

**CONCEPTUALIZING GESTURAL REPRESENTATIONS
IN ESL CLASSROOMS: ALTERNATIVE THEORETICAL APPROACHES**

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Abstract

This study adopts a transdisciplinary approach (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016) to gesture research to understand how meanings of teachers' and students' gestures are influenced by broader sociocultural influences and power relations and how the meanings produced in the classroom interact with second language (L2) pedagogies. I incorporate multiple theoretical concepts such as the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), multimodality in communication and learning (Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010), embodied actions as shaped by discursive knowledge (Foucault, 1979; Kubota, 1999; Luke, 1992; Ramanathan, 2010; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000) and performativity (Butler, 1999; Miller, 2012; Pennycook, 2004) as complementary to each other. Each theoretical perspective provides specific meanings to the gestural practices. The teachers and students, for example, used their gestures to scaffold each others' learning processes (McCafferty, 2004; Smotrova, 2017) while the gestural signs were made and negotiated in the teaching-learning processes (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). Furthermore, students' gestures were subject to disciplinary regulation (Foucault, 1979) that aimed at normalizing students' specific academic behavior (Toohey, 2000) while the teachers' gestures both conformed to and challenged normative practices as well as created collaborative power relations (Cummins, 2004). Finally, following the concept of performativity, the ESL (English as a Second Language) pedagogies displayed in each classroom were viewed as emergent products [or outcomes] of the teachers' and students' repeated transmodal acts of identity (Butler, 1999; Pennycook, 2004). Drawing on the above findings, in the final chapter of this dissertation, I discuss how gesture research may inform classroom pedagogy, research and teacher education in English Language Teaching.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Gesture Studies – An Emerging Field of Research	4
1.2. Limitations in Gesture Research in SLA	7
1.3. Conceptual Framework of this Study	13
1.4. Purpose of this Study	15
1.5. Research Questions	15
1.6. Methodological Procedures	16
1.7. My Position as a Researcher	17
1.8. Important Definition of Terminology	21
1.8.1. What is gesture?	21
1.8.2. Structure and classification of gesture	23
1.9. Organization of this Dissertation	25

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework	26
2.1. Gestures Mediate Language Learning.....	27
2.1.1. How students use gestures for mediation	29
2.1.2. How teachers' gestures facilitate language learning	32
2.2. Gestures as Modal Resources.....	34
2.2.1. Social semiotic multimodality.....	35
2.2.2. Meaning/Sign making through gestures.....	39
2.2.3. Learning as an active process of sign-making/-transforming.....	40
2.2.4. Gestures as semiotic resources in English classrooms	43
2.2.5. Transliteration and cross- <i>cultural</i> differences in sign-making.....	46
2.3. Discourse and the Body.....	52
2.3.1. Discourse	52
2.3.2. Discursive meanings of the body.....	53
2.3.3. Regulation of students' bodies	57
2.4. Performing Subjectivities through the Body	60
2.4. 1. Relevance of performativity to this study.....	62
2.4.2. Doing language, learning and subjectivities.....	63
2.4.3. The subject and embodied/transmodal performance	66
2.4.4. Embodied resistance in the classroom.....	68

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology	71
3.1. Multimodal Research	71
3.2. Research Ethics and the Process of Consent.....	75
3.3. Sites of Research	77
3.4. The Participants.....	81
3.4.1. Elaine and her students.....	84
3.4.2. Riley and Her Students	84
3.4.3. Tracy and her students.....	85
3.4.4. Rhonda and her students.....	86
3.4.5. Robin and his students.....	86
3.5. Risks and Benefits.....	87
3.6. Methods and Procedure.....	89
3.6.1. Observation/ videography.....	89
3.6.2. Stimulated recall interviews	92
3.6.3. One focus-group (FG) with teachers	93
3.7. Data Analysis and Transcription Conventions.....	94
3.7.1. Rough transcription	94
3.7.2. Re-transcription of video texts	96
3.7.3. Re-transcription and analysis of interview data	96
3.7.4. Data selection, analysis, and reporting	97

3.8. Issues of Reliability and Validity	99
Chapter 4: Findings.....	101
4.1. Gestures as Mediational Means.....	101
4.1.1. Scaffolding of pronunciation aspects with catchments	107
4.1.2. Creation of ZPD through the gestural signs	109
4.2. Gestures-as-Signs in ESL Classrooms	116
4.2.1 Gestures as negotiated signs: Individual and social interest.....	116
4.2.2 Gestural signs as elicitation techniques in a grammar class	121
4.2.3 Gestural affordances in the ESL classrooms	127
4.2.4 Verbal and gestural signs: Transliteration of meanings across modes in ESL classrooms	130
4.3. A Foucauldian Analysis of Gestures	142
4.3.1 Gestures as discursive practices	142
4.3.2. Regulation of students' gestures.....	148
4.3.3. Use of teachers' gestures as a form of disciplinary mechanism.....	161
4.3.4. Limitations of the common-sense knowledge about gestures	167
4.4. Gestures and Performativity.....	171
4.4.1. Understanding ESL pedagogy through a performative approach	171
4.4.1.1. <i>(Re)constituting identity through repeated pedagogical acts at NCO.....</i>	172

4.4.1.2. Riley's performative acts of identity and ESL pedagogy at ILS	177
4.4.2. Moments of resignification, <i>unstable selves</i> and <i>alternative embodied pedagogy</i> ...	181
4.4.2.1. Tracy's alter-native embodiments of ESL pedagogy	182
4.4.2.2. Reproducing and resignifying discourses through gestures.....	188
4.4.4. Resignification of student-subjectivities and negotiation of discourses.....	196
4.5. Summary	201
5. Discussion	203
5.1. Introduction	203
5.2. On the Participants' Understanding of Gestures	203
5.2.1. Meanings of gestures are discursive	203
5.2.2. Meanings and functions of gestures are negotiated in the classroom.....	204
5.2.3. Limited perceptions about the functions of gestures	206
5. 3. On Multiple Representations of Gestures	206
5.3.1. Gestures as mediational tools	207
5.3.2. Gestures as modes/meaning-making resources	208
5.3.3. Gestures emit signs of <i>discipline</i> in the classroom.....	210
5.3.4. Gestures comprise performative acts of identity that (re)produce classroom pedagogy	211
5.3.5. Gestures represent both conformity and resistance to discourse	211

5.3.6. Gestures and power relations.....	212
5.3.7. Gestures and other identity categories in ESL classrooms.....	213
5.4. On the Implementation of Gesture Research in Classroom Pedagogy and Teacher Education.....	214
5.4.1. Gesture as pedagogical strategy	214
5.4.2. Explicit Instruction of gestures in TESL Programs.....	216
5.4.3. Uniting theory and practice- a praxis approach to research	217
5.5. Drawbacks and Direction for Future Research	218
5.6. Conclusion.....	220
References.....	221
Appendices.....	240
Appendix A: Major Interview Questions for Students	240
Appendix B: Major Interview Questions for Teachers	242
Appendix C: Sample Topics/Question for Discussion in the Teacher FG.....	244
Appendix D: Transcription Conventions (Adapted from Talmy, 2011).....	246

List of Tables

Table 3.1 [Profile of the Key Participants] 82

List of Figures

Figure 1. Stages of Research Design.	74
Figure 2. Tracy and Cheng’s one-on-one session.	106
Figure 3. Riley’s gestures during her instructions.	124
Figure 4. Vanessa’s “inattentive” gestures during an activity.	152

Chapter 1: Introduction

Robin: A good class is where students are talking to each other, so you want to have a body language that says I am not available to be in this conversation.

Rhonda: Yeah, that's true because a lot of students don't engage with each other for whatever reason but...

Robin: As soon as a teacher steps in, they turn away from each other.

Rhonda: I don't think that lots of students have the high social skills as maybe they should, so maybe it gives them that opportunity or forces them to engage with each other out of necessity

(Teacher Focus Group Interview, 2015-03-14)

When students use hand gestures, it focuses everybody on them even if they are sitting. So, I think I use a lot of hand gestures and so, if I, if students are talking, I notice that people like Indian students tend to be more expressive with their hands than Chinese students. Chinese students lose their audience quicker probably because of the quality of the pronunciation, could be because of what they are saying, but I think when you use your hands people look at you. People are drawn to movement. In my foundations class most [of them are] Chinese students, three Indian students, and generally speaking, the Indian students speak clearer. You know they've an accent, but they are more comprehensible than lot of the Chinese students. Chinese rarely use hand gestures. Their hands rarely come above the desk whereas the Indians are always, if I remember how they talk, they are always moving.

(Rhonda, Teacher Focus Group Interview, 2015-03-14)

Researchers from a range of fields have offered multiple interpretations and theorizations of gesture over the past decades. Its entrance into applied linguistics, however, is very recent and still under-researched. The importance of gestures has been recognized by linguists in various ways: one line of research conceptualizes gestures as integral to a speaker's total expressions in which speech and gestures are inseparable, while others believe that gestures facilitate speech in interaction (Kendon, 2004). Gesture research in (applied)linguistics demonstrates that gestures have both cognitive and communicative functions in language learning contexts (Gullberg & McCafferty, 2008; Kendon, 2004; Stam & McCafferty, 2008). A growing body of studies on gestures, and non-verbal communication in general, focuses on the powerful impact of gestures and other embodied expressions on classroom environments (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Kress et al., 2005; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000; Quinlisk, 2008). The above quotes in the beginning of this chapter have been extracted from the teacher participants' interview excerpts in this study. The excerpts suggest how teachers often interpret their own and students' body language based on conventional ideas about teaching/learning and cultural biases that may have direct influences on classroom management. In the first excerpt, for example, the teacher participants were referring to a teacher's ideal body language that should encourage her students to be engaged in interaction. The participants' beliefs about language learning and instruction reflect the popular view of learner-centred approaches to second language learning (L2) which often emphasize fluency over accuracy and language comprehension and production over teaching of linguistic rules (Spada, 2007). Hence, they believe that L2 teachers' body language should accommodate learning and instruction in a specific way in the classroom. In the second excerpt, on the other hand, a teacher participant compared gestures of students from two different national cultures. She emphasized how students' gestures may have direct influences on the

comprehensibility of their language production. Perceptions as such are also evident in research on gestures that suggest how East Asian students with limited gestures are often perceived as less communicatively competent despite having better verbal performance than other students (Stam & McCafferty, 2008).

Apart from the above issues, gestures also have potential to express emotions, impressions and power relationships beyond semantic and pragmatic functions. Non-verbal studies in social psychology point to how gestures and postures often reflect the ways in which people relate to each other in terms of power relations that demonstrate dominance and subordination (Carney, Cuddy, & Yap, 2010). Gesture, whether intentional or not, always sends messages that are interpreted by the audience, which is why meanings of gestures are often “co-constructed through intention and interpretation of senders and receivers” (Quinlisk, 2008, p. 25). Hence, how the complex meanings of gestures are interpreted and negotiated by teachers and students in the classroom are underreported in applied linguistics research. This limitation in gesture studies provides a rationale for this research study, in which I aim to explore multiple meanings of gestures in five ESL classrooms in Central Canada. I specifically focus on teachers’ and students’ gestures and their effects on the classroom pedagogy. In this chapter, I will briefly discuss the ongoing developments in gesture research, the limitations in current gesture research, and the purpose of this study. I will also provide definitions of important terminology used in this study. For documentation, the 6th edition of APA (American Psychological Association) has been followed, and *italics* have been used to emphasize important terms and concepts throughout the dissertation.

1.1. Gesture Studies – An Emerging Field of Research

Gesture is generally considered as a part of nonverbal communication even though it has become an independent area of research since the mid-twentieth century. Stam and McCafferty (2008) provide a brief history of gesture research in the introduction to their edited book *Gesture: Second Language Acquisition and Classroom Research*. As suggested by the authors, gesture research started taking a systematic approach in the mid-twentieth century following the work of Efron and Birdwhistell. Around that time, gestures were investigated mostly within research on cross-cultural differences in body movements. Later, in the 1970s, the theoretical framework that modern gesture research is based on started emerging based on Adam Kendon and David McNeill's work on gesture-speech relationships. McNeill's (1992) research is noteworthy because he proposed a specific theoretical perspective in which gesture and speech are integral parts of the same thought processes "that have been connected within" (p. 33). His hypothesis emerged from his observation of gesture as a translator of his speech.

Early studies on gestures focused on acquisition of specific types of gestures by L2 learners possibly because L2 learners' use of gestures during L2 production often influences native speakers' perceptions of their overall L2 proficiency. Research suggests that L2 learners who lack gestures and facial expressions may be assessed as less communicatively competent in L2 contexts (Neu, 1990). Some early studies, as discussed in Stam and McCafferty (2008), thus, focused on how L2 learners showed better comprehension and reproduction of L1 gestures when they were exposed to the L2 in naturalistic contexts. Following this, more recent studies show that L2 learners often imitate and reproduce their teachers' gestures (Haught & McCafferty, 2008; McCafferty, 2004; Smotrova, 2017), so the role of gestures in the L2 context gets more attention. Some researchers also propose that learners should be taught L2 gestures as there is

evidence that this may help them improve learning such as developing vocabulary in L2 (Stam & McCafferty, 2008).

Current studies on gestures focus on the multiple roles and functions gestures play in the classroom, especially within SLA contexts. The role of gestures in understanding power relationships has been investigated in non-verbal communication research. Quinlisk (2008), for instance, discusses how teachers' non-verbal behaviour emits signs of positive and coercive power, which may make students empowered or reluctant to participate in classroom activities. According to other studies, gestures have multiple functions in interaction, including the use of gestures to add information, to retrieve lexical items, to facilitate turn-taking in conversation, and to organize special information and thoughts in the process of communication (Stam & McCafferty, 2008).

Cognitive functions of gestures have been investigated in SLA research that investigates learners' cross-linguistic differences in communication; for example, gestures used by learners in their first language (L1) can be transferred to their second language (L2) (Yoshioka & Kellerman, 2006), but they start using more native-like gestures when they become advanced learners (Stam & McCafferty, 2008). Gullberg and McCafferty (2008) review contemporary studies on gestures, among which some focus on the functions of gestures in the psychological aspects of development. Some of these studies view speech as primary to gestures emphasizing how gestures are used to retrieve lexical items while speaking and to represent imagistic thought to verbalize utterances. To exemplify, speakers will gesture more when they experience difficulty in verbally expressing something. This observation is related to two hypotheses. First, speakers' gestures facilitate their access to the mental lexicon; the hypothesis is known as the lexical retrieval hypothesis. The other hypothesis, termed as the information packaging

hypothesis, explains how speakers' gestures help them *package* spatial information into verbalizable units. The hypotheses were tested and confirmed by Alibali, Kita, and Young (2000) in their research on some 5-year-old children.

Communicative functions of gestures have also been of interest to many SLA researchers. Gullberg (1998) and McCafferty (2004), for example, suggest that second language learners use gestures as communication strategies to supplement a lack of verbal expressions in their L2. Others point to how gestures may benefit interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the students (Peltier & McCafferty, 2010). Peltier and McCafferty (2010) also points to how SLA teachers may imitate students' gestures to provide positive feedback to students; on the other hand, L2 learners are often observed to imitate the teacher's gestures while speaking in their L2 (McCafferty, 2004). Sime (2006, 2008) identifies three specific functions of a teacher's gestures from students' perspectives. The student participants in the study identified cognitive, emotional and organizational functions of their teacher's gestures. The cognitive function involved gestures that helped learning by stimulating students' attention and memorization. The emotional function included use of gestures for encouraging and comforting students, while the organisational function referred to classroom management in the study. Furthermore, different categories of gestures may serve different communicative functions. Iconics or pointing gestures, for example, co-occur with speech to point to concrete objects or actions. The classification of gestures is discussed later in this chapter. Gestures also have an important function in demonstrating the listener's interest and active participation in any interaction (de Fornel, 1992). Acknowledging these influences of gestures on SLA, researchers such as Sime (2006) recommended that L2 teachers should be trained at using gestures in the classroom.

Recent developments in second language education research that adopts interdisciplinary theories such as *sociocultural theory* (Vygotsky, 1978) and multimodality research (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2009; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) have brought new insights into gesture studies [see chapter 2]. Researchers such as Gullberg (2010) and Kusanagi (2015) have pointed out, gestures have been overlooked/underreported in the mainstream SLA research despite the numerous developments in SLA research in recent years [see Swain & Deters, 2007]. The limitations in gesture studies provide a backdrop to this study in which I explore the meanings of teachers and students' gestures from multiple theoretical perspectives. My aim is to show how an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016) approach to gesture studies may provide valuable insights into gestures as complex meaning-making resources in the classroom. Before getting into the details of my study purpose, I find a discussion of the major issues that limit gesture research in SLA is necessary.

1.2. Limitations in Gesture Research in SLA

Two major issues that delayed the development of gesture studies in linguistics until the 1970s were structural linguistics and Chomsky's notion of universal grammar (Kendon, 2004). Kendon (2004) discusses how in an effort to create linguistics as an independent field of study, scholars like Bloomfield discarded its relationships to other fields such as psychology. Linguistics studies, as they argued, should focus only on "purely segmental aspects of speech"; gestures were left out from linguistic studies because they were "only partly governed by conventions" (Kendon, 2004, p. 67). Even though many linguists followed Bloomfield's path, some scholars such as Trager and Birdwhistell started acknowledging the possibilities of studying non-verbal features of communication using the structural linguistic methods. Yet,

Chomsky's notion of universal grammar appeared as another backlash against gesture research. Because of his overemphasis on the mental processes in language acquisition, the visible aspects of communication such as gestures lacked attention.

While discussing the above issues, Kendon points to the problems of separating non-verbal from verbal interaction in linguistics research that focused mostly on spoken utterances for a long time. Because of such dichotomies, gesture did not get the center of attention even in non-verbal communication studies as they focused on "those aspects of behaviour that contributed to the maintenance or change of interactions or relationships, or which were thought to reveal attitudes and characteristics of persons that are not revealed through a study of what is spoken" (Kendon, 2004, p. 72). To date, gesture is still referred to as a part of non-verbal communication, which makes it somewhat subordinated to speech. As Norris (2004) puts it:

Modes like gesture, gaze, or posture have generally been termed nonverbal modes of communication. However, I will steer away from this expression, as nonverbal conveys that these are appendages to the verbal mode. If the so-called nonverbal modes were actually appendages to language, these modes would always have to be subordinate to language. However, this is not the case. Modes like gesture, gaze, or posture can play a superordinate or an equal role to the mode of language in interaction, and therefore, these modes are not merely embellishments to language. (p. X)

It is noteworthy that research on sign language hugely influenced the development in gesture research. Ironically, as Kendon (2004) discusses, it was Chomsky's notion of a *language acquisition device* (LAD) that brought gesture research back to linguists' attention. Chomsky described that children have the mental capacity to naturally learn a language when they are exposed to it. Using the LAD, which is based on Chomsky's universal grammar, children

naturally learn or discover the sequences of specific grammatical structures of a language. To test this hypothesis, linguists started recording the language acquisition processes of young children, which led them to discover the earliest communication processes between children and their mothers through gestures. “The emergence of the ability to engage in gesture is seen as an integral part of the process by which the capacity to use language comes about” (Kendon, 2004, p. 76). Much later, it was recognised in the SLA setting that L2 learners also need to learn gestures in their L2 to be successful language learners as they need to develop a *paralinguistic competence* (Pennycook, 1985) in the target language.

Although gestures received significant attention in the SLA context following the recognition of paralinguistic competence as an important aspect of language learning, the early perspectives to the teaching of gestures had their own limitations. I discuss two articles that appeared in TESOL journals. Pennycook’s (1985) article on paralanguage and communication in *TESOL Quarterly* specifically discusses how grammatical and sociolinguistic competence in English include understanding of the native-speaker-model of non-verbal language code, and *appropriate* kinesics and proxemics. The author draws on examples of cross-cultural differences in paralanguage and suggests that it is important to develop L2 learners’ paralinguistic competence such as the gaze, alert posture, and head nods while also suggesting that this should be done with caution by avoiding the acquisition/learning dichotomy. Pennycook, thereby, calls for implicit and explicit teaching of gestures in ESL classrooms by presenting multiple models through videos, guest speakers and other modes of communication. The notion of *body language accent* was embraced by Al-Shabbi (1993) in an article on gestures and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) a few years after Pennycook’s publication. Al-Shabbi reclaimed the role of *authentic* materials in improving L2 learners’ communicative competence and proposed the

authentic and *appropriate* use of gestures in the classroom to develop ESL learners' communicative competence in *native-like* body language. The article suggests a renewed interest in teaching body language not only to avoid cultural misunderstanding in the classroom but also to improve *accented* body language following a native-speaker model of paralinguistic competence. Irrespective of the significant development these studies have brought into the investigation of gestures in L2 contexts, they seem to follow the same linguistics concepts that view languages as unitary systems with static rules and conventions that are acquired by learners following a homogenous native-speaker model. Pennycook (2004), in fact, criticizes this view of language in his later work by calling it a *competence-heavy domain* of (applied)linguistics. Pennycook suggests that the competence-based approach to language learning separates languages from their social context and creates normative practices. Pennycook writes:

the moment has arrived to argue that the language concept too has served its time. Such a proposal would not mean that all conceptions of linguistic difference should be discarded, but rather that the over-determined sense of linguistic fixity, with its long ties to colonialism and linguistics needs to be profoundly questioned...Whatever we may use to transcend the concept of language should at least no longer be closely tied to notions of organic unity, traditional continuity, and the enduring grounds of culture and locale. What we need is a set of relations that preserves the concept's differential and relativist functions and that avoids the positing of cosmopolitan essences and human common denominators.

(p. 2)

Pennycook, in the same publication, also acknowledges the problem with viewing paralinguistics as an additional branch of linguistics. He suggests that such perspective will only promote the "segregationist nature of linguistics" (Pennycook, 2004, p. 16). Instead, he invites

(applied)linguists to understand “the body as interlinked with other social and semiotic practices” (p. 16). Even though more recent studies adopt an integrated approach to investigate gestures as part of multimodal communication [for example, Busà, 2015; Hudson, 2012], the native-speaker model of gesture teaching seems to be still dominant in ESL teaching and research contexts. Busà (2015) acknowledges the problems with teaching a single model of gestures in the classroom as there are more than one variety of English spoken within any context.

