justification, as well as more complex grammar. In short, the students were not pushed to advance in their self-expression during this discussion that could have easily been accomplished with a follow-up question, such as "Why?" or "Please explain why you would say this."

Examples 8 and 9 show how literary discussion provides a context for high level language functions and cognitive tasks. In the next example, we see a student's attempt to expand on her alternate ending by using a verb rather than using the telegraphic style that characterized the students' contributions in the above two examples. We see the instructor posed a similar question to the one before, here to determine how students thought things *would have turned out* for Damian rather than Antonia. The instructor, as in the previous examples, posed her question in the form of a counterfactual using the conditional perfect for the hypothesizing function.

Example 10

    T   NO, ¿Y DAMIÁN?
         ¿CÓMO TERMINA?
         BUENO IDEALMENTE PARA EL, ¿CÓMO **HABRÍA TERMINADO?**
    S1   **será** con Antonia
    T   YEAH, **PARECÍA** QUE **HABÍA** REALMENTE CARINO ENTRE LOS DOS, EM? A PESAR DE LA DIFERENCIA DE EDAD (??) A PESAR DE LA DIFERENCIA DE SITUACION ASÍ TODO, EM?

S1 responded using a future tense verb rather than the correct counterfactual conditional perfect modeled in the instructor's question. Additionally, S1 used the incorrect form of the verb *to be,* confusing the distinction between *ser* and *estar.* Moreover, the instructor used the imperfect tense in her elaborated response to S1, using *parecía* and *había,* but did not negotiate the choice of verb or tense with the student.

The presence of advanced-level functions in the discourse does not guarantee uptake by the student, requests for clarification by the instructor, or negotiation of form between student and instructor. The conclusion of the analysis of uptake is clear. Direct attention to the linguistic component of discussion is required, for any serious claim on the usefulness of literary discussion to language proficiency. Advanced-level functions may not develop in students as a result of mere exposure to them in the instructor's model. As Lyster and Ranta (1997) pointed out, student uptake in language classrooms is brought about through the instructor's explicit intervention and the request for students to repair, to reformulate, and to extend utterances. Clearly, this type of verbal interaction is also needed during literary discussion among foreign language learners, as the above examples show quite dramatically.

Analysis of Instructor and Student Expressed Goals

A final analysis we conducted concerned uncovering the course and learning goals as expressed by instructor and students. The purpose of the interviews was to see if what we observed could be explained by the goals that the instructor and students expressed about their literature class. We interviewed the instructor and two students near the end of the term. The instructor was interviewed twice during the course of the semester and the two students were selected based on their high degree of participation and willingness to participate in the study. Students and instructor were asked what they perceived as (1) the major goals of an advanced-level literature course, (2) the types of knowledge and abilities that were to result from this course, and (3) the challenges and problems that instructor and student faced in a course of this type.

We organized responses to the interview questions in the form of a matrix using two intersecting axes (see Figure 1). The vertical axis represents the instructor and the horizontal axis represents students. Each end of the axis is labeled with a + or a − indicating information that was gained in the interview (+) or lack of an explicit reference to a particular issue (-). When the two lines intersect, four quadrants result allowing us to plot visually the reported goals by:

   (a) both instructor and students
   (b) instructor but not students
   (c) students but not instructor
   (d) neither instructor nor students
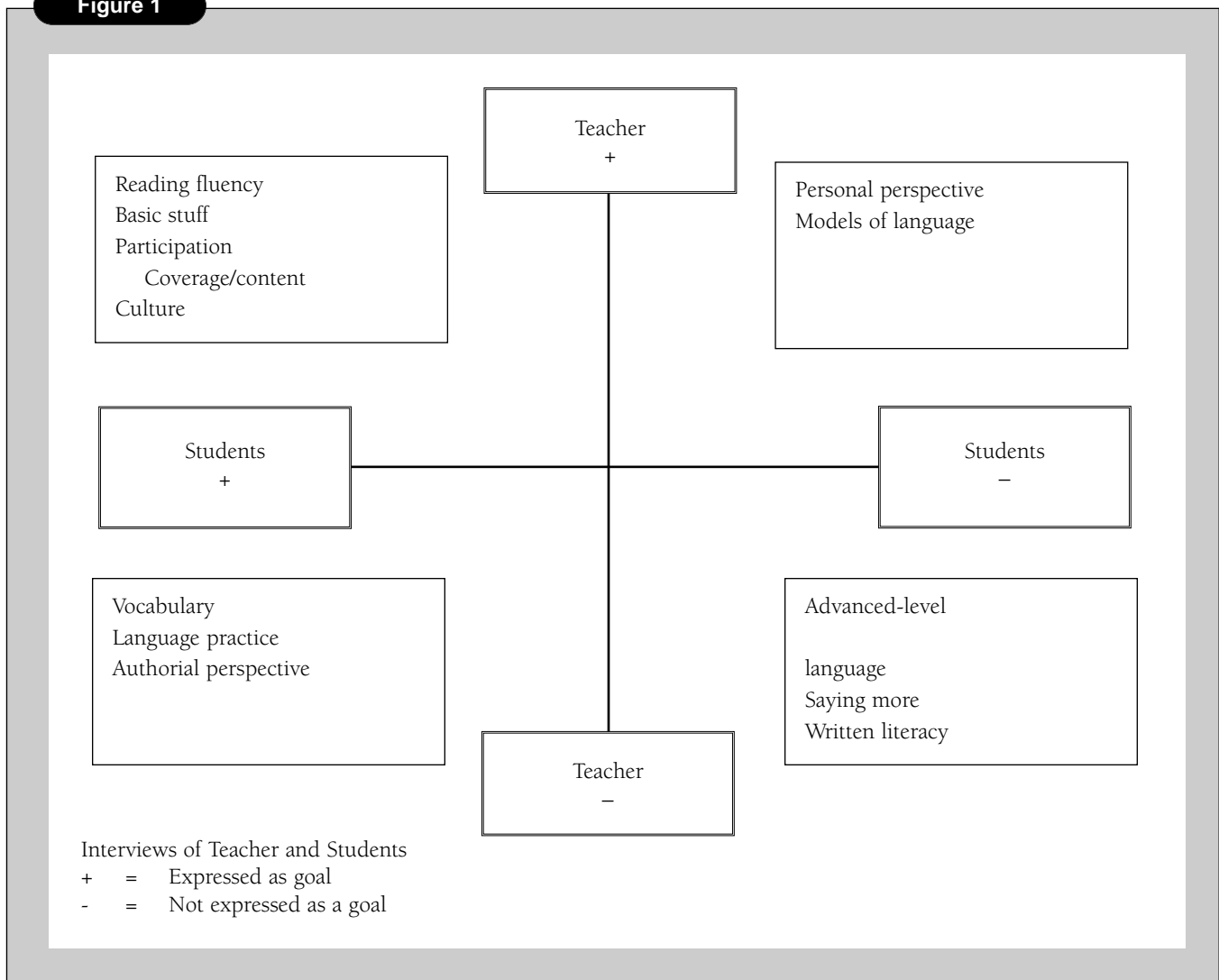
Shared Goals of Instructor and Students

Remarkably, both instructor and students expressed similar orientations to the literature course. Both reported that the course should deal with "basic stuff" meaning, in their terms, "who wrote what and what happened in the works . . . you know that basic stuff." This orientation to knowing the fundamentals of the literary works connected to a second goal of both instructor and students: coverage of the content in the syllabus in a participatory discussion-oriented setting. Students and instructor reported knowing that coverage of works on the syllabus was a goal but both expressed frustration with the amount of material studied. One student expressed this frustration clearly with the remark that he "was turned off most at the end with the quantity of works . . . I don't think we should have gone through so much." The instructor also related that she was frustrated with the need to cover so much material. She also observed that the goal of coverage influenced the participation patterns of the class. She stated "when we get to the end of the semester and realize we have not done all that we were supposed to have done . . . I jump in when I shouldn't because of time." The frustrations and instructional decisions that derived from time constraints and material coverage explain clearly the structure of discussion we observed during the last five days in this class. As we reported, classroom discussion was largely instructor dominated and student participation was often elicited through IRE patterns of talk, limiting the students' possibility for elaboration and expansion. The instructor goes on to state that "I hate those days [when she jumps in and gives more information] because if [the students] have not read [the text] or if they read it [the text] and it was too difficult, or there were questions, somehow it has to be put together . . . and again the time constraints."