Yet, much remains unexplored about gestural representation in the classroom, especially its realization in pedagogy and teaching methods. Although, there is an increasing interest in the pedagogical significance of gesture, as Smotrova (2018) suggests, “there is still a lack of awareness of gesture as a potent pedagogical strategy in language teacher education” (Smotrova, 2018, p. 483). There are initiatives to include gestures in language pedagogies such as the Accelerative Integrated Method (AIM) introduced to the core French curriculum in teaching French as a second language in Canada. The aim has been to increase secondary school students’ functional knowledge in French. However, as evident in some studies (Mady, Arnott, & Lapkin, 2009), AIM seems to place limited emphasis on gesture other than using this as a method of vocabulary teaching in spite of the recognized benefits of using gesture in L2 classrooms. The method employs gesture to increase learners’ oral proficiency in the target language by introducing high frequency vocabulary from the very first class. Each vocabulary item has a matching gesture that is primarily taught in isolation and is gradually incorporated with drama and dance; however, the further the learner progresses the less gesture is employed. Mady et al.’s (2009) mixed-method study conducted through interviews, a questionnaire, and a formal test assessed French language proficiency and experiences of Grade 8 AIM students compared to non-AIM students. Though the findings did not suggest a significant difference in the proficiency

level across the groups, the qualitative data suggests that AIM students felt more confident in listening and speaking skills. The study, however, does not tell us much about gesture, which, as the authors also acknowledge, is a neglected area of research in AIM.

The limitations in understanding multiple meaning-making possibilities of gestures in the classroom and its diverse influences on the pedagogical activities [see chapter 2] is partly related to the lack of theoretical and methodological perspectives to gesture research. The most frequently employed theoretical frameworks in present gesture research derives from sociocultural and cognitive approaches. These perspectives provide valuable insights into gesture-speech relationships while highlighting the functions of gestures in language comprehension and production. Furthermore, conversational analysis and multimodal interactional analysis are also important research areas, but they are still emerging perspectives that are used to theorize gestures. On the other hand, many potential areas of research such as how the body gets meaning within a socio/historical context (Butler, 1999; Foucault, 1979) in humanities and social sciences have not yet been adopted [or have been under-researched] to specifically understand gestural representations in the classroom. Foucault's (1979) historical analysis of how disciplinary institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons came into being and facilitated the birth of *an art of the body* is worth mentioning here. His discussion includes the institutional regulatory practices that produce individuals by training/subjugating the body into docility by supervision within a bounded physical space. A school, for example, prescribes how to sit and behave through routine practices through which students will be constructed as subjects who conform to a specific academic standard. Using Foucault's perspectives, a few studies in education such as Saavedra and Marx (2016) and Toohey (2000) explore how ESL students' bodies and behaviours are regulated to socialize them into the school curricula. Hence,

studies as such are very limited in number or they are under-reported. Because our bodies are susceptible to social norms, gestures are also subjected to social standards of behaviour. “There is no shortage of rules dictating what we should or should not wear, inhale and ingest; the size, shape, and overall appearance of our bodies; and even our gestures, gait, and posture” (Bartky, 1988, as cited in Bobel & Kwan, 2011, p. 1). Therefore, existing research on the body as such could bring new insights into the aesthetic meanings of gestures such as how gestures might be subjected to socio-historical norms in the classroom.

1.3. Conceptual Framework of this Study

This study complements and extends the growing interests in interdisciplinary studies within applied linguistics [see Swain & Deters, 2007]. Firth and Wagner (1997) called for initiatives in linguistics, more specifically, SLA research that views the learner more holistically as active agents within the language learning context because, as Ehrman and Dornyei (1998) suggest, language learning is directly influenced by the learners’ own perspectives to and construction of the interaction as a whole. Acknowledging the importance of the interdisciplinary expansion in SLA research, the Douglas Fir Group (2016) has proposed a framework for understanding and advancing transdisciplinarity in SLA: “a framework as problem-oriented, rising above disciplines and particular strands within them with their oftentimes strong theoretical allegiances. It treats disciplinary perspectives as valid and distinct but in dialogue with one another in order to address real-world issues” (p. 20). Such a “dialogue across paradigms” (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005, p. 24) has been identified as crucial to look at the learners more holistically. Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson (2005) also call for an action “to juxtapose alternative theoretical approaches to see how different underlying assumptions alter our perception both of what is interesting and of what the research reveals to

us” (p. 24). Researchers like Pennycook (2004), in fact, projected the view that language studies across diverse contexts would benefit from transdisciplinary knowledge including theories from “cultural studies, philosophy, literary theory, postcolonial studies, sociology, history, gender studies, and more” (p. 2). A growing body of applied linguistics research, as discussed in Swain and Deters (2007), shows how transdisciplinary knowledge, encompassing poststructural theories, situated learning and sociocultural theory, for example, has strengthened SLA studies by providing valuable perspectives to applied linguistics research. Therefore, restricting gesture research within specific theoretical boundaries of applied linguistics also will limit the understanding of the diverse meanings of gestures in the classroom.

Although a growing trend to use alternative approaches is observed in studies on L2 learning in general (Duff, 1995; Miller, 2012; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000; Pennycook, 2004; Swain & Deters, 2007; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005), research on gesture has not received adequate attention within these trends. To that end, in this study, I incorporate multi-theoretical approaches such as the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), multimodality in communication and learning (Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010), embodied actions as shaped by discursive knowledge (Foucault, 1979; Kubota, 1999; Luke, 1992; Ramanathan, 2010; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000) and the concept of performativity (Butler, 1999; Miller, 2012; Pennycook, 2004) to understand multiple meanings of gestures in ESL classrooms; the theoretical framework is discussed in greater detail in chapter 2. In the following sections of this chapter, I present the purpose of this study while laying out an overview of how gesture is defined and understood in linguistics/educational studies. I will incorporate only relevant descriptions that will help readers understand the concepts used in this study.

1.4. Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to explore meanings of teachers' and students' gestures and their relationships to classroom pedagogy, learning and instruction in adult ESL classrooms. Data for the study were collected from five ESL classrooms at two educational institutions. The purpose of the study is to investigate the teachers and their students' gestures in the classrooms from different theoretical perspectives. The theories are considered to be complementary to each other in terms of understanding the socially constructed meanings of gestures because meanings of the body and embodied actions are fluid and multiple across historical time and social space (Turner, 2012). The objective of this study, thus, is to investigate the meanings of gestures within specific contexts and to co-construct knowledge with the teacher participants (Talmy, 2010) about gestural representations, learning and instruction in ESL contexts.

1.5. Research Questions

The specific research questions this study seeks to answer are:

- 1) How do the participants understand and negotiate the meanings of their gestures?

This question focuses on the participants' perceptions of, and responses to, gestures. To exemplify, I will explore how the participants' prior understanding of gestures is shaped by broader sociocultural influences and power relations. I will identify how they negotiate the prior beliefs over the course of this study.

- 2) What meanings do the participants' gestures produce in the classroom in relation to L2 classroom pedagogies?

This question focuses on the interaction between the participants' gestures and L2 pedagogies. Specifically, I explore how the meanings of the gestures produced in the classroom relate to the L2 curricula and pedagogy.

3) How might this study on gesture contribute to classroom pedagogy, research and teacher education in English Language Teaching (ELT)?

This question focuses on the contributions of this study to the field of ESL. I will explore how specific findings can be used to understand gestures within ESL classrooms.

1.6. Methodological Procedures

Multiple methodological approaches have been used to transcribe, analyze and present data in this study. The research design and methodology have been discussed in detail in chapter 3. In this section, I only present a summary of the methodological procedure.

The study was conducted in two English language teaching contexts: a community college and an ESL school in central Canada. Five teacher participants took part in the study. One to two classes taught by each participant were observed, and all the students in those classes consented to be video recorded during classroom observation. However, only eleven students participated in the interviews. Classroom observation and interviews were the main data collection methods. Data collection tools included video and audio recordings and field notes.

A multimodal approach to research (Jewitt, 2009, 2014) was followed in this study. To transcribe and present video data, I specifically followed Norris' (2004) multimodal transcription process. For interview data, I followed Talmy's (2011) transcription process. Following Talmy, interviews were addressed as *social practice* rather than a mere data collection method or source of data (Talmy, 2010; 2011). The traditional approach to interviews as data collection tools conceptualizes interviews as content or topics for investigation. On the other hand, the interview as a social practice views interviews as active processes of knowledge production while focusing on both the content of the interview and the procedures, in which interviewees actively take part in producing and transforming knowledge. In addition, as I discuss in the following section, a

reflexive account of how the researcher's presence and orientation contribute to the process and outcome of the research is crucial in this approach. During analysis, I followed a process-oriented approach in which I looked at how meanings of gestures unfolded through the data collection and analysis process. The major theoretical approaches followed in the analysis process was briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter. Each theoretical concept was used to interpret data to understand how each theoretical perspective may influence meanings of gestures in the classroom. Each of the approaches and methods to data collection, analysis and presentation has been discussed in greater detail in chapter 3. I also acknowledge that multiple interpretations of the data are possible, and readers may have their own interpretations of data.

1.7. My Position as a Researcher

In this section, I discuss how my varying experiences with the idea of the human body, gestures and movements have shaped my interests in gestures as complex meaning-making resources in the classroom and how these experiences might have shaped my role as a researcher in this study.

My understanding of the ways body images and physical movements are perceived, interpreted, and managed by people based on discourses (Foucault, 1979) across different contexts had a significant influence on the formulation of research questions and theoretical approaches adopted in this study. My early perception of the body was very specific and uniform in my childhood. I was raised in a conservative Muslim family, in which a female body had to maintain modesty through material and symbolic acts such as wearing a hijab and behaving politely. I went to a girls' high school in which I experienced different kinds of restrictions on body movements, gestures and postures in and outside the classroom. Students were not allowed outside the classroom except during morning assembly, physical exercise classes and

approximately a 30-minute recess. Each teacher also had their own policies for gestures and movements in the classroom. I recall of being scolded by a teacher in grade 10 because of not being able to show her respect by standing up properly while she was entering the classroom. After I had explained that I had been feeling nauseous, she let me sit down. Although actions as such to manage body images, postures, and movements were considered normal and socially acceptable, my perspectives to the meanings of the body started shifting around the time of my high school graduation. My mother started showing early signs of dementia, which affected my family's relationships with each other, their individual beliefs and practices, and their overall perspectives to life. Nevertheless, my mother's unusual behavior such as repeating daily activities or smiling at strangers while frowning at a distant relative was more concerning to us than the idea of her worsening memory. Her mental health was called into question as dementia was not a familiar concept, and after going through two years of psychiatric treatment, which worsened her memory and ability to do daily activities, she was diagnosed with the Alzheimer's disease in 2001. My family was, however, more comfortable with this new diagnosis because my mother was not a *mental* patient anymore. Still, we had a hard time to convince people who were afraid of her "abnormal gestures" and movements that she was harmless. While going through these life-changing experiences, I became more aware of the idea that the body receives a multitude of possible interpretations, the "ways of seeing/ interpreting/judging – that medical and societal discourses have perpetrated, that have colonized the ailing conditions" (p. 22).

My experiences as both a teacher and a student in two distinct cultures- Bangladesh and Canada, have informed my awareness of the essentialist understanding of teachers' and students' gestures, and this epistemic belief had a notable influence on my role as an interviewer in this study. During my undergraduate studies in Bangladesh, I discovered my own preferences to

specific teacher gestures and movements that were precisely criticized by other students. For example, while I appreciated an instructor's casual postures such as sitting on the desk during lectures because it made me comfortable, a student used that specific teacher-behaviour as an example of *unprofessionalism* while complaining against him. I was drawn to specific teacher movements that would help me feel important, which is why I liked teachers who would come close during a group discussion and appreciate my ideas. I adopted similar movements in the classroom when I became an ESL teacher in Bangladesh, but I realized not all the students felt comfortable having me beside them during a group discussion. Many students would stop participating and expect answers from me when I went close to them. Therefore, my "group monitoring" had to be implemented carefully in the classroom. Another personal experience with my petite body image also affected how I tried to relate to my students through expressive body movements in early years of my teaching career. I often heard from others that I did not *look* like a teacher, but a high school student because of my young look. At many occasions, I often had to show my ID to prove my age. I was specifically told by the Director of my workplace to wear *professional* attire such as a saree so that I looked a little *older*. Hence, I had to behave *mature* and *professional* in the classroom to avoid conflicts with students. However, over time, I realized that my young appearance was not necessarily an issue to students; rather, many students would interpret my young-looking appearance and natural amicable behaviour as welcoming. Experiences as such developed my insights into the ways people stereotype about body images and movements within specific contexts.

My experiences in Canadian classrooms enhanced my understanding of individual students' and teachers' choices of wearing specific body images and projecting their gestures and movements. Each instructor I met in Canada during my graduate-level studies had their

individual styles of delivering a class along with gestures and movements: some would never sit down in the classroom, but some would never leave their desks. Nevertheless, each of them had their own ways of engaging learners in classroom activities, which gave me a sense of freedom in my graduate classes. It was during my master's program in the West Coast of Canada when I realized that the limitations in classroom layout and space could be overcome by teachers' expressive facial gestures and/or movements that not only improved students' attention and engagement, but also enhanced teacher-student relationships during a lecture. Around the same time, I came across reading and video materials such as the study conducted by Tracy and Matsumoto (2008) on posture and power relations. I was fascinated by the idea that gestures could be intentionally used as teaching/learning strategies to improve student participation in the classroom. Experiences as such, I believe, had strong influences on the ways I posed questions to the participants in this study and focused on specific contents of their responses during the interview process. Hence, I focused on, what Talmy (2011) calls, the "fundamental sociality of the interview" in which researchers account for the "*process* involved in the co-construction of meaning" during interviews (p. 28). I will elaborate more on this issue in the methodology chapter.

During data analysis, I was aware of the issue that my epistemic beliefs might have significant influences on the findings. Hence, from the sociality of the interview perspective, I acknowledged that my prior knowledge helped me focus on specific sets of data and extract specific meanings from the data-sets. Interpretation of data, therefore, was contextualized according to its relevance by addressing, for example, how the types of questions asked in the interviews and the processes involved in the analysis influenced the participants' responses and interpretation of the responses respectively. On the other hand, I might have overlooked

meanings of data that would be more relevant to other researchers. My aim in this study was to demonstrate the possibilities of interpreting gestures in multiple ways, which is why data presented in this study are open to new interpretations.

1.8. Important Definition of Terminology

In this section, I present definitions of gestures and some other important concepts used in this dissertation.

1.8.1. What is gesture? Kendon (2004) describes gestures as *visible actions* that are deliberately produced for the purpose of communication. Though gaze and other body movements are included in his definition of gesture, it apparently excludes unintentional body activities such as crying, smiling out of emotion, or similar feelings “that are deemed inadvertent or are regarded as something a person cannot ‘help’” (p. 8). Kendon, however, acknowledges that intentionality may be contextual because “what will be counted as intentionally expressive and treated as such may vary from one situation to another” (p. 16). McNeill (2015), on the other hand, defines gesture as “*the intrinsic imagery of language*” (p. 4). “They are not just the arms waving in the air, but *symbols that exhibit meanings* in their own right. They have a meaning that is freely designated by the speaker” (McNeill, 1992, p. 105, original emphasis). McNeill (2015) is one of the proponents of the idea that gesture orchestrates speech, and they are inseparable. By gesture, in his work, he usually refers to the spontaneous gestures that cooccur with speech. McNeill often calls these *gesticulations* – one of the two basic types of gestures discussed in Stam and McCafferty (2008). The authors describe gesticulations as “holistic, nonlinear, instantaneous, noncombinatoric, and imagistic” (p. 7). Kendon once came up with specific distinctions between different types of gestures, and McNeill (1992) termed the categorization as *Kendon’s Continuum*. The continuum places gesticulations on the far-left hand corner because

they cooccur with speech, and sign languages that occur without speech are placed on the right-hand corner. When we move along the continuum from left to right, accompaniment of speech with gestures decreases, and the essential properties of a language within the gestures increase.

Gesticulation→Language-like Gestures→Pantomimes→Emblems→ Sign Languages

(McNeill, 1992, p. 37)

Regarding their unique features, sign languages are distinct from other types of gestures presented in the above continuum. Sign languages, like any other spoken/oral language such as English, are fully developed languages in the sense that they have their “unique set of rules for making sign language constructions just as there is for making standard English constructions, non-standard English constructions, or the constructions of any language” (Stokoe, 2001, p. 376). *Emblems*, the gesture group presented before sign languages in the continuum, are different from sign languages in this regard. These are “nonverbal acts which have a direct verbal translation” (Ekman & Friesen, 1969, p. 63), and they usually occur without speech. A community has shared-understanding of emblems. The meanings of emblems are culturally determined; for example, the thumbs-up gesture means *good* in North America. Stam and McCafferty (2008) describe emblems as “codified, conventional, language-like gestures that complete an utterance by filling a grammatical slot” (p. 6). As mentioned, McNeill focuses on spontaneous gestures or gesticulations that are synchronized with speech. Hence, he opposes Kendon’s concept of *deliberate production of gestures* given that deliberate may mean *purposeful*, and a speaker does not necessarily intend to orchestrate speech through their gestures (McNeill, 2015).

In this study, I adopt Cope and Kalantzis' (2009) definition of gesture, by which they refer to:

movements of the hands and arms, expressions of the face, eye movements and gaze, demeanours of the body, gait, clothing and fashion, hair style, dance, action sequences (Scollon 2001), timing, frequency, ceremony and ritual. Here gesture is understood broadly and metaphorically as a physical act of signing (as in 'a gesture to ...'), rather than the narrower literal meaning of hand and arm movement. Representation to oneself may take the form of feelings and emotions or rehearsing action sequences in one's mind's eye. (p. 362)

The above definition of gesture embraces it as one of the many resources that we use to make meanings through communication. This line of thought considers meaning-making in communication as a complex process of sign-making through multiple resources such as speech, gesture, writing, and image; the meaning-making resources are called modes of meaning that are closely interconnected [see chapter 2]. This definition of gesture, thus, helps me embrace a broader understanding of gestures that may include any kind of gestures made intentionally or unintentionally in the classroom. I also focus on all types of gestures used by the participants of this study because each may have a significant contribution to the meanings of classroom activities.

1.8.2. Structure and classification of gesture. There are different components or phases of gestures, and together, the phases make up a whole gesture or a gesture phrase (McNeill, 1992; Stam & McCafferty, 2008). The main phase in a gesture phrase expresses the meaning and is completely synchronized with speech. This is called a stroke. As discussed in Stam and McCafferty (2008), after the invention of slow-motion films, it was identified that the stroke of a

gesture “anticipates or ends at the phonological peak of the utterance” (p. 8). There are also other phases of a gesture that takes place before and after the stroke. These are called a preparation in which the hand/arm or a body part involved in gesture moves to the position where the stroke will begin; a pre-stroke hold where the body part holds its position after the preparation; a post-stroke hold that takes place after the stroke where the body part holds its final position; and, a retraction in which the body part returns to a rest position. When multiple gesture phrases occur simultaneously, they are called a gesture unit.

McNeill (1992) classifies gesticulations into four major categories: *iconics*, *metaphorics*, *deictics*, and *beats*. Iconic gestures are used to refer to concrete objects or actions while speaking about them. For example, a teacher may describe a round object to her students by making a spherical shape with both hands. *Metaphorics* are also like iconics, but they represent abstract concepts; the abstract concepts are represented through concrete physical actions. For example, a teacher may explain a test and say that the test will cover everything done in class. Along with her speech, she makes the same spherical gesture as a metaphor of *whole* or *everything*. Next, *deictics* are pointing gestures made with hands or other body parts. A teacher may point to a concrete object such as her desk or to an abstract concept such as pointing to a direction to explain where something is located. Finally, *beats* are made with hands moving up and down or side to side to represent rhythm or emphasize words/concepts while speaking. A teacher may clap her hands while teaching stress/intonation in a pronunciation class; the movements of hands represent changes in stress on words/sentences. However, it is noteworthy that the classification of gestures is not rigid as the forms of gestures often overlap, and the same gesture form may represent different meanings. The types of gestures also occur simultaneously in interaction.

Hence, in this study, I use the categories of gestures only for identification purposes, and they are flexibly applied so that the meaning of each gesture type is open to interpretation.

1.9. Organization of this Dissertation

In chapter 2, I present the theoretical framework used in this study. I specifically review research literature on how the body and its activities, including what's commonly known as gestures, are investigated from some theoretical perspectives within applied linguistics and educational research. Chapter 3 provides a detailed discussion of the methodology adopted in this study. Next, in chapter 4, I present specific data excerpts from this study with their analyses based on each theoretical concept to demonstrate how meanings of gestures may be interpreted within each theoretical construct. Finally, chapter 5 presents a discussion on the findings providing implications for teacher education and research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This study investigates teachers and students' gestural representations in ESL classrooms. In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I provided a brief historical context of gesture studies in applied linguistics and mainstream SLA (Second Language Acquisition). My discussion in that chapter points to how gesture research has not progressed much, unlike the other developments in SLA such as the recent trends in understanding L2 learning from the theoretical perspectives of *situated learning* and *poststructuralism* (Duff, 1995; Miller, 2004; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). In this chapter, I provide possibilities of a broader understanding of gestures in L2 contexts drawing on some applied linguistic studies of the body and embodied actions including gestures (Luke, 1992; Pinnow, 2011; Ramanathan, 2010; Toohey, 2000); the studies have been influenced by theories from multiple disciplines (Kress et al., 2005; Pinnow, 2011; Sime, 2008). One of the implications of the above studies is to problematize the essentialist meanings of the body and embodied actions. For example, the studies may help us understand how embodied practices including gestural representations in the classroom are often ascribed narrow stereotypical meanings, and how they might be explained through alternative perspectives such as in relation to sociocultural influences and power relations. In this chapter, I discuss applied linguistic studies related to gesture by grouping them into four major sections based on their underlying theoretical constructs. First, I discuss how some studies, influenced by the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), explore gesture as one of the symbolic artefacts used by teachers and students to mediate interaction through which students are able to voluntarily control their learning processes (Lantolf, 2006; 2010; Sime, 2008; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013). The second group of research is influenced by multimodal research in which gestures are seen as semiotic signs in relation to other modes such as speech, writing, and images that contribute to

meaning-making, communication and learning (Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010). Next, I discuss the group of studies that understands the body and embodied actions as shaped by discursive knowledge (Kubota, 1999; Luke, 1992; Ramanathan, 2010; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000); the concept of discourse here is influenced by Foucault's (1979, 1980) famous couplet power/knowledge, through which he promotes the view that knowledge is always intertwined with power relations and is produced, defined and regulated by discourses. This will be discussed in greater detail below. Finally, I discuss the studies such as Pennycook (2004) and Miller (2012) that contribute to the understanding of gestures as part of teachers' and students' repeated multimodal performances that constitute their identities. This final group of studies adopts Butler's (1997) theory of performativity, which focuses on how the body is continually (re)made through performative actions [including language use] in the processes of constructing specific subjectivities such as being a boy or a girl. In the following sections, I present a detailed analysis of each of the perspectives to the body and its actions, including gestures, and show how they are relevant to my research on gestures in ESL classrooms.

2.1. Gestures Mediate Language Learning

One of the emerging areas of gesture studies within applied linguistics explores the role of gestures in mediating language learning (McCafferty, 2004; Lantolf, 2006; 2010; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013). These studies mainly focus on how gestures are used as symbolic signs in mediating psychological processes as well as internalization of communication skills during social interaction. This line of research is influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which situates the mind within the context of social, cultural, and historical human activities. Vygotsky acknowledges both biological and social influences on learning. The theory emphasizes that our external activities and mental processes are mediated by culturally

constructed material objects and symbolic representations. To Vygotsky, material objects or *tools* are different from symbolic artefacts or *signs* such as language, music, or numbers because the tools make external changes to the object of activity while signs mediate our internal activity or mental processes. Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2015) exemplify how a book can be used as a material object to swat a bee, which helps us avoid the bee-sting, while the grammatical knowledge in the book can be used as signs that mediate our learning of English. Lantolf (2006), however, suggests that the tools and signs function as an integrated symbolic system, which is appropriated and negotiated by the mind to comprehend and interpret the world. Learners use their agency to activate the cultural tools and signs to relate themselves to others, to the material world and to their inner mental world (Lantolf, 2006). In the process of appropriating the tools and signs, they internalize the symbolic system that helps them control and organize their higher mental processes through which development/ learning takes place (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015; Vygotsky, 1978).

Gestures are described as cognitive tools by Gullberg and McCafferty (2008). Swain, Kinnear and Steinman's (2015) example of *Madame Tremblay's* unintentional use of dramatic gestures suggests that gestures may become symbolic artefacts or signs in mediating students' learning of vocabulary in French. The teacher's gestures such as *running her hands through her ringlets* while *pushing her head into the couch* and *fanning her face*, as the authors suggest, might have helped her students learn the word *headache* in French. Furthermore, Vygotsky's theory specifically highlights how gestural signs are used in the processes of object-regulation, which is later transformed into self-regulation. For example, *gesture-for-itself* becomes *gesture-for-others* and gradually transforms into *gesture-for-oneself* (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2008). The example used in Negueruela & Lantolf (2008) suggests how a child starts using gestures to grab

objects, and later directs the same gestures to others for assistance in grabbing the objects until they realize the communicative functions of the gestures. In the process, the child's gestures stimulate object- and self-regulation that help them internalize communication skills. A growing number of studies (Gullberg & McCafferty, 2008; Hudson, 2011; Smotrova, 2017; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013) adopt Vygotsky's concepts to interpret gestures as mediational means in the language learning process. This line of research shifts the traditional understanding of gestures as mere non-verbal cues for comprehension while explaining the actual mediation and internalization processes learners go through while utilizing gestures as signs. I discuss some relevant studies in two sub-sections to explain the processes: how students utilize gestures and how teachers may use gestures as sociocultural signs.

2.1.1. How students use gestures for mediation. Even though only a handful of studies have been conducted on students' gestures, which I find as one of the limitations of current gesture research, some studies demonstrate how students use their own and the teachers' gestures to mediate learning a second language (L2). Gestures have cognitive and (self)regulatory functions (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2008; Platt & Brooks, 2008) that help learners mediate their higher mental processes and internalize grammar rules and language structures (McCafferty, 2004; Lantolf, 2010; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013). McCafferty (2004), for example, studies how gestures may mediate the learning and production of lexical items, prosody and syllable structures. As part of a large-scale research project, the author analyses interactions between a Taiwanese ESL college student in the US and his tutor, an American English-speaking graduate student. The ESL student used several gestures to express the verb *transport* and the Japanese attire *kimono*, which McCafferty explains, allowed him to organize his thoughts and discourse in speech. The student also used *beats* [gestures that represent rhythm or emphasize

words/concepts; see chapter 1] while representing syllables and other linguistic structures several times to transform the symbolic signs into mental activities that helped him mediate his interaction in L2. Furthermore, gestures served self-regulatory functions such as controlling and organizing one's own thoughts as discussed by the author in his 2008 publication. McCafferty (2008) gives an example of a Japanese speaker who frequently used several gestures such as "bending elbows to her sides, forearms horizontal, hands pushing towards each other and upwards", and bringing "the tips of the fingers of both hands" to make an A shape (p. 59) while discussing an ideal marriage. The author discusses how the Japanese speaker's verbal explanation and gestures represented ideal marriage as a "manufactured product", which is "built from the ground up" (p. 60). The gestures helped her formulate her own thoughts and facilitated her English production even though she was not very proficient in the L2. In the same article, the author also discusses a few other studies in which the self-regulatory function of gestures was evident. L2 learners, for example, used abstract deictic or pointing gestures to "maintain a sense of coherence for themselves" (p. 54) in their speech and to control and organize their speech in the L2. This helped them with their overall L2 production.

Research also shows that students appropriate their teachers' or other L1 speakers' gestures for several purposes, including internalization of concepts and vocabulary in language learning contexts (McCafferty, 2002, 2004, 2008; Hudson, 2011). McCafferty's (2008) discussion of the Japanese ESL participant's use of gestures discussed above suggests that the participant might have appropriated and internalized the metaphoric gestures from her American husband as her gestures were very different from other Japanese ESL participants. In fact, her understanding of the model of ideal marriage and the subsequent gestures were very similar to a monolingual English speaker. Hudson (2011), likewise, notes one of her student participant's appropriation of

a pedagogical gesture such as clapping gestures to mark syllables of an English word used by the teacher. Both were helpful in mediating thoughts in the process of learning linguistic components. Hence, students do not blindly imitate teachers' gestures; rather, they appropriate the gestures in the internalization process. Smotrova (2017) describes the adoption and appropriation of teachers' gestures by students as *creative imitation*. To Vygotsky (1978), creative imitations are a crucial part in the internalization process. Smotrova (2017), and Smotrova and Lantolf's (2013) studies are noteworthy in that they specifically focus on how creative imitation develops a shared understanding between the teacher and students. The studies explore an ESL teacher and her students' use of *catchments* in pronunciation class in an intensive English program at a North American university.

Catchments are frequently occurring gestural units/features, such as shape, movement or space having the same instructional functions; teachers use these to maintain topical cohesion. Smotrova and Lantolf (2013) provide an example from another study in which a Biology teacher frequently used a gesture that represented the contraction of the cardiac muscle. The gesture was synchronized with words such as *heartbeat* and *blood surge* at different points in her speech and provided topical cohesion throughout her explanation. Smotrova's (2017) study demonstrates how the catchments were appropriated by the students through creative imitation, which mediated shared understanding in the classroom. The study shows how catchments helped students identify and produce syllables and word stress, and, in the process, how students internalized the pronunciation aspects.

All the above studies also imply that students' learning/acquisition is not always a hidden process, which becomes partly visible through gesture (Lantolf, 2006, 2010). Gestures may disclose how learners understand the meaning of grammar points even though they lack the

metalanguage to describe/explain those (van Compernelle & Williams, 2011). This helps others to take part in the mediation process by providing a helping hand. Studies as such illuminate the hidden processes of developing interpersonal relations through which internalization takes place. This also suggests that learning or comprehension is not passive, but an active process in which learners voluntarily control and organize their thoughts and internalize symbolic systems (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). These studies illuminate the significance of understanding students' gestures in a more systematic way than treating them as mere non-verbal cues or paralinguistic competence. Students' gestures, rather, have a broader role to play in L2 contexts.

2.1.2. How teachers' gestures facilitate language learning. Some studies inspired by sociocultural theory focus on teachers' gestures in the classroom to understand how teachers may use gestures to facilitate specific linguistic skills including listening, grammar and pronunciation (Harris, 2003; Hudson, 2011; Smotrova, 2017). As discussed in chapter 1, Sime (2006, 2008) identifies three specific functions of teachers' gestures: cognitive, emotional and organizational functions. She incorporated L2 learners' interpretation of gesture in her study conducted in a summer course at a Scottish university. The study suggests that the student participants were aware of the instructors' gestures and that a combination of different types of gestures such as emblems and deictics [see chapter 1] helped them comprehend the teachers' explanations. The researcher adopted stimulated recall interviews using 5-minute video extracts where the participants found the gestures to be complementary to speech in meaning making. Gesture, thus, facilitated the learning process stimulating cognition such as attention and memorization and acted as feedback in the classroom. The author, however, suggests that learners' interpretation of gesture is influenced by their background and cross-cultural awareness. Peltier and McCafferty's (2010) study also suggests how gestures stimulated interpersonal and intrapersonal cognition in

an Italian as a foreign language class at a community college in the US. The study highlights how teachers' gestures worked as feedback when they imitated students' gestures to confirm that their utterances were correct. This provided the students possibilities for embodied interaction in Italian in the future.

Hudson (2011) studies gestures as mediational means in second language learning. The study looks at the role of gesture and its multiple functions in teaching and learning a second language by observing a teacher and her students' gestures over five weeks in a university pronunciation course. Employing video-recordings, interviews and surveys, the study highlights different types of gestures used by the teacher to illustrate her verbal communication and their meanings. The author discusses how gesture was a form of social interaction in the classroom. The instructor consciously accommodated the gestures as mediation, and the students appropriated and used them in the process of learning.

Studies influenced by sociocultural theory also help us understand how teachers may use gestures in the process of scaffolding their students. Scaffolding, in general, refers to a process of assisting learners to help them progress towards a goal that they cannot reach without assistance. The metaphor is synonymous with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). Vygotsky (1978) believes that development in children takes place through collaborative learning with the assistance of a capable person and is influenced by materials adequately used in relation to children's cognitive levels. ZPD determines both the minimum level of potential skills they can reach independently and the maximum level of skills they can access through assistance. Nevertheless, some researchers describe ZPD as a negotiated act between teacher and students or among students whereas scaffolding is a one-way act constructed by an expert

(Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). Following Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2015), I use the term scaffolding as a verb or an action that operationalizes the activity of ZPD.

McCafferty's (2002, 2004) longitudinal studies are examples of how gestures facilitate learning by creating ZPD. The tutor and his student as discussed earlier, imitated each other's gestures, which created shared understanding of signs such as using specific hand gestures for a lexical item *splash* (McCafferty, 2002), and the shared experiences with the signs led to improved communication and comprehension. The author describes this process as evidence of zones of proximal development that were created through the shared scaffolding assistance both the instructor and the student got from each other. Hudson (2011) and Sime (2008) also point to how teachers' gestures that serve multiple functions facilitate interaction by scaffolding students within the ZPD.

These studies, though limited in numbers, provide crucial understanding of gestures as mediational means that the teacher can use to scaffold their students. This also problematizes the practices of gesture-use within some current L2 settings where gesture-use is gradually reduced along with students' increasing proficiency in L2 [see the discussion of AIM in chapter 1]. The perspective behind such practices is that gestures help low proficiency students better than high proficiency students. Hence, the studies discussed in this section suggest that irrespective of students' levels, gestures have a greater role to play in L2 classrooms.

2.2. Gestures as Modal Resources

A recent development in language and literacies studies is that communication and representation are considered to be multimodal in which language is just one of multiple meaning-making resources or modes such as gesture, posture, image, writing, music and dance that people use to communicate and represent meanings (Jewitt, 2009). These modes of

representation are socially made and culturally available to us (Kress, 2009), and meaning is realized differently by each mode within a multimodal ensemble. Gesture, from this perspective, is a mode that does not merely rely on speech to make meaning; rather it has its own meaning potential in each representational act (Jewitt, 2009). Within applied linguistics research, gestures have been researched in relation to other modal resources to understand how they contribute to meanings and learning in specific contexts, especially in English/ESL classrooms. Three perspectives to multimodality exist in current applied linguistics research: social semiotic multimodality, multimodal discourse analysis and multimodal interaction analysis (Jewitt, 2009a). Among the three, social semiotic multimodality and multimodal interaction analysis have been evident in some educational studies that explore meanings of gestures in classroom interaction (Arzarello, Paola, Robutti, & Sabena, 2008; Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Kupetz, 2011; Sert & Walsh, 2013). In this section, I will discuss social semiotic multimodality because of its relevance to understanding gestures as meaning-making resources in L2 classrooms. Multimodal interaction analysis, on the other hand, is more helpful in describing interrelationships among modes in making meanings within a moment of (inter)action (Jewitt, 2009a); therefore, I use this perspective in my video data analysis process [see chapter 3] because this helps me investigate my data excerpts as texts that reflect moments of interaction in the classroom. In this literature review, I only include the studies that are relevant to my study, especially the ones that inform gesture research in L2 classrooms.

2.2.1. Social semiotic multimodality. A group of studies focuses on gestures as semiotic resources that are socially (re)constructed and locally realized (Kress, 2010) in communication/representation, which is considered as a process of sign-making. *Social* refers to

the domain of (*inter-*)*action* shaped by power relations, while actions such as writing, talking, reading, and interacting are considered to be social/semiotic *work* that produces cultural resources (Kress, 2010, 2012). This line of research is influenced by Halliday's (1978) social semiotic approach to language that explains how language is a resource to construct meanings within specific social conditions, unlike the cognitivist view of language which conceptualizes language as a fixed system acquired by learners through cognitive processes that are independent of the context of its use (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Halliday states:

we are interested in what language can do, or rather in what the speaker, child or adult, can do with it; and that we try to explain the nature of language, its internal organization and patterning, in terms of the functions that it has evolved to serve. (Halliday, 1978, p. 16)

Halliday emphasizes that a child's language learning includes learning a variety of meaning potential - a number of "elementary functions of language" (p. 19), such as instrumental (expressions of material needs), personal (expressions of self) and some other initial functions, as well as "a range of choices in meaning" (p. 19) within each function. Halliday explains that the functions of language undergo significant changes during their transition to the adult language. They become more abstract, "a kind of 'metafunction' through which all the innumerable concrete uses of language in which the adult engages are given symbolic expression in a systematic and finite form" (p. 22). The three metafunctions in the linguistic system, as described by Halliday, are *ideational*, through which the speakers' individual experiences are encoded; *interpersonal*, through which the speaker's relationship with the listener is expressed, and *textual*, through which the speaker's "text-forming potential" (p. 112) is represented. Halliday argues that an adult's language differs from a child's in that these metafunctions give him "the possibility of meaning more than one thing at once" (p. 56). Because adult language operates at

three different levels such as content, form and expression, the grammatical form of the linguistic system allows the functions to overlap and create a range of meaning potential. What is relevant from Halliday's theory to multimodal semiotics is that the areas of meaning potential within the linguistic system provide possibilities for the speaker to mean or do more than one thing with language at once. This helps us understand how people may use language creatively while they continuously modify the linguistic system in the interaction process. Meaning making through language, thus, becomes a social process.

Social semiotic multimodality considers language as one of the semiotic resources among many that people use for meaning making (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). The theoretical concept, however, differs from Halliday (1979) in that Halliday was partly influenced by Saussure's rigid explanation of signs as arbitrary constructions (Halliday, 1979). Ferdinand de Saussure—one of the pioneers of sign theory—explained meaning-making as a process of linking a form (*signifier*) to its meaning (*signified*) in the sign (Saussure, 2011). While signifier refers to “a phenomenon in the outer world” (Saussure, 2011, p. 63) such as the word *hand*, signified refers to the “mental representation” (p. 63) of the form such as the meaning of hand. When the form is connected to its meaning, the sign *hand* is produced. Saussure's (2011) structuralism promoted an arbitrary relationship between the form and meaning of a sign. As Saussure explains, the signifier and the signified are not linked by any natural connection or logical interrelationship. The signified *hand* could be associated with any other signifier; the expressions in the society are based on “collective behavior” or “convention” (p. 68). For instance, as the author explains, polite expressions such as bowing down to show respect in Chinese culture are always fixed by rules, and the rules, but not the “intrinsic value of the gestures” (p. 68), compel everyone to use them. Kress (2010), however, suggests that signs are

not arbitrarily made, but they are motivated because form and meaning [the signifier and the signified] of signs are always the *best-fit* for each other: “the form has the requisite features to be the carrier of the meaning” (p. 55). Kress analyzes the expression *I wanted to ask, could I have an extension for my essay*, often used by his students to ask for an extension of assignment deadlines. The author explains how the past form of the words that represents *distance in time*, in fact, signifies social distance between the teacher and the students. The expression suggests an ambiguity in the request as if the speaker is trying to say that this was their past wish which might be denied at the present time. Thus, the acknowledgement of the social positions was also necessary in a request like this. The sign of social positions here is motivated and carries the speaker’s agency in selecting a signifier to signify the signified.

Van Leeuwen (2005) presents three important aspects of social semiotics that influence how individuals use modal resources to make meanings in specific contexts: semiotic behavior, semiotic potential and affordances. Semiotic behavior refers to how individuals express themselves in relation to the social world and how they want others to relate to them. Semiotic potential, on the other hand, leaves space for multiple interpretation and meanings of the same social sign. Finally, affordance creates opportunities for the observer to interpret meanings based on their interest. Van Lier (2004) equates affordances to Halliday’s notion of meaning potential, but Kress (2010) defines it as the possibilities and constraints of what semiotic resources may represent. From this perspective, affordance of a mode does not reflect perception, but the material, social and historical ways in which modes have been repeatedly used in semiotic work to make meaning. Jewitt (2009) suggests that modal affordances are shaped by peoples’ use of modes in specific social contexts, so affordances depend on how the modes have repeatedly been used by people over time and across space.

2.2.2. Meaning/Sign making through gestures. Research influenced by multimodal semiotics shows how gestures can be motivated signs in the teaching and learning process (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Kress et al., 2005). The sign of invigilation is made, for example, by teachers' meticulous movement during examination in some classroom culture (Kress et al., 2005), which signifies that students are being watched and should not cheat during examination. A set of uttered or written rules for the same purpose may not have the same effect on students. The activity, however, might be represented through an individual teacher's choice of posture/movements such as keeping an eye on the students from the teacher's desk or moving around the students' desks, each of which will have specific significance in constructing classroom meanings. Bourne and Jewitt's (2003) study suggests how a teacher's movement from the classroom center to the sides, or a change from formal to informal posture, shifts the power structure in the classroom by opening up participation opportunities for students. The authors demonstrate through their study on year 10 students in an urban multi-ethnic school that English teachers use multiple modes in the classroom based on their interest – their understanding of the curriculum, literacy, and most importantly, the subject English. Learners' literacies are constructed through the configuration of multiple modal resources in the secondary classrooms, which emphasizes meaning, learning, language and literacy in a complex way. The authors conclude:

The teacher's selection of mode is not arbitrary, nor merely a matter of teacher style – it is motivated, based firmly in her pedagogic intention and in the curriculum focus of the lesson. Her choice of mode is a rhetorical one and is crucial in the shaping of curriculum knowledge and how students are positioned day by day in relation to that knowledge.

(Bourne & Jewitt, 2003, p. 71)

Kress et al.'s (2005) study demonstrates that the pedagogy of the subject English is determined by diverse representations of the meaning of English through multiple modes such as speech, visual displays and gesture. In their study, the pedagogies were locally and distinctly realized though they emerged from the same sets of objectives articulated/described by the macro educational policies. English pedagogy, for example, was represented as *pedagogy* in one classroom while in the other it was represented as the *content* of English or the curriculum. Jewitt (2008) later explains how the different versions of English influenced the students' relationships with the subject English:

These different versions of English (and Englishness) placed students in different relationships to the curriculum content of English and in turn attempted to connect or disconnect English in specific ways to the experiences of those students in ways that are significant for the construction of literacy. (p. 254)

2.2.3. Learning as an active process of sign-making/-transforming. Multimodal semiotics emphasizes learners' engagement in actively creating, interpreting, appropriating and transforming signs in the process of learning. Kress and Bezemer (2015) discuss how learners constantly interpret, transform and (re)create selected elements from teachers' original message according to their interest. In the process, they create new *inner signs* that are the evidence of their learning. This "ongoing, unceasing process of *transformative engagement*, of integration in 'inner' transformation, with a constantly new resultant state, constitutes *learning*" (pp. 158-159; original emphasis). The authors suggest that every sign made by the learners is new and presents their innovation in the transformation process in which they follow some transformative principles that they have acquired from their prior learning or their communities of practice. This also corresponds to Vygotsky's notion of *creative imitation* (Smotrova, 2017), which refers to

the idea that learners merely replicate or copy in the learning process, but their imitation is a “selective, creative, and transformative process” (Smotrova, 2017, p. 64).

Signs and cultural resources are appropriated and remade in social/semiotic work (Kress, 2012). An example discussed by Kress and Bezemer (2015) was a social action of surgery by an experienced surgeon and her student. During a surgery procedure, both demonstrated the action of *touching* a lump on the patient’s abdomen, while the surgeon’s touch was significantly different from that of the student. “The surgeon’s touch is more specific, deeper, firmer, involving (the tip of) a flat though angled hand as well as a grasping action; the student’s touch is broader, more superficial, and involves (the tip of) a flat hand only” (p. 160). Each made the signs according to their prior learning experiences. The authors conclude that the semiotic actions, the reading of the ‘lump’ through *touch*, signify both the surgeon and the student’s learning; each has learned about the other’s semiotic work of touching or *reading a lump*, which has transformed each of their inner resources. Both will, thus, change their future actions and semiotic resources accordingly. In their subsequent actions, for example, the surgeon demonstrated foregrounding in slow motion so that the student could follow, and the student paid attention to the precise direction of the surgeon’s movement.

The semiotic principle of sign-making also problematizes the traditional understanding of learning in the classroom. The curricular and pedagogic choices in any classroom often favor a specific style of learning and specific modes of representation (Jewitt, 2008), which may exclude learners who do not conform to the official modes of representation. In North America, for example, writing and speaking are the predominant modes of representation in the classroom, while in other cultures, valued local knowledge may be expressed through multimodal writing, including drawing (cf. Kashinawa multimodality, de Souza, 2002), which may not be officially

recognized, especially in North American adult classrooms. Because learners from different backgrounds constantly transform signs according to their interest and may represent them through unofficial modes, their learning may not be officially recognized (Kress & Bezemer, 2015). Pinnow (2011) studied the semiotic resources used by a sixth-grade ESL learner, Enrique, in the South-Eastern United states to investigate his interactional competence. The learner was identified as “at-risk” by the school administrator and less competent by his teacher, but the study reveals his creative abilities to access and use multimodal semiotic resources such as gestures, silence, speech and proxemics to understand and negotiate his social roles in interaction. Enrique was able to “use the semiotic resources available to him to navigate an institutional context that positions him as one always on the receiving end of the social actions of an institutional authority” (p. 389).

Drawing on various studies, Jewitt (2008) emphasizes that (re)creating, negotiating and transforming meanings across multimodal texts offer opportunities to construct different identities because the multimodal texts are “material instantiations of students' interests, their perception of audience, and their use of modal resources mediated by overlapping social contexts” (Jewitt, 2008, p. 259). Therefore, as the author states,

students need to learn how to recognize what is salient in a complex multimodal text, how to read across the modal elements in a textbook or IWB [Interactive Whiteboards], how to move from the representation of a phenomenon in an animation to a static image or written paragraph, and how to navigate through the multiple paths of a text. (Jewitt, 2008, p. 259)

To explain the importance of multimodal learning, Kress and Bezemer (2015) argue that the evidence of learning is found in the signs learners make using multimodal resources, and each of these modes shapes the substance of learning differently from other modes. For example, a

science student's written texts on cells will not express the same meanings that can be expressed through the drawing of a cell. Thus, if a science student lacks access to the mode of drawing, they will show limited evidence of learning. This concept of learners as active sign makers may help us transform the static and deterministic learning practices by renewing the understanding of power relations in the classroom (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015).