Time constraints explain some of the interaction patterns we observed in this class. The issue of time and amount of content interestingly was of concern to student and instructor alike. The dilemma for the literature instructor seemed to be creating a classroom where students actively and discursively explored literary themes and topics in an academic system that constrained time and a curriculum that expanded content. From the perspective of the need to produce competent speakers of the target language upon completion of the language major, the dilemma is exacerbated because it results in restricted language use opportunities for students and increased speaking time for the instructor (Davis, 2000; James, 2000).

Goals of Instructor Not Expressed by Students

The instructor included in her discussion of goals issues of language. Her orientation to the language component of a literature course dealt with "models of [written] language, seeing it on paper . . . you have time to look at it and think

Figure 1

	Teacher +	
Reading fluency Basic stuff Participation Coverage/content Culture		Personal perspective Models of language
Students +		Students −
Vocabulary Language practice Authorial perspective		Advanced-level language Saying more Written literacy
	Teacher −	

Interviews of Teacher and Students
+   =   Expressed as goal
-   =   Not expressed as a goal

about it, change it around, go back to it in ways that you can't if you hear it." The interviewer asked the instructor to comment upon the functions that learners might develop in an upper-division literature class, such as persuasion, argumentation, speculation, and conjecture. The instructor stated such speaking functions could be developed in a literature class calling them "medium-high level on the proficiency exam." However, she concluded that "mostly what they get at this point is the ability to discuss what happens to someone else, to describe, to analyze, and then bring it back to themselves (personalize) . . . I want them to be able to expand on it [the text] by sharing what they got with other people and with me." These two statements point out a critical issue for the teaching of literature and its connection to language development in proficiency. First, the instructor was unaware of what advanced proficiency means. Referring to the functions enumerated as "medium high" reveals a lack of understanding of the

Guidelines and the nomenclature used for describing levels of language growth. Second, the observation that what students could gain "at this point" is the ability to describe, analyze, and personalize was quite ironic. In the five classes we observed and transcribed, no student was ever observed to engage in sharing their expanded descriptions or analyses of a literary work with one another or the instructor. Rather, their contributions to discussion were mainly word, phrase, and sentence-level factual recollection of plots ("the basic stuff") and some speculation lacking in textual support. This finding cautions us that what is expressed as a goal may not be realized in practice.

Goals of Students Not Expressed by Instructor
The interviews of the two students revealed goal conflict with the teacher. When asked about the goals of the literature class, one student argued that expressing one's personal perspective on literature was not the overarching goal of

the course. Rather, he stated that "we [the students] are here to understand why it [the text] is pertinent to the author's life and why they [the authors] wanted to get across this message. I mean like in high school where you read a bunch of coming-of-age stories, well it was obvious it was meant [the text's inclusion in the curriculum] for the public and the audience to get them interested in literature. Now I've already expressed interest in Spanish literature. We are studying their culture." This student's comment stood in contrast to the instructor's expressed goal of wanting students to personalize the literature they were studying.

A second theme of the students' goals for literature study concerned the issue of language. In response to the question "Has this class had any impact on your Spanish proficiency?" one student compared his study of Spanish literature to language study in his elementary textbook. He stated that literature presented him with opportunities to see language used in contexts that went beyond language textbooks. "There are only so many little situations you can go over in a standard textbook. It [literature] presents more situations to think about different situations in life." Clearly this student perceived a direct link between the contexts presented in a literary work and how these contexts provide illustrations of life contexts constructed in language beyond the standard textbook lessons. However, when asked how these literary contexts have improved his Spanish he replied "definitely more vocabulary." This was echoed in another student's remark that literature study improved "definitely vocabulary" adding "it is hard to quantify just how much." [12] It is interesting to note that among all the potential benefits of using the target language in content-based instruction, such as a literature class, the only linguistic contribution identified was vocabulary expansion. If this was the case, students' participation in these classes would not result in stronger speaking skills. To know a language requires more than vocabulary knowledge and entails active linguistic construction of cultural practices in the conduct of one's everyday life (Hall, 1995, 1998).