2.2.4. Gestures as semiotic resources in English classrooms. Gestures may emit signs of students' understanding of subject matter in English classrooms, their subjectivities and positioning in relation to the curriculum (Kress et al., 2005; Sert & Walsh, 2013). For instance, students do not always verbally declare their insufficient knowledge ("I don't know") about the subject matter; rather they often use their embodied actions such as avoiding mutual gaze with the instructor to express their unwillingness to talk (Sert & Walsh, 2013). Sert and Walsh's (2013) study was conducted in 10th and an 11th grade EAL classrooms at a public school in Luxembourg. The study explores how students' claims of insufficient knowledge are expressed through multiple embodied actions such as vertical head shakes, withdrawal of gaze and other gestures, which often leads to further pedagogical actions. For example, teachers interpret the meanings of such embodied actions and allocate the turns to other students using various strategies.

In the classroom, teachers and students' gestural representations may provide insights into *silent discourses* (Jewitt, 2008) that affect learning. Teachers' gestures, for instance, represent their beliefs and practices of learning and instructions in the classroom; their expected notion of classroom competence that the students need to achieve is represented through multiple modes including gestures (Kress et. al, 2005). On the other hand, students' gestures, or lack thereof, during classroom discussion may represent how they negotiate and/or resist the classroom

meanings. Kress et al.'s (2005) study discussed earlier represents how teachers in each English classroom used multiple modes to create and represent a set of social relations; each teacher's background influenced this representation. Gestures played a significant role in creating these meanings in the study.

The meanings made in the mode of gesture are, as it were, meanings in the body of the teacher, just as the effects of his positioning, movement and use of gaze have the same force. In this manner, English and its meaning seem to be held in, displayed by, actualized through the body of the teacher: English is the teacher; the teacher is English. (Kress et. al., 2005, p. 30)

Kress et al. also discuss that gestures represent meanings of authority and classroom management, or how teachers want to relate to their students. Gestures become one of the pedagogical tools that the instructors utilize to socialize the students within the curricula and pedagogy according to their *abilities*. The authors argue that teachers conceptualize English in different ways to students of different *abilities*, and thus different groups “receive very different versions of English” (p. 87) even within the same classroom. The authors, for instance, described one of the teacher participants' engagement with two small group discussions among her students. Group 1 was perceived by the teacher as *high-ability* whereas group 2 was perceived as *less able*. While her gestures such as leaning towards the group members and direct eye-contact with the first group “signaled membership of the group...[and]...a sign of shared pleasure,...[her] ...upright, angular and tense body-posture...[with the second group] actualize(d) a sign of authority and of directed instruction” (p. 92). The authors explain that her gestures in the first group represented English as *discussion*, but the gestures in the second group represented English as *comprehension*. In response to the specific representation of English to

each group, the groups acted very differently: the first group was more active in asking and responding to questions during the discussion whereas the second group hardly spoke or gestured throughout the session. The authors conclude that the high-stakes testing and the teacher participants' assumptions that abilities were *innate* contributed to the teacher's performances within each group as they "want(ed) to achieve at least some minimal level of success for all their students" (p. 98).

Teachers' gestures are embodiment of classroom lessons that may construct meanings in specific ways. Social semiotics helps us understand the meanings of teachers' gestures as contextually motivated. Bourne and Jewitt's (2003) study that used the same data from Kress et al.'s (2005) study explores how a teacher's gestures created an informal environment in the classroom and facilitated students' participation. The classroom discussion focused on gendered relationships portrayed in a text based on a story about a male character who created tension between a bride and her groom, whose anger was illogically directed to the bride. During the discussion, the teacher's upward hand with a stop sign was posed to male students to stop them, while her waving hand was pointed towards the girls to let them talk. The author explains how the gestures generated signs of power structures between males and females and placed the male and female students in different relationships to the text. By her gestures, the teacher was able to create boundaries between men and women in real life, thereby transforming the literary fiction into social reality. This also helped her maintain an uncontentious environment in which the students were required to critically reflect on the text.

Kress et al.'s (2005) study, on the other hand, suggests how students' gestures may reflect specific meanings about their resistance to the pedagogy and curriculum. Social semiotic multimodality, however, problematizes a monolithic understanding of classroom meanings.

Meanings are created and represented through the interaction of multiple modes, so gestural representations should be understood in relation to other modes as well as the immediate context of interaction. Different modes of representation in the classroom may also conflict with each other; for example, gestures may contradict the authoritative classroom layout or the traditional curriculum displayed through visuals on the wall (Kress et al., 2005).

2.2.5. Transliteration and cross-cultural differences in sign-making. The use of gestures as semiotic resources could potentially be different across what is commonly known as *cultures*. Traditionally, culture is viewed as the *big C* culture and the *small C* culture. While the big C culture usually refers to literature, symbols, and music of a national culture, the small c culture includes the culture of everyday life such as customs and behaviour (Kramsch, 2013; UNESCO declaration on culture, UNESCO, 26 November, 1976). From a semiotics view, however, culture refers to “the repository of resources *jointly made in social interaction*” (Kress, 2012, p. 370, original emphasis). The social domain of (inter-)action or *the society* is the group who (re)makes the material [such as modes] and non-material cultural resources [such as discourses] through (inter-) action. Furthermore, as Kress suggests, (inter-)action can be done with social others, such as the case of ‘speaking’ or with the self, such as the action of ‘reading’. In each (inter-)action or semiotic work, the members of a group engaged in the work jointly use previously made cultural resources “with particular purposes, aware of the potentials, meanings, affordances and constraints of the resources/tools” (Kress, 2012, p. 370). The cultural resources that are used over time, thus, achieve some conventionality or agreed-upon meanings based on the need of that community; for example, the shoulder-shrug gesture in French has some levels of shared understanding within French speakers in France. The signs and their meanings made in each semiotic work are also transformed by the persons who are engaged in the semiotic work

because of specific social conditions that shape the domains of (inter-)action. For example, the above gesture may be used and interpreted differently by different age, gender and professional groups across social spaces within the same nation-state. From this perspective, the size of a social group engaged in semiotic action does not have any relevance because the action might take place between any number of people who understand and recognize the resources and the conventions, and they make up a community which has its own *culture*.

Their degree and the kind of understanding distinguishes ‘insiders’ from ‘outsiders’, those who feel themselves to belong to the community and those who do not; those who are judged by members of the community as being part of the group or not, always on the basis of their recognition and understanding of the resources. (Kress, 2012, p. 371)

Therefore, the semiotic resources will differ from one community to another, no matter the size. There are many studies on kinesics and paralanguage that are suggestive of different semiotic systems of communication across large or the big C cultures. Orton’s study (2006), for instance, suggests how gestural behavior in Chinese culture is very different from gesture-oriented communication in Anglophone cultures (Al-Shabbi, 1993; Burgoon & Hoobler, 2002; Busà, 2015; Pennycook, 1985). In social semiotics, however, *Chinese or Anglophone communities* may have their shared understanding of semiotic resources such as gestures, which comprise some of the macro-level semiotic practices and processes, but each community also includes multiple smaller social groups with their micro-level semiotic practices or ‘cultures’. Kress (2010) states, “the more pronounced the cultural differences [either inter or intra group], the greater are the differences in the resources of representation and in the practices of their use” (p. 8). Any outsider of a specific social group has difficulties understanding the practices of that group even if they share the same language, and this may lead to difficulties in understanding cross-cultural

signs. The reach of mode is also different across social groups; for example, the prominence of the mode of drawing is different in the community of science students from the community of humanities students.

All (inter-)actions are done through multiple modes in every community although the selection and mixing of modes are different across the communities; mode-switching, therefore, is a common phenomenon in semiotic activities in every community (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015; Kress, 2010). Bhattacharya et al. (2007), for example, demonstrate how multiple modes have been used in subject English courses in three classrooms in Delhi, Johannesburg, and London. In the classroom in London, for example, the students read a scene from *Macbeth* followed by multiple activities including watching a film version of the play and working with images with captions from the film. Through these activities, the written text of *Macbeth* was transformed into visual representations, which the teacher thought were more accessible to her students. In the classroom in Delhi, on the other hand, the teacher mostly relied on written texts and hardly used any other modes; yet, as the authors suggest, regulation of students' gestures influenced the multimodal ensemble in the classroom. Each classroom in the study, thus, represented unique multimodal ensembles and distinctly reflected the process of meaning-transfer from one mode to another.

Meaning is always transformed through the process of *transliteration*, which refers to the transfer of meanings from one mode to another, because of the affordances of each mode (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015). A thumb-up gesture, for instance, represents 'good' in a different way from the verbal representation of the same word. Kress (2010) suggests that transliteration of meanings across cultural/semiotic resources, whether within the same mode or across different modes, is "achieved with enormously difficult selection; at a considerable level of generality;

and inevitably with significant changes in meaning” (p. 10). Kress terms the social and cultural aspects of modes as the *reach of modes*. His examples include the differences between the expression of politeness through different modal resources across macro-level semiotic practices or cultures. Some social groups, for example, use speech to express politeness, while others may use proxemics such as gestures or facial expressions to express courtesy. Thus, the reach of modes could be significantly different across social domains, which requires much effort to transfer meanings from one mode to another or within the same mode across the domains, with a significant change/loss of meaning.

This occluded view to transliteration and cross-cultural meanings of semiotic resources in the classroom is under-researched in studies of multimodal communication. Gestures have cognitive, communicative and regulatory functions, and teachers use them intentionally to help learners comprehend subject matter as well as provide them input in the process of language learning (Belhiah, 2013; Lazaraton, 2004; Sime, 2006, 2008). Nevertheless, it is understated in most studies discussed above if all students could equally benefit from the cognitive and communicative functions of gestures, irrespective of their cultural background. Except for a few researchers such as Sime (2006, 2008), most studies on the cognitive and communicative functions of gestures somewhat overlook if and how learners’ previous experiences with sign-making within social groups influence their level or quality of comprehension of teachers’ gestures. It is only the *emblems* that have extensively been explored in cultural studies given their culture-specific meanings. As I mentioned in chapter 1, emblems, such as the thumb-up gesture, are used as substitutes for words. Because of the culture-specific meanings, emblems are the only type of gestures that received broader attention in cross-cultural studies of gestures in second language teaching (Hauge, 2000; Lazaraton & Ishihara, 2005).

In a multicultural classroom, all types of gestures are subject to individual and social interpretation because of their modal affordances and meaning potential. Individual learners may interpret and negotiate meanings of gestural signs in a complex way as learners' interpretation of gesture is influenced by their previous experiences of sign making as well as their individual interest within the immediate context of interaction (Kress, 2010, 2012). Kress (2012) states that the interest of someone making a sign and the interest of the interpreter reading or transforming that sign are both "an effect and the outcome of the history of interactions in which she/he has participated, in various communities" (p. 384). Furthermore, learners' potential to demonstrate learning is influenced by what modes they have available to use in the learning process; any limitations in the availability of modes will influence their learning potentials through specific modes (Kress & Bezemer, 2015). Gestures are semiotic and heuristic resources for making signs that are "made and mediated intertextually- in and through culture" (Yandell, 2008, p. 54). From this perspective, if a learner does not have adequate experience with a particular mode, they may struggle to transform the signs into their inner signs, which will affect their learning process.

For the students it is of course absolutely crucial what signs are made, what signs are there to be read, transformed, and remade by them, and, above all, how they are positioned in relation to these complex signs, given their own specific and, as a group, diverse backgrounds. (Kress et al., 2005, p. 36)

Students' difficulties in producing and interpreting multimodal signs may create further tension, especially if the students fail to connect to the signs. Scollon (2003) advocates for critical semiotic practices in the classroom that would help students engage in diverse semiotic systems of interaction. At the same time, students' access to multimodal resources in sign-making processes is necessary because each mode has its own meaning potential and limitations,

and the use of multiple modes in communication is important to replace one's limits with the others' meaning potentials. Educational studies suggest that one mode supplements or complements the other in the meaning-making process (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015). When students have lack of access to a particular mode, they are deprived of developing expertise in contemporary modes that may help them participate in new forms of learning.

The differences in sign-making through gestures across diverse social groups have also special significance for ESL classrooms. Apart from the multiple functions of gestures, students' use of gestures, or lack thereof, may often be identified as their communicative (in)competence in English in the ESL classroom. ESL learners are often identified as less fluent in English because of their paralinguistic incompetence, as discussed earlier. Many linguistic researchers, inspired by the notion of communicative competence, have suggested that teaching gestures should be integral to second/foreign language teaching (Al-Shabbi, 1993; Hassanain, 1994; Pennycook, 1985). Drawing on research on intercultural differences in non-verbal communication, a more recent article (Busà, 2015) in the *Lingue e Linguaggi* journal advocates for teaching non-verbal aspects of communication for eliminating cross-cultural miscommunication. The study also draws on two pilot studies that suggest how learners may transform their L1 gestures into L2, which are often misinterpreted by L2 speakers. From a multimodal semiotics view, learners' use of such resources is motivated by their social context and individual interest; therefore, students' difficulties in using gestures as meaning-making resources should be understood in relation to their previous experiences of semiotic work within specific social domains. This will provide insights into how gestural signs are made, transformed and negotiated by students in multicultural classrooms. A traditional way of teaching gestures-as-signs may not be effective to develop learners' paralinguistic competence because of the

complex sign- making processes involved in each semiotic work. Gestures, thus, need to be understood as part of teachers' and learners' transmodal performances (Pennycook, 2004), which emphasize integration of multimodal practices and interrelation among theories “encompassing the transcultural, translational and so forth” (p. 17).

2.3. Discourse and the Body

The body has been conceptualized as a social construction in humanities and social sciences. According to this view, meaning is inscribed on the body, which (re)produces the norms of being and behaving in the world (Turner, 2012). Race, gender and sexuality, for example, are considered to be socially constructed rather than biologically determined categories. Studies in education and (applied)linguistics provide important insights into meanings and images of the body such as gender, race, culture, disabled/ailing bodies as discursive construction (Kubota, 1999, 2001; Ramanathan, 2010). Following Foucault (1979, 1980), a few studies also suggest how bodies are regulated within specific contexts according to discursive realities to produce specific subjects (Kubota, 2001; Luke, 1992; Toohey, 2000). In this section, I review literature on discourse and the body to understand how such perspectives may inform studies on gestures in applied linguistics.

2.3.1. Discourse. In this study, discourses refer to Foucault's “systems of power/knowledge that define and regulate our social institutions, disciplines, and practices” (Norton & Morgan, 2013, p. 1). According to Foucault (1980), discourses construct and define knowledge and produce the object of knowledge. These also govern the way in which knowledge will be represented and put into practice within a historical moment. Some forms of knowledge, thus, acquire authority or power while others are restricted during that given time. Social practices are normalized by these various forms of knowledge, which is always linked to power.

Power is productive as it creates possibilities of new relations and produces and organizes individuals through which they take on specific subject positions. Pennycook (1994) discusses how discourses produce and regulate ways of understanding and organizing meanings; they create and limit possibilities through which we organize our subject positions. Hall (2001) also presents an analysis of Foucauldian discourse and discursive practices while noting that Foucault's discourse transcends the linguistic meanings of discourse as it refers to both language (what one says) and practices (what one does).

Discourse itself is not true or false, but it validates or rejects particular forms or configurations of knowledge and produces social realities (Foucault, 1980; Pennycook, 1994). Certain forms/modes of signification or meaning systems are accorded the status of truth "which are scientifically acceptable, and hence capable of being verified or falsified by scientific procedures" (Foucault, 1980, p. 112). Walkerdine (as cited in Pennycook, 1994), for example, demonstrates how knowledge about a *developing child* and learner-centered pedagogies are products of specific psycho-educational discourses. Such knowledge, practices and the subjects who embody the practices emerge from specific regimes of truth that produce scientifically validated pedagogies. Truth or realities about pedagogies, teaching learning and research are, thus, discursively produced; they do not have any truth value outside discourses.

2.3.2. Discursive meanings of the body. Foucault's (1979, 1980, 1990) work has a significant influence on the research on the body across academic fields, including applied linguistics. According to Foucault, discourses inscribe meanings on the body and (re)produce normative behavior and practices through which humans define and organize themselves. The body carries the imprints of discourses that sustain themselves by subjectifying and transforming the body. Using his work, Ramanathan (2010) discusses how the medical discourses of health,

ailment, and disability perceive the body in specific ways that colonize the ailing conditions. The discourses of *chemotherapy*, *amputation* and *prosthesis* characterize the ailing bodies in ways that represent body breakdowns such as the loss of body tissue, hair and energy. Discourses as such create the knowledge about the able/disable body and include/exclude individuals and groups based on the new knowledge, and the body becomes an object of knowledge. Discourses, thus, regulate the way in which we perceive the body as normal and make it, which, in turn, relates us to the social world.

Within classroom contexts, a similar view has been adopted to understand how discourses of race, gender, culture and sexuality operate on the bodies of teachers and students (Johnson, 2002; Haque & Morgan, 2009; Kubota, 2001; Kubota & Lin, 2009; Nelson, 2009). Johnson (2002) provides significant insights into the discursive meanings of the body in the classroom suggesting that bodily distribution and actions in the classroom are not accidental phenomena, rather “a thoughtful design derived from very old notions of how the body anchors mainstream values about authority, community, and the nature of mind” (Johnson, 2002, p. 99). Drawing on Foucault, Johnson (2002) discusses students’ academic behavior, such as sitting upright in stringent rows of desks while listening to lectures, as scholar-shaping techniques that emerged from the medieval European universities. Techniques as such embody Christian Monastic religious body practices such as kneeling, sitting in the church, monitoring eyes and the body to present oneself to the divine authority. In the 19th and 20th century, however, the secular practices transformed educational curricula and practices at major universities. Yet, except in a few educational institutions inspired by Montessori, Dewey and Freire’s philosophies, the constantly present body practices that conform to the classical discourses of academic behavior have rarely been questioned. The instructors and learners perceive themselves according to this

habitual culture through which they develop their subjective selves – a “felt sense of self [or a] body schema” (Johnson, 2002, p 100). Johnson also suggests that the discourses of academically sound bodies are consistent with “the development of an intelligence that requires quiet, centeredness, and discipline” (p. 105). Any unconventional body activities such as stretching or sudden stand-up do not conform to the above scholarly features, so these are considered as possible distractions from appropriate scholarly behavior. Likewise, ESL learners’ bodies are constructed as scholarly or civilized by school curricula, pedagogies and other educational discourses (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000), while Teachers’ bodies are also subjected to various discourses, and their embodied actions in the classroom are shaped by various pedagogical expectations (Saavedra & Marx, 2016).

The body, nevertheless, acquires multiple and even conflicting meanings over time and across social, cultural and political spaces (Turner, 2012). Because discourses are subject to transformation, different forms of knowledge may become dominant over time, creating a new set of discourses. Anthropological studies on gestures, for example, demonstrate how gestures produce different meanings across cultures; the sticking-out-tongue gesture represents mockery in the West, while serving the purpose of greeting in Polynesia (Kirch, 1979). The thumbs-up or the pointing-with-index-finger gestures may still have conflicting meanings across geographical spaces, while tattoos have been transformed into a symbol of fashion from a sign of criminality over time (Turner, 2012). Therefore, traditional discourses of academic bodies that quietly sit with upright postures in the classroom (Johnson, 2002) are also contingent upon time and space. Learners and learning are socially, politically and historically constructed (Toohey, 2000), so the discourses of the body will be different within each historical context (Hall, 2001). In general, students’ bodies are often identified as problematic and an obstacle to learning, and different

pedagogies across diverse historical contexts suggest specific supervision of the bodies to conform to the pedagogical goals (Saavedra & Marx, 2016). In communicative ESL classrooms, for instance, silent bodies are often equated with non-participatory actions or students' disengagement in the classroom (Hao, 2011), and what constitutes an active learner in those contexts is the product of dominant psycho-educational discourses (Pennycook, 1992).

Discursive meanings of the body in the above review inform this study by providing insights into how meanings of gestures might be constructed within specific discourses. As evident in Kress et. al.'s (2005) study, a group of students with lack of gestures in a classroom were identified as *low-ability* by their teacher. Orton (2000) suggests that many Chinese students are often identified by native speakers of English as "stiff and awkward" (p. 305) in conversation, and their lack of gestures is misrepresented as low proficiency in English (Orton, 2000; Pennycook, 1985). Such forms of knowledge are produced by the disciplinary knowledge about communication across cultures within the discourses of anthropology, which often compare how norms of communication are different across large cultures in which culture is defined by the nation state (Hao, 2011). The discourses of culture that ascribe specific positions and characteristics to individuals and groups are essentialist in nature because, as Toohey (2000) cites Hall, cultural identity is constructed through *time*, *history* and *culture* itself. Discourses produce and regulate the processes in which people are essentially positioned through categorization and norms that "enable the articulation of standards so that people can be compared and differentiated on the basis of their relation and standards" (Toohey, 2000, p. 8). Toohey also points to how identification and categorization of learners are done in a simplistic way within ESL contexts ignoring the dynamic characteristics of learners over time and across space.

2.3.3. Regulation of students' bodies. Discourses consist of techniques that normalize human behavior to produce them as subjects and objects of knowledge while knowledge functions through the body (Foucault, 1979; Luke, 1992; Saavedra & Marks, 2016). Young learners' bodies, for example, are subjected to specific knowledge that acts through pedagogical inscriptions (Luke, 1992) through which they are regulated in the classroom to be transformed into civilized/able bodies (Ford, 2003; Foucault, 1979; Holt, 2004; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000). For example, ESL children in Toohey's (2000) study were assigned specific seats away from other children who spoke their L1, while ESL learners in Saavedra and Marx's (2016) study were not allowed to use washrooms until they asked for permission in English. The practices were influenced by traditional second language learning perspectives that children would learn English better if they always spoke English. The language learning practices were, thus, exercised on the ESL students' bodies to normalize their *deviant* language skills. To Foucault (1979), the regulatory measures are subjectification processes that emerged from new technologies of power or what he calls *discipline*. This form of power is exercised on the body to optimize skills and capacities of individuals who will carry out specific tasks. Individual's bodies and actions are manipulated to produce improved and *docile* bodies. Foucault's (1979) concept of discipline focuses on how the overt control of the body by others is transformed into a form of self-control or disciplines. For example, following Foucault, researchers show how disciplines work in educational contexts through schedules, tests, standards, and rewards through which students become self-controlled civilized beings (Ball, 2013; Ford, 2003; Haque, 2017; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000). Ford (2003) illustrates methods of grouping students into categories, conversation with peers, self-reporting and diagnosis of students' dysfunction as measures to produce a targeted group of students who will gradually learn self-discipline.

A few studies in applied linguistics focus on how students' bodies become subjected to disciplinary power in the process of normalizing their linguistic and literacy skills. Luke (1992) discusses how pedagogical discourses construct children, their targeted levels of competencies and signs of successful achievement of those competencies. These discourses work on the bodies of children to make them literate within specific moral and political ideologies. The author presents his study on Australian early childhood literacy classrooms and suggests how the regulation of children's bodies through physical and verbal rearrangements was key to the literacy training in the classrooms observed. The children's bodily movements such as gaze, postures and sitting were all directed as part of the classroom discourses, which transform them into collective subjects of the literacy training. Similarly, Toohey's (2000) ground-breaking research on elementary school children's learning of English as a second language, as mentioned, points to how ESL learners are constructed into specific subjects. The ESL children in a Canadian elementary school were constructed as ranked individuals through the physical space of the classroom and management of their bodies. Toohey explains that the student participants' sitting arrangements and mobility in the classroom were some of the regulations through which the "acquisition of social skills" (p. 68) occurred. The ESL children were assigned seats away from each other if they spoke the same home language. They were also placed close to the teacher so that their conversation with peers could be monitored and terminated. Practices as such are influenced by multiple psycho-educational discourses that emphasize specific theories and methods of teaching and learning of ESL while prescribing *scientifically validated* pedagogies (Pennycook, 1994). All these measures aim at constructing them into specific subjects who will conform to *school identity*, which requires the students to be proficient in a variety of overlapping components, including physical, behavioral, linguistic, academic and

social skills (Toohey, 2000). The discourses produce specific realities of ESL and “taken-for-granted notions of what learning a second language in schools comprises” (Toohey, 2000, p. 91).

Saavedra and Marx’s (2016) study emphasizes how linguistic minority children are subjects and objects of discursive practices through which their linguistic skills are managed to make them speak *like everyone else* (Saavedra & Marx, 2016). The study reveals how bodies are managed in the classroom by forbidding ESL students to use the washroom until they could ask for the teacher’s permission in correct English. Saavedra and Marx also discuss how the teacher participants adopted specific teaching methods developed from cognitive psychology such as the Direct Instruction method to teach minority students. The instructional approach adopts “scripted curriculum, choral readings, repetition, and memorization, followed by external rewards” (p. 46), which as the teacher participants explained, were easy to measure. The teachers in the study also explained that the instructional approaches such as making the students sit quietly until the teacher finishes instruction helped them regulate the children’s behavior. The authors demonstrate that separating minority children from their peers as a measure to improve their skills also emerged from specific educational discourses that promoted the *No Child Left Behind* projects in which the school space becomes an economic reality.

Understanding the body as a discursive construction provides insights into how teachers and students’ gestures may also carry the imprints of discourse. There are specific examples of regulation of students’ gestures in the classroom in some existing studies. An example of such discursive practice is found in Kress et al.’s (2005) study where a student’s posture was constantly corrected by the teacher. The authors note that “the constant ensuring effort by the teacher to control the students’ posture” (p. 34) was done providing reasons such as they need to “sit up straight to avoid ‘cutting off the supply of oxygen to the brain’” (p. 34). The specific

posture was necessary to produce the student as an academic subject with specific paralinguistic competence. In this study I look for teachers' and students' specific gestural behavior that are subjected to disciplinary power within specific social/cultural discourses and construct them as ESL teachers and students.

It is noteworthy that teachers and students' bodies and embodied practices may also become a site of struggle and resistance within a specific discursive reality (Holt, 2004; Toohey, 2000). The pedagogical significance of embodied resistance will be discussed in detail in the final sections of this chapter regarding its relevance to the concept of performative identity (Butler, 1999) and the body. In the following sections, I will explain how some of Butler's concept of subjectivities, more specifically gender, as performative helps us understand embodied resistance as performative act of identity within the ESL context.

2.4. Performing Subjectivities through the Body

Performativity is an ongoing process of performance through which the subject is continually formed (Butler, 1999; Miller, 2012). The term *performative utterances* was first developed by Austin (1962) in his Speech Act Theory to demonstrate how some words/statements have performative functions. Through the concept, Austin explains a specific type of speech act which does what it says, as evident in the statement *I pronounce you husband and wife*. Austin argued that such functions of speech acts are contextual because their success depends on, as Pennycook (2004) explains, "the conventional procedure, the right words being uttered by the right people in the right circumstances, and the whole having the right effect" (p. 9). Butler's (1999) work on gendered identities is informed by this concept through which she proposes that gendered identities are performative because they are constitutive of rehearsed and repeated performances and "stylization of the body...within a highly rigid regulatory frame" (p.

43). Butler (1999) suggests that the body is always acquiring meaning through signification practices, so there is no pre-existence of the gendered body; gendered identities are constructed through repetitive performative actions. Inspired by Foucault's (1979) idea of how discourses are inscribed on prisoners' bodies by regulation, Butler (1999) explains that the principles and markers that constitute gendered identity are also discursively constructed, and they are inscribed "*on the surface of the body*" (p. 173). Thus, "acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means" (p. 173, original emphasis) for the purpose of sustaining heterosexual norms.

Butler emphasizes that meanings of gender and sexuality are inscribed on the body through social/semiotic resources such as speech and gesture, and the body becomes signified by the discursive meanings represented through semiotic signs. The statement *it's a girl* after a child is born, for example, provides a specific gendered identity to the child and creates an image of a context-specific body with certain physical features, clothing and gesture that would be different from the meaning of *a boy*. The girl, on the other hand, needs to conform to specific discursive acts to be able to *become* a girl through *performance*, which "reenacts established social meanings by which individuals re-experience conventional identity attributions, and thereby sediment such conventions" (Miller, 2012, p. 89). "Through repetition, identities become recognisable and develop an appearance of solidity or 'reality'" (Charteris, 2016, p. 191).

The concept of performativity suggests that subjectivities are formed within specific discursive realities and, thus, confirm and (re)construct the social reality itself. Butler (1999) emphasizes the process of becoming the self through sedimentation or reiteration, which makes the subjective formation a "circular and self-producing activity" (Pennycook, 2004, p. 8). Butler

(1999), however, rejects the notion of any fixed power relationships, which position subjects within social relations in a rigid way. Pennycook (2004) points out how Butler's ideas of unstable power relations creates a pathway to agency through which people who are denied power may appropriate authoritative discourses for creating political movements. This suggests that the identity positions are paradoxical as they appear to be fixed but are inherently unstable (Charteris, 2016) and may produce alternative selves (Jagger, 2008).

2.4. 1. Relevance of performativity to this study. Pennycook (2004) sketches the relevance of Butler's performativity to language studies explaining how it deconstructs the rigid regulatory framework of understanding language and (applied)linguistics. Pennycook discusses the possibilities of understanding language and all its discursive formations as emergent products of performative acts of identity while criticizing the "foundational categories" (p. 8) of language use and subjective formation of its users. Pennycook says, "Gender, like grammar, like many other forms of identity or apparently structured properties, is a sedimentation of acts repeated over time within regulatory contexts" (p. 15). This concept assigns a dynamic relationship between language and society, in which language and identities are continuously *done* by people in the process of refashioning their selves. Pennycook's discussion also points to the importance of understanding language and identity in terms of "transmodal performance" (p. 9) in which all modes of communication are interrelated in creating meanings. To Pennycook, transmodality is a preferred term because, unlike multimodality, it acknowledges a set of interrelated theories such as transculturalism and transnationalism in the study of language use while recognizing the contribution of multiple modes as an integrated system in meaning-making. This concept of performativity opens up possibilities for understanding the formation of subjectivity through embodied actions as part of transmodal performance.

I use the concept of performativity in this study to understand ESL teachers' and students' gestures/embodied practices as part of their repeated multimodal acts that constitute them as their desired versions of ESL teachers and students. What constitute good teaching and learning, from this perspective, are not objective realities, but are perceived and/or realized through their repeated gestures and other multi/transmodal actions, so ESL pedagogies are also emergent products of their repeated performances of identity. This theoretical perspective helps me identify the moments of resignification of the participants' selves through which they sometimes may re-signify and/or resist discourses of teaching and learning a second language. This also helps me maintain my major argument in this study that meanings of gestures are continually (re)made within specific signifying practices and that each theoretical concept I use in this study may provide new insights into those meanings.

I discuss in the following section how language, learning and subjectivities are produced through performative acts of identity. The sections below also include some educational studies (Charteris, 2016; Liew, 2013; Vick & Martinez, 2011) that suggest how teachers and students may negotiate/appropriate their subject positions in the classroom through their embodied performances that continually construct social realities such as what signifies *good teaching* or *being a good student*.

2.4.2. Doing language, learning and subjectivities. The concept of performativity has recently been used in applied linguistics research to study teachers' and students' subjectivities in ESL classrooms (Miller, 2012; Morgan, 2004; Nelson, 2009). A few studies point to the powerful implications of the concept for understanding teachers' and students' ongoing (re)constitution of identities through words or language in ESL classrooms (Miller, 2012; Morgan, 2004; Pacheco, 2010). Performativity, for example, informs Morgan's (2004) study

which portrays a co-constructed and reiterative discovery of his own identity in an adult ESL program in a Chinese community center. The author strategically deployed aspects of this co-constructed identity in ways that challenged stereotypes of gender relations and family matters. Morgan was an ESL teacher in a community-based ESL program in Toronto. The author suggests how his frequent interaction with his students became a “dialogical activity in the performative sense” (p. 181) through which his identities were re-constituted according to student responses. The author’s strategic interaction about his participation in household chores such as cleaning and cooking while emphasizing his wife’s role in making financial decisions at home is an example. Interactions as such produced multiple *image texts* of himself and (re)constituted his identity, for example, as a “‘domesticated’ male teacher” (p. 183). This contested some of the students’ stereotypes of gender relations and provided them with opportunities to negotiate social relations.

Miller’s (2012) study also demonstrates how language and learning are sedimented products of repeated acts of identity in classroom interaction. The author investigates a series of three interactions between two adult ESL learners in the US. Through the repeated interactions, the author shows that the conventionalized forms of English language, its (in)correct usage and the notions of native/non-native speakers are (re)produced through the participants’ continuous discussion and appropriation of language rules and conventions. The learners, for example, were observed discussing and appropriating how to respond to a “negative question” in English because one of the learners identified “grammar mistakes” in the other’s response to a negative question. They also discussed how other *native speakers* of English would respond to a question like this. The author suggests that the learners viewed language as a static system with specific rules and conventions, which they could analyze to determine and learn its correct usage. During

their interactions, the learners also turned to the author as a legitimate speaker of the language to confirm the correct usage. Thus, as the author suggests, the rules and conventions of English were not pre-given, but were emergent through the interactions, through which native/non-native speaker identities were (re)constituted. This, in turn, legitimized the common sense understanding of English as an autonomous system. It also reproduced the idea that some speakers have the legitimate language authority over the others. As the author suggests, such understanding of language and subject positions are continually sedimented in local practices. This also provides insights into the ways in which the positions and the discursive practices can be contested and reinterpreted:

Recognizing the ways in which we normatively constitute the realities of interest for our field does not invalidate them, but it does make clear that there must always be alternatives. If something is constructed, then, in principle, we can contest, reinterpret, and invoke new ways of orienting to constructions such as language and learning and the subjectivities of the people involved. (Miller, 2012, p. 97)

Pacheco (2010), on the other hand, emphasizes continual positioning of economically disadvantaged ESL students as *low-achieving* and *deficient* by their teacher in a bilingual education program in Limon. The teacher imposed her own ideological views about achievement and success on the students and identified them as either successful or deficient based on racial background and other ideological views. For instance, students who could not finish a skimming task on time were identified as *disadvantaged*. The teacher valued the possession of a dictionary by individual students, and those who did not have any at home were identified, along with their parents, as *deficient*. She also suggested that the students should ask for dictionaries instead of toys from their parents. Thus, the students' *disadvantaged* identities were constituted through the

teacher's talk and classroom practices. This, in turn, also constructed their families as deficient through discursive practices that were products of larger sociopolitical ideologies and reforms such as the *No Child Left Behind* project.

Language, learning and subjective formation, thus, are productive processes, which problematize the competence-based understanding (Pennycook, 2004) of the acquisition of linguistic and paralinguistic systems of English. Rather, the (para)linguistic aspects of communication are semiotic resources (Kress, 2010; 2012) that learners use, appropriate, and (re)construct through social interactions. These ongoing semiotic practices create the conventions over time, and they may demonstrate conformity as well as resistance to discourses. Furthermore, through the semiotic practices, which may be both agentic and discursive, learners constantly negotiate and (re)construct themselves as appropriate subjects in the classroom.

2.4.3. The subject and embodied/transmodal performance. Some of the above studies mainly focus on what Austin (1962) would call the performative power of words. Hence, the role of embodied practices or what Pennycook (2004) calls transmodal performances in subjective formation have not been widely investigated in applied linguistics research. It is noteworthy that Pacheco's (2010) study suggests how the (re)constituted subject positions of *good* or *deficient* students are often inscribed on their body, which is why the embodied practices are worth investigating. The author, for example, shows that one of the students identified as a disadvantaged ESL student reflected his marginalized positions through his "downward gaze... bobbing of his head...[and] slow swaying movements" (p. 87). The author also notes how the student sometimes demonstrated his *good student* performance through "wrinkled eyebrows...index finger positioned on his chin" (p. 87) and raised hands to answer questions from the margin.

Evidences of embodied performances of subject positions as such have been somewhat underreported in applied linguistics research. However, a few educational studies emphasize how teaching and learning are outcomes of performative acts of identity in which embodied actions such as postures, movements and stylized gestures play significant role (Charteris, 2016; Liew, 2013; Vick & Martinez, 2011). Vick and Martinez (2011), for example, explore *teaching* and *teachers* as discursive constructions, pointing to how they are products of reiterative embodied practices. The authors explain that the act of teaching is comprised of embodied acts such as the use of teachers' voice, postures, movements and stylized gestures within the classroom space. "Teaching, in this context, is constituted anew in the citation of gestures already invested with the particular meanings that constitute them as 'teaching'" (p. 186). Teaching is subject to a multifaceted and often changing normative regime, while *teachers* are constructed through "personalized 'teaching styles'" (p. 188) "within the repertoire of possibilities available to them" (p. 187). The teacher, here, is the *subject* who continually looks for options to reassemble themselves in individualized ways to become appropriate to "socio-cultural processes that are themselves multiplicitous and continually changing" (p. 188). Liew (2013), similarly, suggests how teachers have multiple roles in the classroom, including the role of caregivers, managers, administrators and social workers, which they enact "through an embodied repertoire of words, gestures, postures, facial expressions, and outward appearances" (p. 263). Both teachers and students appropriate and (re)do their subjective positions (Davies, 2006) as well as the social practices that constitute them as subjects (Vick & Martinez, 2011), and both subjectivities and social realities are (re)constructed in their embodied practices. Vick and Martinez suggest that adopting alternative practices is possible, but it requires to draw "attention precisely to the embodied practices through which teaching is performatively (continually re-)constituted" (p.

189). They also point to the importance of uncovering and drawing in “of forgotten or submerged traditions of practice, both contemporary and historical, in which differently embodied pedagogies are employed” (Vick & Martinez, 2011, p. 189).

2.4.4. Embodied resistance in the classroom. Negotiation and resistance are complex phenomena. All the theoretical concepts discussed in this chapter acknowledge the presence of agency and resistance in social meaning-making processes in various degrees. This opens up possibilities for investigating how the body rules and conventions might be resisted or altered through the same performative acts of identity as they are essentially unstable. Anthropological studies present numerous examples of how this is done by marginalized people who create alternative signs/ meanings. Bobel and Kwan’s (2011) edited book, for example, includes empirical studies and personal essays on embodied resistance such as growing hair on the body, being *fat*, breastfeeding in public that highlight how such actions may challenge cultural inscriptions on female bodies. The authors discuss how embodied resistance that challenges “contextual body norms” (p. 2) can have multiple forms of expression. Resistance may include complex negotiation of the norms, which involve “lesser and greater degrees of intentionality and recognition” (p. 2). Embodied resistance may also contribute to internal and external transformations as suggested by Davidman (2011) in his study on Haredi Jewish groups in Israel and the US who resisted and transformed bodily practices that were central to their religious identities.

Embodied resistance has also been investigated in educational settings. Holt (2004) and Toohey’s (2000) studies highlight how children may adopt specific embodied practices to negotiate and resist classroom discourses. Holt’s (2004) study highlights how the children participants who could not show the expected behaviour in the classroom were punished more

often and were labelled as *naughty* by the teachers. This situation was negotiated by the children who seemed to have learned to continue their *inappropriate* practices hiding from the teachers' *gaze*. One of the children participants said: "We talk all the while though, but we don't let Miss see...when she turns her back" (p.230). Toohey's (2000) study as discussed earlier also suggests how disciplinary techniques such as the removal of ESL students from the class for "ESL pullout" in the observed classrooms apparently seemed to have marginalized them, but later, the children were observed withdrawing themselves from large group activities, which could "have been a practice of resistance to the centrally defined classroom activities" (p. 91). Toohey says,

being on the margins, farther from teacher surveillance, in some ways could put a child in a more powerful position; one had more autonomy in choosing one's own activities and verbal participation than when one was more centrally located with regard to the teacher. (p. 91).

Researchers also suggest how teachers constantly disrupt official practices and resist/reinterpret documents according to their own understanding of what good teaching constitutes (Vick & Martinez, 2011). In ESL contexts, the normative view of language learning as a unitary process and the taken-for granted realities of SLA (Miller, 2012; Toohey, 2000) need to be problematized to understand the complex meaning-making systems in everyday interaction, which includes gestural representation as complex and dynamic semiotic resources. The body needs to be re-conceptualized as, what Ramanathan (2010) argues, "the condition and context through which we have relation to the world... an intricate machinery of power that subjugates it, explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it" (p. 9) as well as "agentive inasmuch as it shapes the world" (p. 9). A more holistic approach to gesture research is necessary, one that incorporates a flexible understanding of gestures as meaning-making modal resources;

social/cognitive tools for learning, development as well as regulatory control; and, socio-historically constructed *practiced* and *subjected* expressions (Foucault, 1979) that are both “medium and outcome of subjective formation” (McLaren, 1991, p. 154).

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter, I discuss the research design, including the principles and procedures that guided the methodology of this study. I adopt a multimodal perspective to research that conceptualizes communication and representation as complex processes of meaning-making using multiple modes (Jewitt, 2014). I discuss in this chapter how multimodal research is relevant to my study. Following this, I discuss the ethical considerations and the procedures followed in the study. The chapter then includes descriptions of the research site, the participants and methods and procedures of data collection. Finally, I discuss the principles and procedures of data analysis, selection and presentation in the dissertation.

3.1. Multimodal Research

Multimodal research looks for different forms of communication and representation, so this theoretical perspective helps researchers look beyond the dominant mode of speech and understand other meaning-making resources such as gestures, gait, postures, demeanor of the body and even silence (Jewitt, 2014). Jewitt (2009) discusses that the underlying principles of multimodal research emerge from social and cultural theories of communication and representation, which reflect how modes are adopted and used across social and cultural domains for meaning-making purposes. This methodological approach is relevant to my research because gestures become prominent semiotic resources along with other modes in the data when they are investigated from a multimodal perspective. Multimodal research has also been an important perspective to understand meanings of gestures as I have discussed in the literature review. Jewitt (2014) points to how multimodality can be used as a theory, perspective, a heuristic framework or a method like ethnographic research. This theory can also be used in combination with other theoretical approaches; Jewitt's (2009) edited book on multimodal research provides

examples of various studies that incorporated multimodality with other approaches such as visual communication, New Literacy Studies and sociocultural theory. In my study, I adopt a range of theoretical perspectives such as sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), multimodal semiotics (Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001), discourse and the body (Foucault, 1979; Kubota, 1999; Luke, 1992; Ramanathan, 2010; Toohey, 2000), and the concept of performativity (Butler, 1997) [see chapter 2]. I use the theories as complementary lenses to each other because each theoretical concept informs this study by providing a different perspective to gestures as resources of communication. Since multimodal research focuses on how modal resources interact with each other in moment-by-moment interaction within specific social/cultural contexts, this helps me understand the meanings of gestures in relation to other modes and social contexts of communication while looking at how the meanings can be complemented by different theoretical approaches.

The main objective of this study is to collect multimodal data focusing on verbal and non-verbal interaction including gestures, which is why my study is video based. Understanding the research objective, sites and the elements and processes of recordings are key to having effective video data (Jewitt, 2014). Furthermore, as Jewitt suggests, a reflexive account of video data is necessary because working with video data involves a rigorous process of extracting still images from video recordings and transcribing different forms of communication such as gestures and speech. Therefore, transcription, presentation and analysis of data require careful attention and revision.

Hence, different perspectives to multimodality have been adopted in multimodal research based on the purpose of the studies. Jewitt (2009a) presents three different perspectives to multimodal research: first, social semiotic multimodality which seeks to understand the sign-

makers' choices in using semiotic resources in meaning-making. Examples of such studies (Kress et al., 2005; Kress & Bezemer, 2015) are discussed in the literature review. The second view, as discussed by Jewitt, is termed as multimodal discourse analysis. This focuses on the analysis of discourse within the immediate semiotic system and resources such as language, visual images and space (O'Halloran, 2004). O'Halloran's book includes a range of studies that use multimodal discourse analysis. The larger social and historical context within which the text is produced is ignored in multimodal discourse analysis, so it restricts the understanding of any contexts outside the semiotic system. The third perspective, termed as multimodal interaction analysis, as Jewitt (2009a) explains, focuses on the use of multiple modes in face-to-face social interaction, so how modes are used in real contexts in specific moments of interaction is important. Norris' (2004) work is prominent in this line of research. In my dissertation study, I use a combination of social semiotic multimodality and multimodal interaction analysis at different stages in the research process because both emphasize the sign-maker's interest/choice in selecting specific modes in meaning-making. Multimodal interaction analysis, however, acknowledges that agency can be restricted as actors' participation in communication may not always reflect their intentions (Jewitt, 2009a). For example, a listener who is subordinated to the speaker in terms of power relations, may respond with a head nod even though they do not agree with the speaker. Therefore, the perspectives help me acknowledge power relationships that often shape interactions while agency can also be influenced by discourses.

There were multiple stages of data collection and analysis processes involved in this study. Following is a visual representation of the stages.