We reflected on the interviews and reviewed them for not just what was reported but what seemed conspicuously absent. We noted that neither students nor instructor conveyed the idea without prompting that participation in a literary discussion could advance one's speaking skills and ability to communicate in the interpersonal mode. Opportunities for talking in extended texts and increasing the quantity of what one says was not salient in the minds of the respondents. Additionally, the issue of literacy and focus on linguistic form was not raised by the instructor or students. The comments of the respondents pertained more to issues of curricular coverage, culture, time constraints, and vocabulary. It is not surprising that these issues would be raised. What the interview data revealed clearly supports what many already know—literature

courses in the undergraduate programs, with rare exception, do not reflect language proficiency goals in their curricular design or in the minds of instructors and students (James, 2000).

Discussion and Implications

This preliminary exploration into the discourse of a literature class raises several issues for further discussion and research. First, *discussions that take place in literature courses have the potential to incorporate advanced proficiency goals.* The data suggest that language functions at the advanced to superior levels emerge in the literary discussion. That is, literary discussion affords discourse opportunities to hypothesize, defend opinions, elaborate, and speak beyond words and phrases. What is critically needed is an understanding of the relationship among literary discussion, the teacher's orchestration of classroom discourse, and the students' attention to advanced proficiency functions in the framework of an interpretive literary discussion. Given the time and out-of-classroom language experiences needed for developing advanced proficiency, it is unlikely that any program will prepare students completely in a few language courses to assume the weighty task of discussing literary ideas in the target language. When the literature curriculum fails to address language objectives and is reduced to summaries of literary facts, the question will need to be asked: What *are* the students learning and what intellect is being developed in advanced literature courses? (See Glisan, 1999.)

Second, *literature classes need to include a variety of interaction patterns to provide opportunities for elaborated responses, one feature of an advanced speaker.* Large group discussion may not be the ideal context for enacting advanced speaking functions, specifically the development of elaborated utterances. As we observed in the data, many concepts developed across turns and among several participants and, therefore, ideas were spoken as short phrases to be later combined and summarized by the teacher. One caveat is in order, however. In this study, only eight students were enrolled in the class, hardly representative of what is meant by a large class discussion. Small group discussion can provide more time for talk, but the addition of small group discussions does not imply that whole class interpretive discussion in advanced literature courses is not possible. The point is that a variety of interaction patterns provide multiple speaking opportunities for students to engage in accountable talk using extended discourse.

Third, *the potential of literary discussion to move students into advanced speaking tasks needs to be raised in the minds of instructors and students.* Additionally, these features of discussion need to be salient to instructors and students as one goal of the course. In this study, it appears that

there was a naïve understanding of the nature of proficiency and language development by both the students and the instructor. In the students' comments, language development was reduced to vocabulary knowledge; for the instructor, her misconceptions about language learning were revealed in her implicit understandings of what constitutes a proficiency level and what comprises a literary discussion with students in a foreign language class. The data reveal, that during discussion the instructor was unable to move beyond the IRE script to push students to say and do more in Spanish. Indeed, if literature classes are to be placed on equal footing with language classes as sites for language learning, then literature instructors need to possess more than strong literary content knowledge and textual analysis skills. As we noted in the introduction, language classes have routinely drawn upon literature as core material for language lessons (Adair-Hauck & Donato, 2002a, 2002b; Adair-Hauck, Donato, & Cumo, 2000; Carter & McRae, 1996; Kramsch, 1993). The opposite has not been the case, however (i.e., literature courses have not drawn upon language learning theories, research, and practices). As James stated "we need to create properly coordinated language, culture, and literature upper-level college programs *now...* " (emphasis in original, 2000, p. 259). She went on to argue that university language departments need to understand that there is an intersection and seamless relationship between applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and literature study. The lack of articulation between language and literature courses and knowledge about the learning of literature and the learning of an additional language are clearly visible in the findings of this study.