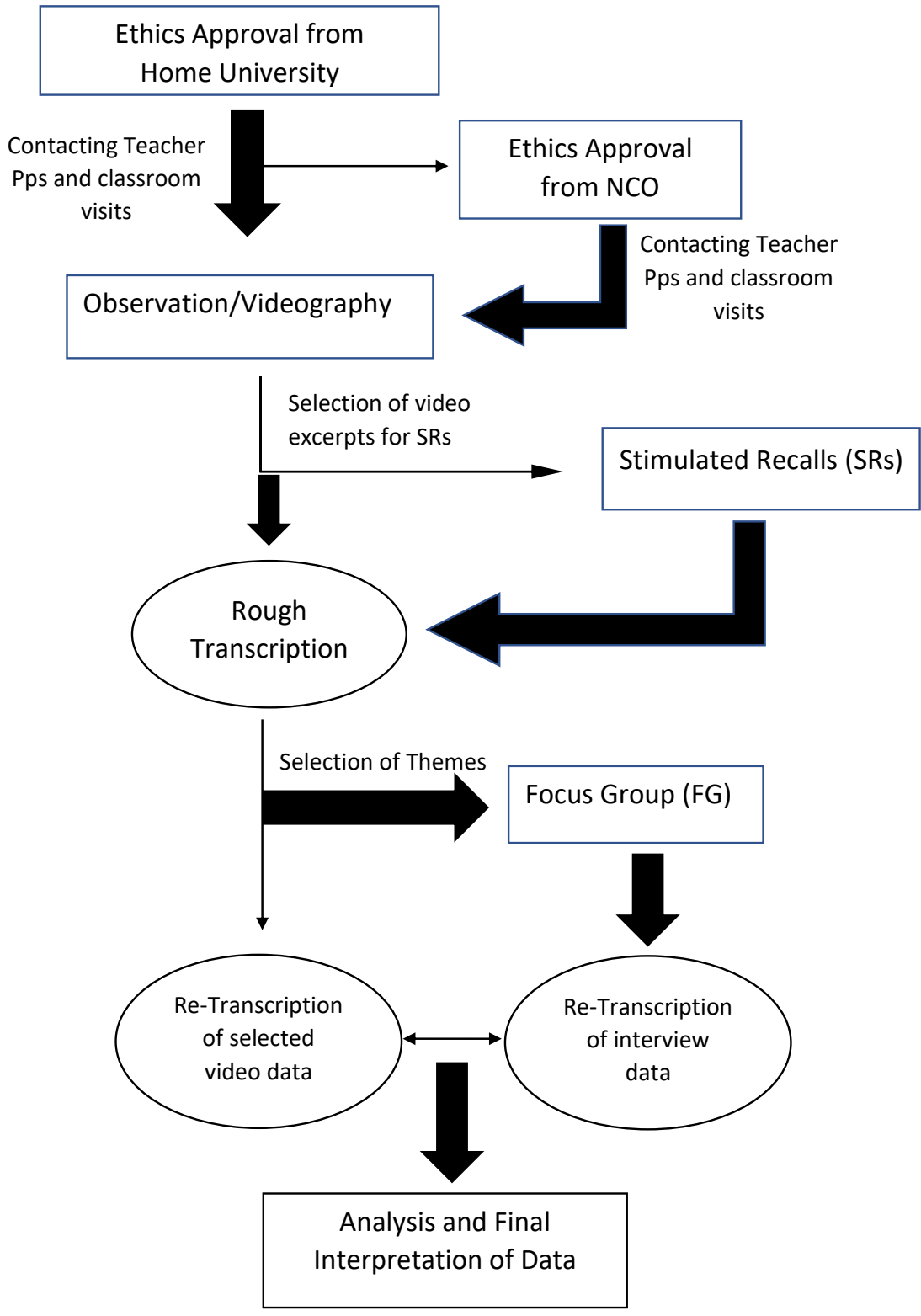


Figure 1. Stages of Research Design.

This figure shows some of the major steps followed during data collection and analysis.

3.2. Research Ethics and the Process of Consent

The research ethics documents of this study were reviewed by York University's Human Research Participants Committee (HPRC), and the study got an approval from the York University Office of Research Ethics in November 13, 2014.

For this study, two schools in Central Canada were selected based on my prior acquaintance with some of the faculty members. One of the schools was a private language school directed by a manager, and the other was a community college, which has a Department of English and ESL. Hereinafter, the private language school will be called International Language School or *ILS*, and the community college will be called National College Ontario or *NCO*. After getting the ethics approval, the manager at ILS and the chair of the English department at NCO were contacted to discuss the study. After getting the official approval from the manager at ILS, some ESL instructors were contacted and provided with an invitation letter in-person. Three ESL instructors responded to the invitation in December 2014, and, afterwards, the consent forms for the teacher and the students were emailed in advance so that they could read and discuss those with the students. Both teacher and student participants were given time to ask questions about the study before the observations were scheduled. The teacher and student participants consented to participate with minimal confidentiality, in which they agreed to show their faces in video data.

At NCO, however, a second round of research ethics approval was required, which delayed the data collection process at the institution. The study was approved by the college Research Ethics Board on December 3, 2014, with a condition that the participants' faces will be edited out in the video data while presenting them in the study. Invitation letters to the faculty members were sent through the Chair in January 2015, and two faculty members responded to the

invitation. The faculty members were provided with the respective research documents following the same process discussed above.

There was a small deception involved in this study. Until the completion of classroom observation, the participants were not informed that their gestures would be observed in the study. Because this study aimed at recording the participants' intentional and unintentional gestures in natural situations, disclosing this information might have made the participants conscious about their gestural behavior. Instead, they were told that this study was on classroom interaction and pedagogical activities. This was, however, disclosed in both the research ethics applications with an additional consent that the participants would be allowed to withdraw from the research during the interviews if they chose to discontinue at any time. The participants were told that those who did not agree to participate, would be edited out completely from the video data. All the teacher and student participants agreed to participate in the classroom observation; all the teachers and some of their students agreed to participate in the interviews. All the participants handed in a signed copy of their consent forms before the classroom observation took place. The participants from ILS agreed to use their faces in the video data; however, the participants at NCO were told that their faces would be blurred in the video data that were going to be used for the study purpose.

The study participants were informed about the main objective of the research after the classroom observations were done. They were informed that the study aimed at the role of body language in teaching and learning, especially in comprehending lessons and understanding classroom meanings. I explained that this was not told before because I wanted to observe the teachers' and the students' body language in natural situations without making them conscious of their behavior, whether intentional or unintentional. They were also told that they could

withdraw anytime if they did not agree to participate, and they would completely be edited out from the video data. All the participants agreed to go forward with the research. Before the classroom observation took place, all the participants gave written consent to participate in the observation, and those who agreed to participate in the interviews selected the appropriate option on the informed consent form.

3.3. Sites of Research

The study was conducted at a private language school ILS and a community college NCO in Ontario. I had access to both the schools based on my prior acquaintance with some of the teachers. Therefore, the sites were easy to access for this study. Furthermore, the study aimed at observing adult ESL students' gestural behavior, so both schools met the requirements of the study. ILS was founded in 1969, and currently offers teacher training programs, a variety of English and foreign language courses and examination preparation programs, including IELTS and CELPIP. ILS provides 55+ intensive, executive and evening ESL courses to domestic and international students from zero English level to advanced level in English. The foreign language classes include French, Spanish, Japanese, Russian and Arabic. ILS has different levels of English language components including pronunciation, speaking, reading and writing, and grammar. There are two campuses in the same area. The main campus accommodates all language skills from level 1 to 6, equivalent to IELTS Band 1 to 5.5. These are identified as intensive English classes for beginner (level 1 to 3) to intermediate levels (level 4-6). The classes are about 55 mins long from Monday to Friday. Each class has an average of eight students because of their intensive nature. Students have options to choose their teachers, language components within their tested level, and three to six hours of classes per day. The other campus located nearby offers an English for Academic Purposes program, which accommodates levels 7

-12. Level 7 to 9 are described as advanced [equivalent to IELTS Band 6 to 7] and level 10 to 12 are presented as proficiency levels [equivalent to IELTS Band 7.5 to 9]. This program prepares students for university or college level English, so it is also called Academic Pathways. This is, in fact, a pathway program to earn an equivalency credit for admission into many community colleges, including NCO. The students who successfully complete the Academic Pathways program are exempted from the language proficiency test at the community colleges. The courses observed at ILS were a pronunciation-6 taught by Tracy, grammar 4 taught by Riley, and pronunciation 8 and speaking 8 taught by Elaine.

ILS is open to students' choices of attending, and moving to, any of their level of classes taught by different instructors at any time. This creates a flexible and mobile atmosphere in the classrooms where some new students join, and some old ones leave every day. According to the teacher participants of this study, they have to always be prepared for new students. To accommodate the new students, they usually have 5- to 10-minutes of revision of previously taught content in the beginning of the class. The teachers also closely monitor new students, and the small class size helps them work individually with the students.

This flexibility is reflected in the classroom space as well. The four classrooms observed at ILS had a diverse classroom layout with different sitting arrangements for teachers and students. Some classrooms had chairs arranged in a half circle around the room. The teacher's desk is usually placed at the front or on the side in these classrooms. Some classrooms had a dining-room layout with big tables in the middle. The main campus of the school had posters, images, maps and other resources decorated on the walls by the instructors, but the other campus having the EAP program had white-washed walls with one or two photographs posted by the school authority.

NCO was established in 1966 and has multiple campuses in the city. The English department at NCO offers English and ESL courses as well as some Foundation programs. The English curriculum at the department is divided between two parallel streams: English and ESL. Except for some program-specific English courses such as Business English, most of the courses are categorized into different levels with their own descriptors, and each level of English has an ESL counterpart. The syllabi, textbooks, classroom activities and assessment in the ESL courses are different from that of English courses. The courses aim at developing students' reading, writing, grammar and editing skills, along with other communication skills required to succeed at the college level. The courses run for one academic semester in the Fall, Winter and Summer, and end with a formal assessment. Both English and ESL courses have fixed curricula, course syllabi, textbooks and assessment schemes.

While most students admitted to NCO take English or ESL as mandatory credit courses as per their program requirements, the students barred from admission because of poor English scores may take Foundation programs to upgrade their English. Among the credit courses, College Communications 1 [both English and ESL] is considered to be the first college-level English course, and most programs have an entry requirement of College Communications 1 [referred to as CC1 from now on]. Students seeking admissions into these programs have to take a placement test. Domestic students may get admissions based on their grade 11/12 English scores but are still required to be placed in an English course. If they are tested at a lower level than CC 1, additional English courses are added to their program schedule; if they are tested at a higher level, they are exempted from CC1 and are directly placed at CC2 [College Communications 2]. International students, on the other hand, may use their IELTS scores or English language certificates from Academic Pathways programs from qualified schools such as

ILS to get admissions, but they have to go through the same placement process. Among the domestic and international students, those who have less than five years of high school education in a non-English speaking country are placed at the ESL stream. The Foundation programs are usually one-year programs that include two English courses, one of which is equivalent to CC1. Students who successfully complete a Foundation program becomes eligible for their program of choice and are directly placed at CC2.

The classroom space at NCO is very different from the classroom space at ILS. During the observation, the classrooms at NCO had traditional sitting arrangements with student desks in four/five straight rows. The instructors did not have any desks, but a podium was placed at the front corner so that the teacher would not block the white board. During the observation, students were sitting at their desks facing the instructor, except when they were engaged in group work.

One of the two classes observed at NCO was a foundation level ESL course, called F2-ESL as of now; F2 is equivalent to CC1. The second course observed was a CC1-ESL course. Both courses observed were from the ESL stream. F2-ESL is an eight-hours/per week Foundations 2 course specifically designed for foundation -level students to upgrade their English. This integrated course helps the students earn a CC1-ESL equivalency credit. The course focuses on analyzing reading for main ideas, organization, purpose, audience, tone; writing coherent paragraphs following academic vocabulary and sentence structures; academic listening and speaking skills; and summarizing, paraphrasing, editing and proofreading skills. The students are expected to get a minimum 60% to get into their respective programs. CC1-ESL, on the other hand, is considered as the first, college-level English-credit course, which focuses on grammar, sentence structure skills, paragraph writing and reading comprehension skills. The course runs for three hours/per week for fourteen weeks.

3.4. The Participants

I selected the teacher participants in this study because they were teaching ESL to adult students when this study took place. Furthermore, they all showed interest in the study and volunteered to participate. Three teachers from ILS and two teachers from NCO responded to the invitation, and all of their students consented to participate in the observation. The number of teachers is adequate for this study because this is a qualitative study that looks for an in-depth understanding of each teacher's gestural representations. All the teacher participants in this study were native speakers of English. All the five teachers agreed to take part in the interviews. However, two of the teacher participants from ILS were unable to attend the Focus Group because of time constraints. As discussed earlier, ILS has a complex teaching/learning scenario because of the fluid student intake. This also influenced the teachers and students' participation in the study. Some of the students who had participated in the observation left before the interviews, and some of them could not provide a suitable time because of an intensive schedule. Teachers and students from NCO, however, were easy to access. A total of eleven students took part in the interview. The number of students who participated in the interview was also adequate because I was interested in individual students' use and understanding of gestures. The following table presents a brief profile of the key participants who participated in the observation and interviews.

Table 3.1 Profile of the Key Participants							
The School	Teacher participants	Student participants	Country of origin	Educational background	Number of years/months at the institution	Classes observed	
ILS	Elaine		Canada	B.A + TESL	Six months	Pronunciation level 8	
		Alice	Venezuela	B.A	Seven months		
		Vanessa	China	Diploma in Tourist admin	Six months		
	Riley			B.A + TESL	Three years	Grammar 4	
		Andres	Venezuela		Four months		
		Maria	Portugal	MA	Four months		
	Tracy		Canada	BA +TESL	Four years	Pronunciation 5	
		No students from Tracy's class participated in the interview					
		Rhonda		Canada	MA student + TESL + CELTA	Five years	

NCO		Jihong	China/ Canadian citizen	B.A.	2 years	F2-ESL (foundation 2)/ non-credit
		Jamil	Bangladesh/ Canadian citizen	University	2 years	
		Jessica	China	BA	1 year	
		Winnie	China	High school	1 year	
	Robin		Canada	BA +TESL + CELTA	Six years	CC1-ESL (college communication 1)
		Anusha	India	Diploma	1 year	
		Basu	India/ Canadian citizens	Grade 12 (Canada)	Six months	
		Sujal	India	High school	2 years	

Table 1

3.4.1. Elaine and her students. Elaine had started teaching at ILS a few months before the time of the study. She started her teaching career volunteering at a Sunday Church school and worked as a coordinator at another private school. Elaine had a B.A., and she completed her TESL certification program in 2014 and started teaching at the EAP program at ILS. Elaine was a part-time instructor at ILS, but it was a permanent position, and she was getting regular contracts in the school. Elaine spoke English as her first language and French and Italian as her additional languages. Elaine participated in the observation, SR interview and FG. Two of her classes were observed for this study, and each class had about six to eight international students from a diverse background, including Europe, East Asia, and Middle East. Two of her following students participated in the interview.

Alice came from Venezuela and had been living in Canada as an international student for more than a year until the time of the study. She spoke Castiano as her first language and, besides English, she could communicate in Spanish and Scottish Gaelic. Alice had been at ILS for seven months. Alice wanted to stay and work in Canada, which is why she was taking the English classes. She chose to study at ILS because it was close to her home, and she found the learning environment very flexible. Another student Vanessa was an international student from China. She had visited Canada before and liked the environment, so she came back to learn English. Vanessa finished a Diploma in Tourist Administration back home and wanted to go to university in her hometown. She chose ILS because of the small classes, which she believed would help her improve her English.

3.4.2. Riley and Her Students. Riley had been a teacher at ILS for three years. She had a bachelor's degree in applied linguistics from a Canadian university. Her major, however, was TESL until the completion of her second year of her graduate program, when she switched to

applied linguistics in her third year. Riley also completed a TESL Certificate program from a major university in Ontario. Riley had taught ESL in Japan before she started working at ILS. Riley taught in the beginner and intermediate programs in the main campus of ILS. Riley was also involved in planning extracurricular events in the school. Two classes from her Grammar 4 course were observed. The classes took place on two consecutive days. This class had five students from different demographics and age group. Andres and Maria from her class participated in the interview.

Andres and Maria were international students taking ESL classes at ILS for about four months. Maria came from Portugal after finishing a master's program in cultural studies. Because her field lacked government funding, job opportunities were diminishing, which is why she came to Canada as a tourist and got a study permit. Andres came from Venezuela and had been living in Canada with his brother for about a year. Andres spoke Spanish and had never learned English before. He enrolled in an ESL program at a community college but switched to ILS because of high tuition costs at the college. After finishing his ESL program, he would go to a college and study project management because he wanted to stay and work in Canada.

3.4.3. Tracy and her students. Tracy had been at ILS for about four years. She had a bachelor's degree in psychology, and she finished her TESL certification from a recognized university. She also taught in Korea for two years, and later, moved to Nova Scotia. She did not have her TESL when she first joined ILS; later, the school funded her TESL certification. Tracy taught mostly pronunciation classes as well as a few grammar and speaking classes. Tracy's Pronunciation 5 class was observed in this study, and the course included a few European and Chinese students. Most of her students were near the end of their courses at ILS and were leaving soon, which is why no one could manage time for the interview.

3.4.4. Rhonda and her students. Rhonda had been teaching at NCO for almost five years. She was a contract faculty member and taught a variety of English and ESL courses. She was studying in her master's program during the time of this study and had TESL and CELTA certification. Rhonda had also taught in the LINC (Language Instructions for Newcomers to Canada) program before joining NCO. Because her position was not unionized at the college, Rhonda taught at other community colleges at the same time so that she could keep alternative work hours if she did not have a contract at any of the colleges. One of her foundation-level ESL courses was observed. The course consisted of two 3-hour sessions, and one 2-hour session per week, so a 2-hour session was observed for this study. The class consisted of about 25 students from a diverse background, including domestic and international ESL students.

Four students from Rhonda's class participated in the interview. Jessica and Winnie were international students from China. Jessica had finished a bachelor's degree in China, but Winnie had just finished her high school. Both wanted to finish their program and stay in Canada, so the English courses were very important to them. Jihong and Jamil, on the other hand, were domestic students. Jihong was from China and Jamil immigrated from Bangladesh. They both had university degrees and had previously worked in their respective fields back home. Both students were looking for a prospective career in a Canadian bank, so they wanted to complete a diploma in Business. Jihong had taken some English classes at LINC before she got admission at NCO.

3.4.5. Robin and his students. Robin had been at NCO for about six years. He was also contract faculty and taught a diverse range of English and ESL courses. He had a bachelor's degree, a TESL and a CELTA certification. Robin taught in the LINC program in Ontario, and some ESL programs in Mexico before joining. His position at NCO was similar to Rhonda's, so he also worked at other community colleges. One of his College Communication 1 classes was

observed in this study. It was a three-hour course, but only the first two hours were observed. Robin's class had a similar student demography as Rhonda's.

Three students from Robin's class participated in the study. While Basu was a domestic student, Sujal and Anusha were international students from India. Sujal was in his first year of a 2-year automotive power technician program. He spoke Punjabi, and his placement was in Foundation English (ESL) after his admission. He was now in college communication 1, which he had failed once before. This was his second time taking the course in Robin's class. Sujal had completed his grade 12 from India and wanted to study in Australia, but his parents' choice was a Canadian college. Unlike Sujal, Anusha had been in Canada for three years, and she completed her grade 12 in India. Even though she started her Bachelor program in India, she did not finish it. She completed another diploma program from another community college. In NCO, she was taking a 2-year diploma in computer repairs and maintenance. After finishing her program, she wanted to go back to India and work as a hardware engineer. On the other hand, Basu had been in Canada for about ten years. He was in an international business program. Although he completed his high school from Canada, he found many grammar errors in his writing, which is why he took his communication 1 in the ESL stream. Basu was also taking the course for the second time because he could not complete it in the previous semester because of some medical reasons. He would like to open up a logistic business in Canada in the future.

3.5. Risks and Benefits

There was minimal risk involved in this study. The only risk the participants might have experienced was a personal discomfort of being in front of the video cameras during the observation or in sharing their opinions with the researcher. The participants, however, were given the option to withdraw from the study anytime they wanted. The locations of the video

cameras were carefully selected so that they did not distract the study participants from their natural activities. They were not asked to do any additional things during the observation, so the study did not pose any substantial stress to the participants. The SR interviews were done individually, except for two pairs of students from NCO because they volunteered to be interviewed with their friends. Before the FG, all names were changed into their pseudonyms and full confidentiality was maintained while discussing the major findings with the teacher participants. The participants' possible discomfort was considered at all times to minimize the stress.

There were some immediate and long-term benefits of the study. The teacher and student participants who attended the interviews understood some of the effects of their own and others' gestural behavior, of which they had never been aware. Most of the interview participants disclosed this during the interview. The teacher participants said that they benefited from watching and discussing their own classroom practices in many ways. They could discuss their strengths and limitations of classroom practices in general, and gestural behavior, in particular. They were also able to understand students' behavior in the classroom in relation to gestural representation and space. The student participants also benefitted from participating in the interview because they had opportunities to practice their communication skills with the researcher. The students who could not attend the interview were given the researcher's contact so that they could learn about the findings in the future if they wanted to. One student participant left Canada and emailed me about the progress of this study, which points to how excited he was about his participation. Moreover, the long-term benefits of this study are that the research will contribute to the existing knowledge about gestures in the classroom, which is still an under-researched area in applied linguistics.

3.6. Methods and Procedure

The major focus of this study was to understand the meanings of teachers and students' gestures in the classroom from multiple theoretical perspectives. Therefore, I focused on how and why the teachers and students were using specific gestures, how they interpreted and responded to the gestures, how the gestures influenced their understanding of selves and others, and how those meanings influenced the ESL pedagogy and classroom activities. Major data collection methods are described in the following.

3.6.1. Observation/ videography. The major method followed in this study was classroom observation through videography. Videorecording is one of the important methods for multimodal research because it ensures that all forms of communication are recorded. The validity of video data is often questioned based on the camera effect, which refers to the effects of the process of video recording on naturally occurring events. Jewitt (2012) points to how such criticism is based on the notions of *reality* and *objectivity* in the data collection process. In traditional methodological approaches, data collection methods and tools are considered as instruments that collect 'natural' data that are able to capture an essentialist reality. Jewitt (2012, 2014), on the other hand, opposes this view of methodological approaches suggesting that video should be considered as a reflexive tool in the data collection process, in which the problems regarding the camera's effects themselves become points of investigation. The technical and non-technical problems of video recording, thus, should be embraced by describing them as problems in relation to data collection and analyses processes. Jewitt (2012), furthermore, explains that video is not just a mere reproduction of events; rather, it becomes data only when it is layered and infused with knowledge and interpretation. From this perspective, video data is emergent, "that is video becomes processed into data through the work of looking. The process

of video becoming data is therefore engaged with cultural beliefs and knowledge” (Jewitt, 2012, p. 11).

This view to multimodal data collection coincides with the principles of visual ethnography. Use of visuals in research is gaining popularity in multiple disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and cultural studies (Pink, 2007). Pink, in her discussion of visual ethnography, suggests how different disciplines may adopt and adapt visuals within their own research and representation processes. According to Pink, researchers need to understand the video subjects/participants and their own and the participants’ relationships to the video cameras and the processes of data collection and recording in the process of producing ethnographic knowledge. This study, though not following an ethnographic approach, is an attempt to incorporate videography not only as a method but also as an approach to a collaborative and reflexive data collection process that accounts for participants’ views and experiences. Videography was used during classroom observation to collect primary classroom data, and the video data was used in *stimulated recalls* as well as in a *focus group* to understand the participants’ experiences. Using this approach, in collaboration with the study participants, this study focuses on the meanings of participants’ gestures to provide an in-depth understanding of gestures in the classroom.

Each teacher participants’ classes at ILS were observed twice in Fall 2014. The classrooms were visited once before the actual data collection to understand the ambiance of the classrooms so that the cameras could be placed at convenient places. Because the classes at ILS were about one-hour sessions, a total of six hours of classroom data were collected from ILS. Riley and Tracy were observed teaching the same group of students in two consecutive days, but Elaine was observed teaching a speaking and a pronunciation class for one hour each. The classes at

NCO, on the other hand, were observed in Winter 2015 after the full ethics approval at the school. There are about four hours of classroom observation data from NCO, two hours from each teacher participant. The repeated and extended classroom visits were necessary to understand the general pattern of gestural behavior of each instructor and their students. As discussed earlier, the participants were not informed about the original purpose of the study during the observation. Two video-tape recorders were used to record complete classroom sessions or *moving images* (Kress, 2009). I specifically recorded the teacher and student participants' use of body image, hand and arm movements, postures and movements within the classroom, and facial expressions. A digital video camera was held by hand (Hudson, 2011) while I was sitting at the back of the classroom. With this camera, the teacher's gestures and interaction with students were recorded. I also recorded the teachers' conversations with individual students, pairs and groups with the same camera. Another video camera was placed at the front to record the whole class. The camera at the front was facing students in each class, and it provided moving images of student activities as well as teacher-student interactions when the teacher went close to them. The video and audio recordings were much clearer, and most of the conversations were audible. The inaudible or unintelligible recordings were transcribed as *inaudible text segment* following McLellan, MacQueen, and Neidig (2003). I will describe the transcription process later in this chapter.

Besides this, descriptive field notes (Lynch, 1996) were also used to record any significant classroom setting and procedure where specific gestures were noticeable. For examples, descriptions of classroom space, decoration and the teacher and student participants' major postures and movements were written down after each classroom visit. My own interpretation of

the descriptions was also noted down. Following Lynch, the field notes were used as working hypotheses, and they evolved through the data collection and analysis process.

3.6.2. Stimulated recall interviews. The interviews were conducted with teachers and students within two weeks of each observation to inquire into their interpretation of gestural representations in selected video texts. These semi-structured interviews were designed following Lynch's (1996) model of the *interview guide*. Some major questions were formed as an outline or a checklist, as described by the author, before the interviews, but the questions were adapted through the interview sessions in response to the natural flow of the interviews. Three types of questions were included in the interviews: profile questions, preliminary questions on gestural behavior and stimulated recalls on selected video excerpts. The major types of questions are presented in Appendix A and B.

SRs (stimulated recalls) were designed following the guidelines presented in Gass and Mackey (2000). The guiding principles include conducting the interviews as early as possible after each observation, selecting video data as stimuli as these will help recollect the cognitive processes, and structuring interview questions specific to the video segments. For optimal validity and reliability, the SRs were conducted within two weeks of the observation; some pre-selected video excerpts were used to stimulate memory of the participants, and they were also allowed to select specific classroom activities to talk about. Two/three 2- to 3-minute video extracts were selected from each classroom observation for the SRs, following Sime (2006). For example, each extract itself was a clear sequence which provided a clear teacher-student interaction reflecting a specific ESL activity such as vocabulary explanation, teacher-mediated explanation or instruction. The teacher and student participants were asked to discuss the objective and provide rationale for the activities in the video texts selected from their own

classes [see Appendix A and B]. The major aim was to inquire into their understanding of the production and negotiation of gestural meanings in the texts.

During the SRs, the participants were given minimal training into the objective of the study and the structure of the SRs (Sime, 2006). They were told that the study aimed at exploring multiple meanings of gestures, so any interpretation of data would be welcome. They were also asked about their understanding of what gestures would constitute rather than being informed by any specific definition. The teacher participants mostly referred to hand gestures, facial expressions and their positions and movements during discussion, but the student participants referred to gestures as body language, in general. Students were also provided a general definition of gestures if they were confused about the meaning of gestures.

The participants were interviewed individually; there was an exception for a few student participants who requested small group interviews along with their friends. The interviews were between 25 to 45 minutes long and took place in empty classrooms at the specific schools. A tape-recorder was used to record the interviews, and I took informal notes throughout the sessions to record any significant discussion.

3.6.3. One focus-group (FG) with teachers. This interview was conducted in Summer 2015 after the completion of all the SR interviews. This is an important data collection method for this study as it is used to generate discussion among participants which may provide an in-depth understanding of a less-known topic (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Data from the observation and SRs were reviewed several times to understand the common roles and functions of gestures in the classrooms in this study. These common meanings were discussed with the teacher participants using semi-structured questions (Lynch, 1996). Some video and SR data were transcribed following multimodal transcription (Norris, 2004) to be discussed with the

participants. The transcription process is described later. Semi-structured questions were used to stimulate discussion rather than leading the discussion. This helped me focus on generating discussion on the teacher participants' interpretation of multiple meanings of gestures that were emerging from the data. The semi-structured interview questions used in the FG are provided in Appendix C.

After the primary analysis of the SR and observation data, the teacher participants were invited to attend the FG, in which they had consented to participate earlier. Three teacher participants could provide a feasible schedule to attend the interview at my residence. The FG was an important data collection method through which meanings were co-constructed to achieve a pedagogical understanding of gestures and other activities and their relevance for teacher education and research. Therefore, during the FG, the teachers were given a clear understanding of what gestural representation means in this study. The definition of gestural representations presented in Cope & Kalantzis (2009) were provided to them. I took a peripheral role (Parker & Tritter, 2007) in the discussion by working as a facilitator of discussion. The interview took about an hour, and the whole session was audio-recorded.

3.7. Data Analysis and Transcription Conventions

3.7.1. Rough transcription. All data were transferred to a hard drive and organized into specific folders immediately after data collection. The transcription process also started at the same time. The video and interview data were repeatedly reviewed, and a rough transcription of the data were conducted for re-transcription (Riessman, 1993) that would display significant instances of the use and discussion of gestures in the classroom. From video data, instead of selecting single gestures or movements, or categorizing them into intentional, unintentional gestures, small texts that represented complete sequences of meaningful moving images (Kress

& Van Leeuwen, 2001) were selected. These video images were identified as texts that included “the everyday practices of ‘ordinary’ humans as much as the articulations of discourses in more conventionally text-like objects such as magazines, TV programmes, and so on” (p.24). Such texts are referred to as *practically lived texts* by Kress and Van Leeuwen. In this view, the dominance of one mode in a text is avoided by identifying and analyzing multiple use of modes represented in a single text. Following this approach, video texts were transcribed and analyzed to understand gestural representations in relation to other modes in each video text.

Rough transcriptions of the video data included three to five video texts from each classroom. These texts were transcribed by writing down the actions and speech including the description of the gestures on paper. A rough transcription of interviews, on the other hand, included written words and other striking non-verbal cues such as long pauses and laughter. Rough transcriptions of interviews included all the interview data from SRs and the FG. These rough transcriptions were considered rough drafts and were stored separately for re-transcription. My comments on the data were included separately to be able to relate the data later to different theoretical perspectives. The processes of re-transcription of video and interview data is described in the following sections.

Categorization and identification of gesture types were not a purpose of this study; however, to make specific gestures identifiable in the transcriptions and description of data, gestures were coded following McNeill (1992) and Kendon’s (2004) classifications of gestures. For example, if any gestures were identifiable as *deictic gestures* or *emblems* [see McNeill’s classification of gestures discussed in chapter 1], I noted them down, but I also acknowledged that the categories were not static, and they may represent different forms of gestures when combined with other body movements and semiotic resources.

3.7.2. Re-transcription of video texts. A multimodal research approach was adopted in transcribing and analyzing the rough transcriptions of video texts. The transcription process was based on multimodal interaction analysis. This followed “the processes of *transcribing for analysis* and *transcribing to explicate the analysis*” (Norris, 2004, p. 60) while acknowledging the interconnection between analysis and description of texts. This helped me simultaneously transcribe and analyze the video data. From the roughly transcribed video data, relevant video data that represented clear moving images of ESL activities as well as the teacher and/or student participants’ use of gestures in the teaching and learning process were transcribed following Norris’ (2004) multimodal transcription approach. Following Norris, multiple transcriptions of video data were conducted in layers. First, video images were extracted from each original video text using computer software. Then each mode such as gestures, speech, and intonation were separately transcribed, and later they were combined with the frame by frame images for the purpose of describing “the dynamic unfolding of specific moments in time, in which the layout and modes like posture, gesture and gaze play as much a part as the verbal” (p. 65). Only the relevant video data have been re-transcribed and presented in this study following the above approach.

3.7.3. Re-transcription and analysis of interview data. Relevant interview data have been re-transcribed and presented in this study following Talmy’s (2011) transcription conventions. The transcription conventions are presented in Appendix E, adapted from Talmy.

In this study, interviews were considered as *social practice* rather than a mere data collection method or source of data (Talmy, 2010, 2011). Talmy advocates for the understanding of interviews as a “site for investigation itself” (p. 139) – a “site for knowledge production” (p. 141). This approach can be useful in understanding how knowledge is negotiated and co-

constructed through the interview process rather than being concerned with the researcher bias in the process. This approach also coincides with the aim of this multimodal study, which aims to unfold meanings of gestures as fluid and changeable across educational contexts, theoretical and methodological perspectives as well as social and individual interpretation. Using this approach, traditional coding of data as *thematic analysis* has been avoided because such “representation of themes (as) ‘emerging’, as if by themselves, and of ‘converging’ and being ‘evident’ in data, obscures the theoretical influences, the interpretive activity, indeed, the sociohistorically situated *presence* of the researcher engaged in analysis” (Talmy, 2011, p. 21). Instead, I investigated and described data from multiple theoretical perspectives acknowledging that the meanings were co-created through the discussion and interpretation of both researcher and the participants.

3.7.4. Data selection, analysis, and reporting. This study does not aim at identifying *facts* or knowledge *contained* in the data that stand-alone by themselves (Talmy, 2011). Instead of such a product-oriented approach, a process-oriented approach (Talmy, 2010, 2011) had been followed in selecting and reporting data in this study. Therefore, how meanings of gestures unfold through the data collection and analysis process were considered. It had been acknowledged throughout the analysis and reporting process that multiple interpretations of the data are possible, and the meanings of data were constructed through the data collection, analysis and reporting process according to the objective of the study. The major purpose of the study was to explore meanings of gestures in the classroom from different theoretical perspectives that will have multifarious effects on learning and instruction of ESL. Therefore, data was interpreted and reported using the perspectives such as how gestures can be used as sociocultural mediational tools (McCafferty, 2004; Lantolf, 2006, 2010; Smotrova, 2017; Smotrova & Lantolf,

2013), how meanings of gestures like other body activities may be shaped and regulated by discursive practices (Foucault, 1979; Luke, 1992; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000), how gestures can be used as semiotic resources for meaning-making (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2010; Kress et al., 2005; Van Leeuwen, 2005), and how gestures may be interpreted as performative work by teachers and students in the process of their subjective formation (Butler, 1999; Miller, 2012; Pennycook, 2004).

In the analysis process, first, video texts that represented complete sequences of teacher-student interaction in moving images were selected. Selection of video texts included the same guiding principles in selecting video texts for SRs discussed in Sime (2006). For example, the selected texts represented teacher-student interaction during specific ESL activities, were complete and coherent in themselves and involved significant amount of gesture-use by teachers and students. These texts were interpreted using the above theoretical perspectives. For example, use of gestures in a video text was interpreted in relation to sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) as well as discursive knowledge (Hall, 2001; Pennycook, 1994) and/or different forms of regulation of the body in relation to discourses (Luke, 1992; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000) in the classroom. Next, the gestural practices of teachers and students in the same text were analyzed as part of semiotic resources in the learning process within the specific classroom context (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Kress et al., 2005) as well as their relevance to the teacher and students' performative work within the same context (Charteris, 2016; Pennycook, 2004). Thus, in the process, the same video text acquired multiple analyses and interpretation.

In relation to the video texts, relevant interview excerpts from the SRs and FG were selected to understand how the teacher and student participants understood the meanings of their own and others' gestures. During analysis, any excerpts from the SRs that clarified meanings or

provided interpretation of gestures in the selected video texts were analyzed and reported in relation to the theories. Because findings were co-constructed with the participants, the process of analysis was also reported in the findings as relevant. FG data, on the other hand, provided more in-depth analysis of the understanding and use of gestures in the classrooms. These insights were used to explain any discrepancy or additional meanings of gestures in the video data.

3.8. Issues of Reliability and Validity

Issues of reliability and validity in multimodal research are addressed by discussing the difficulties regarding the data collection, transcription and analyses process, instead of being concerned with the dilemma of the processes. For example, as Jewitt (2014) suggests, instead of being concerned with the effects of video-recording on the data, multimodal researchers look for investigating the effects themselves such as how the participants related and reacted to the camera. In this study these principles of investigating and reporting the difficulties with the data collection and analysis processes were considered. First, I transcribed video and interview data separately, but presented them in relation to each other while describing their (dis)connections. I also described the instances when meanings of data could not be confirmed through SRs as some student participants could not partake in interviews. Hence, the purpose was not to show the (in)consistencies, but to demonstrate different discursive meanings of the data within specific contexts. Second, while analyzing data, I acknowledged that meanings of data were co-constructed by the researcher and participants following the approach of interviews as social practice (Talmy, 2010), which also helped me describe how understanding of gestures emerged through the processes rather than being contained in the data. Therefore, the analyses processes were considered as *dynamic, meaning-making occasions* (Talmy, 2010). I also acknowledged

that multiple interpretations of data were possible. Therefore, I presented large chunks of data in this dissertation to open up the possibility of further interpretations of the data by the readers.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter explores meanings of teacher and student participants' gestures using multiple theoretical concepts discussed in the literature review. This includes analyses of video and interview data to show how meanings of gestures can be interpreted from various perspectives such as gestures and mediation (Hudson, 2011; McCafferty, 2002, 2004; Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015), discourses and the body (Foucault, 1979, 1980, 1990; Hall, 2001; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000), gestures and semiotic resources (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2010; Kress et al., 2005; Van Leeuwen, 2005), and performativity and the body (Butler, 1999; Davies, 2006; Jagger, 2008; Miller, 2012; Pennycook, 2004). Findings have been categorized into different sections based on their theoretical association to show how different perspectives to the gestures in the data may influence meanings of pedagogies and classroom activities in specific ways.

4.1. Gestures as Mediational Means

In this section, I analyze how an ESL teacher's gestures mediated one of her students' language learning processes. Using the concepts of *scaffolding*, *ZPD* (Hudson, 2011; McCafferty, 2002, 2004; Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015) and *creative imitation* (Smotrova, 2014, 2017; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013), I specifically analyze video and interview data from one of the ESL classrooms observed in this study to show how the teacher purposefully used gesture-based pedagogy (Smotrova, 2017) to scaffold a students' learning of an English sound, and how the student creatively imitated the teacher's gestures that helped her internalize the pronunciation aspect.

The video excerpt presented below is selected from Tracy's pronunciation class from ILS. The reason I selected this excerpt is that it demonstrates a one-on-one session between Tracy and

her student Cheng during an in-class activity. Such individual sessions with the teacher were a common phenomenon at ILS because of its small class size. This specific excerpt was also one of the video data excerpts that were clear and audible, and it reflected a significant amount of gestures used by both the teacher and the student during classroom interaction. Furthermore, as Tracy said during the interview, the excerpt represents her conscious and purposeful use of gestures that she adopted as part of gesture-based pedagogy to teach pronunciation.

The video excerpt focuses on the pronunciation of the /th/ or /θ/ sound that occurred after Tracy had noticed that her students were struggling with the / θ / sound in the word *think*. Tracy's pronunciation class was categorized as pronunciation 5 [see chapter 3 for details]. On the first day of observation, Tracy was teaching English word stress. It was a Thursday class, and the students had been working on phrasal verbs since Monday. Tracy said that they usually worked on the same task through the week. The students had been given a worksheet earlier. The worksheet included several activities, including a fill-in-the-gap exercise. The exercise presented incomplete dialogues between two people that required appropriate phrasal verbs to fill in. For example, the first dialogue had the question *what are you going to do this afternoon?* and an incomplete response *I am ...* There was a list of phrasal verbs that the students had to choose from to complete the dialogues. Tracy asked the students to work in pairs to read aloud their dialogues to the partners with appropriate stress on the phrasal verbs. During the activity, Tracy was monitoring each pair by going close to them and helping them out with the verbs and their pronunciation. This is when she noticed that the students had problems pronouncing the word *think*.

Tracy demonstrated the pronunciation of /θɪŋk/ and / θ / separately while explaining that it would require “more tongue” to pronounce the sound. She also said that the lip and the tongue

should not touch each other and made a joke that students had “to spit on people” to correctly pronounce the /θ/ sound. While explaining this, Tracy used several *iconic* gestures (McNeill, 1992) and *catchments* (Smotrova, 2017; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013; see chapter 1 and 2 for definitions). For example, Tracy made a gesture with her five fingers pressing together close to her mouth and spreading them out as a sign of *more tongue* [see the image at 00.05.20min in *Figure 2* below]. Tracy then checked each of the students’ pronunciation of the word.

The classroom had a dining-room layout with big tables in the middle and the students were sitting in a half circle. Cheng was sitting with Mario at the left corner of the room. When Tracy came close to them, they were reading another piece of dialogue. Tracy heard Cheng struggling with the /θ/ sound again – this time in /etθ/. Tracy sat down in front of her. The following video excerpt presents about a 2-minute one-on-one session between Tracy and Cheng. The video excerpt has been transcribed following Norris’ (2004) multimodal transcription described in the methodology chapter.





01.28.77

Tongue needs to be outside



01.30.77

☰ ☐ ☐



01.31.33

enth



01.32.50

Eighth



01.33.45

yea



01.33.60

Now bigger



01.37.20

I know it feels uncomfortable



01.39.60

It's not normal in your language, yea



01.41.43

Eighth

better



01.43.77

Now try it even bigger



Figure 2. Tracy and Cheng's one-on-one session.

Tracy's spoken language is presented in black, Cheng's in red. Following Norris (2004), several still images have been used to represent specific movements and change of positions; rising and falling intonations are represented through curved utterances. Strokes [see chapter 1] are shown through arrows, and font size represents pitch – the higher the pitch, the bigger the font size.

4.1.1. Scaffolding of pronunciation aspects with catchments. The video excerpt is a one-on-one scaffolding session between Tracy and her student Cheng. The first two images in *Figure 2* show two iconic gestures Tracy used in the scaffolding session. Tracy first demonstrated the sound by holding her lower lip down while sticking out the tongue saying /*th*/. Following this, she repeated the previous iconic gesture by using five pressed fingers close to her mouth and spreading them out while saying “more tongue”. Cheng tried out the pronunciation but skipped the /*θ*/ sound. At that point, Tracy asked Cheng to grab her cell phone and video record herself while pronouncing the word *eighth*. Cheng grabbed her cellphone and recorded herself. These images of Cheng’s self-recording have been skipped in the video data in *Figure 2* because of limited space. The images from 01.11.23min occurred after Cheng had finished recording herself.

At 01.11.23min of the video excerpt, Tracy said, “watch your mouth there and watch mine”. Cheng followed her instructions and watched herself saying the word on the video she had just recorded. Tracy pointed to the recording and showed her that she was not pronouncing the /*θ*/ sound at all at the end of *eighth*. Cheng says “aww” (/ô/) with a falling intonation followed by “tongue must be outside” (from 01.23.87min to 01.27.27min). The sound “aww”, which may translate into exclamation, marks Cheng’s realization of what Tracy was referring to as “more tongue”. While saying so, Cheng made a small gesture with her index finger by pointing to her mouth and turning it away from the mouth (at 01.27.27). Note that Cheng’s gesture of *tongue outside* is very different from Tracy, and so is her pronunciation of the sound. Tracy repeated after her that “Tongue needs to be outside” with her previous iconic gesture. This time she extended her arm further with her five fingers pressed together almost like a fist instead of spreading her fingers out. This is a much bigger gesture than her previous one even though

both refer to “more tongue”. She continued showing how much the tongue needed to be outside in the later images by breaking the word *eighth* into smaller units “eigh” and “th” until Cheng tried it out by herself (at 01.32.50min). Cheng’s pronunciation was more comprehensible now than before, but the tongue did not come outside. The /θ/ was as small and vague as her gesture of *tongue outside*. Tracy nodded and said “yes” but asked her to make it “bigger” (at 01.33.60min). Tracy also acknowledged that she fully understood how uncomfortable it was for Cheng as it was “not normal” in her language. She asked her to make an “even bigger” (at 01.43.77) sound. Cheng pronounced the word again, but Tracy was still not completely satisfied. At 01.49.03min, Tracy asked Cheng to pick her finger, to pull her lower lip down with her finger and to say *eighth* with the tongue outside. Cheng followed her and finally pronounced the word including the /θ/. The sound was more pronounced than before. Tracy showed a thumb-up gesture and said, “much better”.

In the video excerpt, Tracy scaffolds Cheng’s pronunciation by her gesture, speech, tone, intonation and a technological device. The two iconic gestures presented in the first two images in *Figure 2* were frequently used by Tracy during the pronunciation exercise. She used them while demonstrating the pronunciation of *think* to the whole class as described earlier. They reoccurred in this video excerpt when Tracy individually sat down with Cheng. In the first image, Tracy held her finger on her lower lip to show her tongue, and, in the second one, she pressed her fingers in front of the mouth and spread them out as a sign of *more tongue*. Both the gestures occurred two more times in the above video excerpt. Once at 01.49.03min and 01.51.97min, and next at 01.28.77min and 01.33.60min. These two iconic gestures, thus, also worked as catchments (Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013) because the gesture units were used by Tracy to explain the place and manner of articulation of /θ/ while maintaining synchrony with the

verbal utterances such as *more tongue*, *bigger* and *lip down*. They helped her maintain a topical cohesion in the explanation that the tongue needed to be outside as much as possible to make the sound. The catchments, thus, made her “pronunciation visible and tangible” (Smotrova, 2017, p. 82). The scaffolding was possible through a shared history of the use of gestural signs (McCafferty, 2004) by Tracy and Cheng.

4.1.2. Creation of ZPD through the gestural signs. The gestural signs used by both Tracy and Cheng helped them understand each other’s difficulties with verbally and gesturally expressing the sound. The catchments used by Tracy, for example, seemed to be vague to Cheng in the beginning of the session as evident in the video excerpt, which is why Tracy took advantage of the cellphone to let Cheng see herself pronouncing the sound. Cheng imitated Tracy’s gesture of *more tongue* slightly differently at 01.27.27min with her index finger moving away from her mouth while articulating *tongue needs to be outside*. Her gesture, which can be described as creative imitation (Smotrova, 2014, 2017), not only represents her awareness of Tracy’s gestures but also shows her struggle with the sound that requires extra effort of tongue movement. After using the cellphone to see her own pronunciation, Cheng seemed to have understood her vague pronunciation of *think*, but as her gesture shows, she was still confused about the concept of *more tongue*. Her gesture of *more tongue*, thus, was different from Tracy’s.