Fourth, *literature instructors need to know the Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking, the range of functions at each level of proficiency, and the modes of communication as described in the National Standards in Foreign Language Education.* In this way, literature instructors can monitor language use during the course, assess the level of speaking during discussion, and set goals for integrating advanced functions into discussion topics and communicative tasks. Students also need to be made aware that the study of literature does not categorically exclude attention to language growth, as their comments during the interviews suggested. Based on the Proficiency Guidelines, literature instructors can make discussion expectations clear to students and inform them of the advanced-level functions needed for participating in talk about text. The literature course, with its concomitant focus on close textual reading and interpretative discussion, is an ideally suited arena for raising the students' awareness concerning what it means to be an advanced speaker of an additional language. By extension, and related to our fourth recommendation, Bernhardt (2002) suggested that graduate students of literature (we include in-service faculty members as well) need to be introduced to the research literature on human learning and language acquisition. Additionally, she stated that they should be required to relate these concepts to the act of literature learning and teaching.[13] Finally, good models of literary discussion are needed that address both literary and language goals.

Finally, an obvious implication of this study *is the critical need for more research into the literary discussion and its relationship to developing functional language abilities at the advanced level.* Because of the time and effort that students spend in literature courses and the amount of financial resources given to hiring foreign language literature faculty relative to faculty in applied linguistic science, asking the hard questions and seeking research-based answers is a professional obligation. The teaching and learning of literature in a foreign language, as we presented in our introduction, has not been approached with the same empirical scrutiny as other language teaching endeavors.[14] Without research attention to the role of literature in the formation of an undergraduate major and serious implementation of its findings to curriculum and teaching practice, literary studies in the undergraduate foreign language curriculum may be placed in serious jeopardy. Through classroom-based research on literature teaching, folk notions on the value of literature instruction to language learning can be verified and principled recommendations for practice can be made.

In conclusion, we ask if the type of discussions observed in this literature class transfers to other literature classes conducted in other universities. The qualitative nature of this study leaves this answer to the readers who may or may not be able to transfer the findings to their personal experiences and observations. Lack of transferability of the findings does not diminish the contribution of this analysis to a deeper understanding of the construct of literary discussions and language use in advanced courses. Additionally, in qualitative research, this study opens more questions than provides answers and offers more research possibilities than definitive conclusions. Mending the catastrophic rift between language and literature instruction (described by James, 2000, and noted in the introduction to this article) requires careful and systematic research attention to the issue. Achieving the connection of language goals and literature instruction also requires a sharing of knowledge among language teaching pedagogy, second language acquisition research, and literary scholarship within departments of world languages and literatures and within the profession (Scott & Tucker, 2002). Forward-looking programs that address principles of learning and development and integrate language objectives into the study of literature need to share their successes and challenges in the professional journals. Because this linkage has not occurred in many university departments, exemplary literature programs, such as the ones cited in the introduc-

tion, need to describe to the professional community what an advanced literature course looks like where goals for speaking proficiency are incorporated into the curriculum. It is our hope that this study has shed light on this issue and will serve as a foundation for other reports and empirical studies of the language and literature (dis)connection.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. We refer here to literature courses where class discussion on literary texts is conducted in the target language.

2. One reviewer pointed out that this assertion was disturbing and irritating. The reviewer stated that university foreign language departments offer at least one teaching methodology course and supervision during master and doctoral programs. This is precisely our point. One course in teaching methodology complemented with classroom observations cannot fully prepare instructors with the specialized professional knowledge to understand language learning research, theory, and practice, nor can it prepare them to teach the diversity of courses in the undergraduate curriculum. The classic introductory methods course is often intended to prepare untrained teaching assistants to deliver quality instruction in elementary and intermediate courses. Instructional issues for teaching advanced classes are rarely presented. Indeed, this negative and incredulous reaction to the assertion that individuals from graduate programs in literature may possibly not possess the necessary background to address issues of language acquisition is endemic to foreign language teaching in higher education. That is, the attitude tacitly grants an instructional expertise where it may not exist and wrongly equates interest in the topic with knowledge and skill.

3. In this study, we are not interested in proficiency outcomes of a single course. Indeed, this question would be misguided given that participation in one course could not bring about major leaps in proficiency (Liskin-Gasparro, personal communication). Of interest in this study is documenting the advanced-level speaking opportunities and experiences that are realized in literary discussion.

4. This is not to suggest that other pedagogical practices are not enacted in the literature class. Clearly, many literature classes actively incorporate group presentations and projects, and pair and group discussions. We focus on lecture and discussion in the literature class first, because it is the most frequent mode of instructional delivery in this context. As Fein pointed out, "It is clear that the lecture mode of instruction is still alive and well in many literature classes" (1999, p. 392). Second, literary discussion is ostensibly interpersonal communication, as defined in goal area one of the standards for foreign language learning (1996), contrasted to student prepared presentations (presentational mode of communication) or listening to lectures and note taking (interpretive mode of communication). Third, teacher-directed classroom discussion has largely gone unexamined in light of the anecdotal claim that literature study is connected to the language development of undergraduate majors.

5. The catalog description of this literature course states: "Prerequisite: One SPW 3000-level course or equivalent. Poetry, novel, and drama of the Modern Period in Spain. Emphasis on close readings of selected works and literary and artistic movements of the period" (from the course syllabus distributed to students on the first day of the spring semester).

6. Works of poetry read were: *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* (Federico García Lorca), *Nanas de la cebolla* (Miguel Hernández), *Inomnio* (Dámaso Alonso), *La poesía es un arma cargada de futuro* (Gabriel Celaya), *A la inmensa mayoría* (Blas de Otero), *Telegramas de urgencia escribo* and *Sale caro ser poeta* (Gloria Fuentes), *Arde el mar* and *La muerte en Beverly Hills* (Pere Gimferrer), *Chico Wrangler* and *Se penso como speso male il mio tempo* (Ana Rosetti). Plays read were: *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (Federico García Lorca) and *El tragaluz* (Antonio Buero Vallejo). Novels read were: *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (Camilo José Cela), *Tiempo de Silencio* (Luis Martin-Santos) and *Te Trataré como a una Reina.*

7. It was deemed unnecessary to videotape the course sessions since we were not interested in doing a complete ethnography of the literature course, rather we were interested in capturing as much as possible teacher-directed discussions on the literary works of the course. Because of where the researcher sat on any given day he was in the class, it was not possible to capture clearly every student contribution. The instructor's voice, by contrast, was clearly audible and comprehensible the vast majority of the time.

8. Dates of classes audio recorded were 1/28, 1/31, 2/2, 2/7, 2/11, 2/14, 3/15, 3/20, 3/24/ 4/3, 4/5, 4/19, 4/21.

9. We are concerned here with quantity as opposed to quality. Although quality of production plays a role, quantity is important when assessing learners' ability to elaborate and quite independent of how well they produce. In a study of young foreign language learners, quantity was found to be useful in assessing levels of proficiency (see Igarashi, et al., 2002)

10. Cazden has pointed out that "IRE is often criticized as a teacher's way to co-opt students to participate in what could otherwise be a lecture and transform a monologue into a dialogue by eliciting short items of information" (2001, p. 46). She maintained that these criticisms are oversimplified and miss important dimensions of IRE. For example, IRE allows teachers to make students' knowledge public and assess it and to build upon their understandings for direct instruction. Although not disagreeing with this assertion and the importance of direct instruction in a literature class, the exclusive

use of IRE prohibits students from experiencing advanced-level functions and fails to grant them the discursive responsibility for co-constructing interpretations through verbal elaborations of their opinions.

11. This finding reinforces the importance of research on the literary discussion. Anecdotal recommendations have been made that teacher models serve an important function in providing students with the facility to discuss literary texts (See Fein, 1999). The discourse data of this study do not provide evidence for the effectiveness of this practice.

12. It is no secret that many have heard a similar remark when literature courses have been discussed as part of a larger language learning enterprise. When asked to explain how literature study might contribute to the goal of developing spoken proficiency, a common response is that reading literature expands lexical knowledge.

13. As one reviewer rightly points out, applied linguists should also turn to literary theory for insights. Indeed, many applied linguists invoke research in semiotics and textual analysis to understand additional language learning across a variety of contexts (see Lantolf, 2000).

14. Interestingly, in the field of English Language Arts, much research attention has been given to language use and the development of conceptual understanding during literary discussions. See, for example, Applebee, et al. (2003).

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