Tracy understood that the forced air out of the mouth required to pronounce the sound was difficult for Cheng, which she acknowledged at 01.27.30min of the video excerpt. Therefore, in the subsequent images, Tracy also slightly modified the catchments to make bigger gestures that would represent the manner of articulation of the sound to Cheng in a more comprehensible way. The modification of her gestures from *five pressed fingers* in front of the mouth into the gesture of *five fingers spreading out* at 01.33.60min of the video excerpt emphasized the forced air

needed to articulate the aspirated sound / θ/. Such modifications of specific gesture units helped her create a ZPD for Cheng and gradually helped Cheng understand the sound better. Tracy thus purposefully exploited the cognitive function of gestures (Sime, 2006) here to operationalize Cheng's ZPD. Nevertheless, she had to modify the gesture units and negotiate the meanings of the catchments with Cheng to make them fully comprehensible. Cheng's gestures, in fact, helped Tracy understand Cheng's difficulties which led her to change her gesture units. Both of their gestures, thus, scaffolded each other through which they learned about each other's signs that helped with the comprehension of the pronunciation.

The success of the scaffolding session that operationalized Cheng's ZPD, at least partly, stemmed from Tracy's awareness of gesture-based pedagogies. SR with Tracy suggests that she was aware of different functions of gestures in a meaningful way. During the SR interview, Tracy discussed her interests in pronunciation classes and explained how her gesture-based activities were related to her background in theatre. Tracy explained that she had a special interest in pronunciation, and she discovered that no one wanted to teach this skill. Therefore, she chose to teach pronunciation drawing on her learning experiences from her TESL training that she completed after joining ILS. In the following interview excerpt, Tracy discussed different functions of gestures that help us understand how the operationalization of Cheng's ZPD became a success through her intentional use of gestures in the scaffolding session in Figure 2.

Interview Excerpt 1

Tracy: I have a theatre background.

Interviewer (I): Oh wow!

Tracy: [laughter]

I: So

5 Tracy: So yeah, that's part of it.

I: So how does it help?

Tracy: Um (.2) often I will act things out for the students,

I: Umhm

10 Tracy: to get them a more realistic idea. (.4) How something will play out in a
conversation. So: rather than ju:st, you know, reading aloud or whatever I'll have
 them do (.2) a scene! or do: like a role play.

I: Ok,

Tracy: O:r I might do that with them. (.2) um Facial expressions help, and just (.5)
 include them sometimes getting a laugh out of them,

15 I: Umhm

Tracy: to make it easier for them to take a risk, to take a chance. yeah

I: so what functions do you think (.4) gestures might have in the classroom?

20 Tracy: uh hh sometimes, um it helps them understand context. Um (.2) so students
 especially when I am teaching them=pronunciation like intona:tion (.2) o:r stress
 or rhythm, um (.4) gestures can help them understand that. So:, for doing rhythm
 (.2) you might um stand=up sit=down (.5) o:n stressed words.

I: [umhm

Tracy: [so that they get the idea that (.2) you can stretch that out.

I: umhm

25 Tracy: Something, like using balloons. To stretch out different words. (.2) or rubber
bands. Um (.4) We=have done things, where we: practiced like, (.2) um using
rhythm? (patted her thigh) to get through a sentence,

I: umhm?

Tracy: Um, (.4) so getting them to do the gestures sometimes, is helpful. And then
30 teaching sound through (inaudible text segment) constantly like modeling for
them and getting them do the modelling for me,

I: umhm?

Tracy: um Lot of time doing that, and often (.2) I will do it in an extremely exaggerated
way. (laughter) to get laugh out of them. (.2) but also make them feel comfortable
35 making stupid face.

I: so are you aware of your [gestures?

Tracy: [yeah! [[laughter]

I: [ok!

I: so, can you give me specific (.4) examples of like ho:w you intentionally use
40 gestures or maybe actions

Tracy: uum, so=like=if I=am teaching a sound like wh- I was just (.2) teaching um
to=create sounds, like ofte:n I will teach them that but also do it extre:mely
exaggerated so I will have my tongue *really* far out using like .hh th: [tongue out ,
making /θ/ sound] [[laughter]

45 I: [[laughter] oh, yeah I saw that, I remember [that

Tracy: [[laughter]

Yeah, like that (.5) yeah! doing things like showing them like there's going to be

I: [Umhm

Tracy: [spit coming out

50 I: [umhm

Tracy: [and that's normal (.4) u:m Sometimes, (.2) they are just as simple a:s (.2) if we
are doing stress, (.6) I will use hand gestures

I: Yeah,

Tracy: to demonstrate how lo:ng each syllable should be, or how short!

55 I: Umhm

Tracy: Um, and then I might have them *do the same thing*

(Tracy, SR, researcher's emphasis added through italics)

The interview excerpt is from the second part of the SR after Tracy was informed about the actual purpose of the study. As discussed in the methodology chapter, interviews were conducted and analyzed following Talmy's (2010) interview as social practice; therefore, the findings discussed here should be considered as constructed through the interviewer and the participant's mutual understanding of the subject-matter and negotiation of ideas during the interview.

In the interview excerpt, Tracy discussed some gesture-based activities including the use of balloons and rubber bands as well as body activities to teach rhythm, word stress and intonation (line 25-28). The activities correspond to the activities followed by pronunciation instructors in other studies reviewed by Smotrova (2017). Besides this, Tracy also exemplified the purpose of the use of her tongue which she had used in her class just before the interview. Through the discussion, Tracy identified two major functions of her gestures: cognitive and emotional (Sime, 2006). Her understanding points to how gestures help with comprehension (line 18-21) and creation of a comfortable environment (line 33-35). Unlike other teacher participants, Tracy's understanding of comprehension is very specific in the interview excerpt, as for instance, she explained gestures as helpful in comprehending *the context* instead of understanding *contents* or *vocabulary*. She explained that gestures such as standing up/sitting down, sticking out the tongue and patting on thighs are helpful in clarifying the context of a pronunciation activity. Tracy said that she attended a TESL program offered at the centre, and a lot of techniques she followed to teach pronunciation were taught in the program. Patting thighs is one such technique that teachers do at the centre to teach rhythms while getting through a sentence. Tracy, however, had also mastered other techniques such as standing up/sitting down to teach stress and intonation through her experiences of teaching pronunciation over time. The changes in positions, as she elaborated, helped her represent the changes in stress and intonation. She prepared the techniques

that involved gestures ahead of time, and she also invented new techniques on the spot such as sticking out her tongue to show places of articulation. Tracy also said that she intentionally exaggerated these techniques to make learning fun. Her interests in pronunciation, and experiences she had gathered over time, thus, helped her understand and represent the context of pronunciation very well. Therefore, her use of gestures played a bigger role than just to clarify vocabulary. The gestures provided a context for the pronunciation activity by helping Cheng make her sound more comprehensible. At the same time, Tracy used the gestures to serve the emotional function (Sime, 2008) by making the learning environment more comfortable for Cheng. Both the functions of gestures were visible in the video excerpt in Figure 2 in which Tracy clarified the manner of articulation of /th/ through the use of her catchments, the frequently occurring gestural units in interaction, [see chapter 2 for detailed explanation] while aiming at making the environment comfortable for Cheng through her gestures and talk. Thus, her awareness of the functions of gestures and their skillful implementation in the pronunciation activity helped her scaffold Cheng's pronunciation within the ZPD.

Tracy and Cheng's use of gestures as symbolic signs in the video excerpt represent a complex negotiation of the meanings of signs that cannot be explained only by creative imitation. For example, Cheng's reproduction of the gestural sign of *more tongue* not only represents her appropriation of Tracy's signs but also displays individual and social/cultural influences on how she understood the signs (Kress, 2010). Furthermore, as mentioned before, both Tracy and Cheng appropriated the gestural meanings to help each other in the learning process. Roth and Radford (2010) suggest that the traditional understanding of ZPD somewhat overlooks the complex process of a scaffolding activity, in which all the participants in an interaction, irrespective of their positions, simultaneously participate in helping each other with

comprehension and learning. ZPD, thus, “constitutes an opportunity for the teacher to learn too” (Roth & Radford, 2010, p. 304). The video data in figure 2 also points to this by highlighting how both Tracy and Cheng learned from each other’s gestural signs and scaffolded each other. To further complement and elaborate on this idea, I find the semiotic understanding of signs very relevant; following sections show how the gestural signs made by both Tracy and Cheng were negotiated signs that were crucial in the teaching-learning process.

4.2. Gestures-as-Signs in ESL Classrooms

This section focuses on meanings-as-signs (Kress, 2010) made by teachers and students in the ESL classrooms in this study. Using the concept of sign-making in multimodal semiotics (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2010; Kress et al., 2005; Van Leeuwen, 2005), I discuss how gestural signs were produced, interpreted and negotiated by the ESL teacher participants and their students in the teaching and learning of English as a second language. I will use the video excerpt presented above in *Figure 2* above and a grammar lesson facilitated by Riley in *Figure 3* below to analyze the semiotic meanings of gestures. I will draw on individual, social and cross-cultural aspects of sign-making (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) to understand the ways in which the teachers and students produce, interpret, negotiate and transform gestural signs and their meanings in the classrooms in relation to their social backgrounds and individual interests.

4.2.1 Gestures as negotiated signs: Individual and social interest. The role of gestures in teaching and learning pronunciation in second language classrooms has been explored in previous studies (Gluhareva & Prieto, 2016; Smotrova, 2017). The episode presented in *Figure 2* is an example of teaching and learning of English pronunciation through scaffolding. Both Tracy and Cheng, as discussed before, scaffolded each other through their gestures within the ZPD.

Creation of ZPD, therefore, was not a one-way act, but a negotiated process in which they learned from each other through the social/semiotic signs (Kress & Bezemer, 2015; Roth & Radford, 2010). The shared understanding of the signs was achieved through much struggle and negotiation of the gestural signs made by Tracy and Cheng. The signs were negotiated, transformed and remade for the purpose of learning and instruction of English pronunciation in relation to each of the participant's individual interest and the context of learning.

In Figure 2, as Tracy stated in interview excerpt 1, Tracy's gestures were used in an exaggerated form but somewhat differently each time. The differences that emerged from Cheng's struggle with the signs, represent Tracy's individual interests as a sign-maker and the social context of the interaction. For instance, the sign of pressed and spread-out fingers close to the mouth emerges from expert actions – Tracy's six years of teaching experiences. Tracy taught ESL in Korea for two years and had been teaching at ILS for four years until the time of the study. As an experienced ESL teacher, Tracy knew how the tongue should be manipulated while pronouncing the sound that East-Asian speakers may often struggle with (Hui-Yin, 2016). Her gestural sign, thus, represents the extent to which the manipulation of the tongue is required to make the verbal sound. Her pressed fingers signify that the tongue needs to be held tight and pulled out while the sudden spread-out of the fingers refers to the force needed to make it happen. The underlying meaning is that the articulation of the sound by a non-native speaker may need more effort because of the difficulties associated with the pronunciation of dental sounds by many Asian ESL/EFL learners. This was supported by her later comment when she told Cheng that she knew how hard it was for her to pronounce the sound as it was not normal in her language (Figure 2, at 01.39.60min). The spread-out fingers also correspond to the force of air required for an aspirated sound like /θ/. Like the surgeon in Kress and Bezemer's (2015)

study, the sign represents Tracy's expertise as an ESL teacher who has a grasp of the sound, its place and manner of articulation, as well as the techniques of teaching pronunciation.

Thus, Tracy's gestural sign made with her pressed and parted fingers (at 00.25.20min of Figure 2) to mean "more tongue" was a motivated sign (Kress, 2010), but it was transformed according to the demand of the semiotic action of teaching the pronunciation aspect to Cheng. The transformation of the verbal utterance into such gestures was not only her choice, but also motivated by the context. This transformation was related to Tracy's background knowledge and experiences in theatre and her TESOL training. Interview excerpt 1 above suggests that some of her gestural practices were intentional. Line 25 through 27 specifically relate her gestural practices to pronunciation strategies discussed in other studies. Line 45-47 also suggests how she intentionally planned and used specific strategies to teach pronunciation. These examples suggest that she was aware of the connection between her gestures and the pronunciation aspects she taught in Figure 2. Therefore, the signs of more tongue she made in the activity were not arbitrarily made, but individually motivated. Tracy also said how she makes her students model her gestures in the learning process (line 29-31), which is also evident in Figure 2 in which she made Cheng use her own fingers to replace her lip and tongue for better pronunciation.

Cheng, on the other hand, did not fully understand the connection between Tracy's translated gestural signs of "more tongue" in the beginning of the session in Figure 2. This led Tracy to use the cellphone as an additional tool and video images as new semiotic resources. She helped Cheng compare her position of tongue with Cheng's in the video. Cheng finally understood that the tongue needed to be outside for a correct pronunciation of *eight*. This was translated through her gesture of the index finger pointed to, and turned away from, the mouth (at 01.27.27 min). This was a much subtler gesture than Tracy's pressed fingers and resembled her

vague /θ/ sound at the end of *eighth*. Both her pronunciation and gestures were *superficial* like the touch of the surgeon's novice student (Kress & Bezemer, 2015), who had to further modify the inner semiotic resources and transform the signs more effectively.

As an ESL learner, the subtler form of Cheng's sign also represents her struggle with the verbal sound absent in Chinese language. Chinese language lacks the inter-dental sounds of English, and this generally leads Chinese ESL students to struggle with these sounds, and they tend to replace the /θ/ sound with /s/ (Hui-Yin, 2016). Cheng's sign made with the index finger represents the emerging but vague /θ/ sound. It was not very audible whether she replaced the /θ/ sound with /s/, but it is possible that the reptile-like finger across her mouth (at 01.27.27 min) represents the hissing sound of /s/. Her understanding of the sound influenced the way she transformed Tracy's prominent hand gesture into the small finger movement, which marks her progress through the learning process.

From an English as an International Language (EIL) perspective, reduction of an L1 accent, as such, is found problematic because L1 interference with sounds such as /θ/ and /ð/ rarely interferes with intelligibility, and is considered a "non-core" aspect of an EIL pronunciation syllabus by authors such as Jenkins (1998). Furthermore, learners may desire to be identified with both the L1 and the L2 accents, which is why a more *accent addition* approach to pronunciation is valued in EIL teaching. This approach focuses on adding a range of core- and non-core items of English into the pronunciation syllabus according to individual learner needs (Jenkins, 2004). Jenkins (1998) also provides examples of segmental and suprasegmental aspects of English that are necessary for EIL pronunciation classes. For example, deletion of consonant sounds such as /t/ in the middle of an English sound could be problematic, hence, requiring attention in EIL classrooms. The pronunciation aspects addressed in Tracy's classroom, and

some other English language components taught in ILS classrooms discussed below, do not conform to the EIL perspectives. However, they seem to largely derive from the objective of ILS, which tends to divide English language teaching into discrete skills and sub-skills such as grammar, pronunciation, and even idioms. As observed in the lessons taught, the teachers focused on discrete grammar and pronunciation aspects, which aligned with the categorization of levels and components of English reduced into bits of information and skills (Ross & Gibson, 2007) and offered to international students as various available packages of language skills (Shin, 2016) at ILS.

Through the semiotic work presented above, Tracy learned about her student's sign-making and semiotic resources and successfully handled the gaps in the interaction by transforming her verbal and gestural signs in her following actions. Her verbal instruction of "more tongue" was transformed into "bigger", while the spread-away fingers were transformed into an arm-movement turned away from the mouth (at 01.28.77min). This transformation of the catchment was related not only to her individual interest in the signs but also to the immediate context or the *social domain* of the (inter)action (Kress, 2010; 2012). This sign of extended arm farther from the body marks the force needed for the pronunciation of the aspirated /θ/ sound as well as the fact that Cheng's tongue had to be further extended for a more pronounced /θ/ sound. This was later accompanied by another modified catchment when Tracy instructed Cheng to pull her lower lip down with her finger to let her tongue out (from 01.50.20 – 01.53.00mins). The two catchments were complementary to each other in the process of teaching, but they occurred at specific moments as demanded by the social domain of interaction. The signs in the catchments were, thus, individually made but socially motivated while the meanings were negotiated by Tracy and Cheng in the teaching/learning process. The negotiation of the meanings-as-signs has

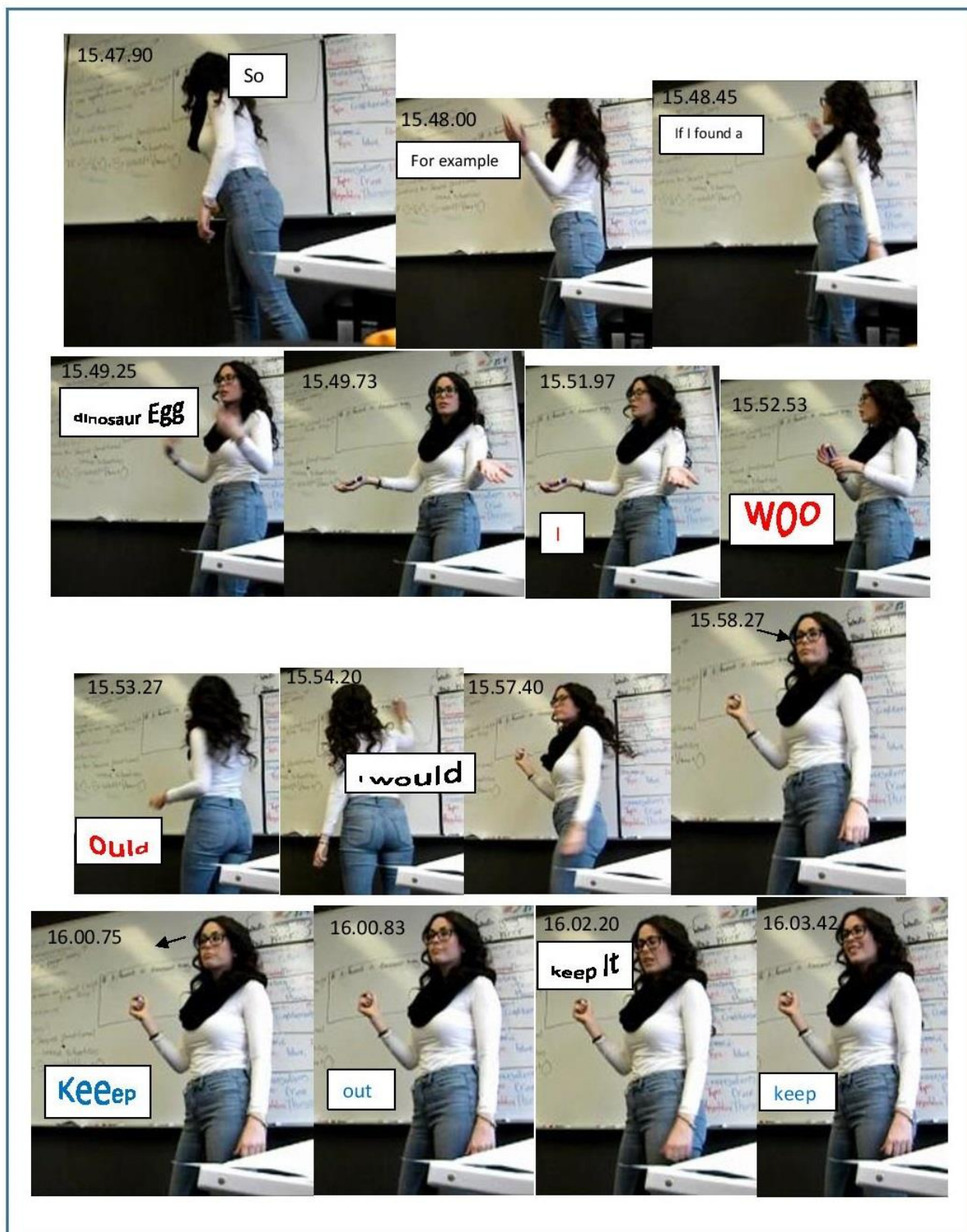
been reflected through the transformation of the signs, which carry evidence of learning. Tracy learned to transform gestural signs in the scaffolding process, and Cheng learned the possibilities of verbal and embodied sounds that are absent in her language. In the teaching-learning process, the semiotic signs and the resources were transformed, remade and negotiated by the teacher and the learner, which led them to a shared understanding of the resources. Learning in this scaffolding session occurred through struggle with, and negotiation of, the meanings-as-signs.

4.2.2 Gestural signs as elicitation techniques in a grammar class. This study demonstrates multiple examples of the teacher participants' use of iconic and metaphoric gestures as facilitation strategies. The gestures worked as semiotic resources that provided visual signs to the students, which they interpreted, negotiated and transformed in the learning process. Apart from scaffolding as discussed above, gestural resources performed several functions, including cognition/comprehension, classroom management, feedback and self-regulation as identified in multiple studies (Kusanagi, 2015; Lantolf, 2010; McCafferty, 2004; Sime, 2006, 2008; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013). In this section, I will discuss how a multimodal semiotic analysis of the gestural resources may provide a specific understanding of the cognitive functions of gestural signs in ESL classrooms. Riley was one of the teacher participants at ILS who used *mimes* and *emblems* (McNeill, 1992) in several of her instructions for a specific purpose – to elicit information or verbal utterances from her students. Similar signs were made by other teachers for the same purpose, but those were not as frequent or prominent as Riley's.

The gestural signs discussed below carry special significance for Riley's class and represent her understanding of ESL learning and instruction. Riley's was a grammar class, which had fewer opportunities for interaction than other speaking or pronunciation classes. Riley reported the difficulties of having diverse activities in this class as she had to provide her

students with writing and grammar exercises within one-hour sessions. Even within such constraints, Riley managed to give her students adequate opportunities for interaction, and the gestural resources were significant in creating those opportunities.

The following video excerpt was selected from Riley's grammar class. The excerpt presents Riley's use of metaphoric gestures and emblems [see chapter 1 for definitions] to facilitate learning of a phrasal verb. On the first day of observation, Riley was teaching second conditionals to her students. The students had been working on the grammar aspect for a few days. On that day, Riley gave them a group activity providing the condition "If I found a dinosaur egg, I would (fill in the gap)". The students wrote down the incomplete sentence on a piece of paper. Riley explained that each student had to complete the sentence and pass their paper onto the next student. Each student would then take the second part of the sentence, which was completed by the previous student, and would develop it into a new sentence, and pass it on again. The activity would go on for 15 minutes. Riley provided the first example during her instruction. Following is a 22sec video excerpt (*Figure 3*), which represents how Riley elicited the first example from the students through her gestures. The data follow a multimodal transcription.



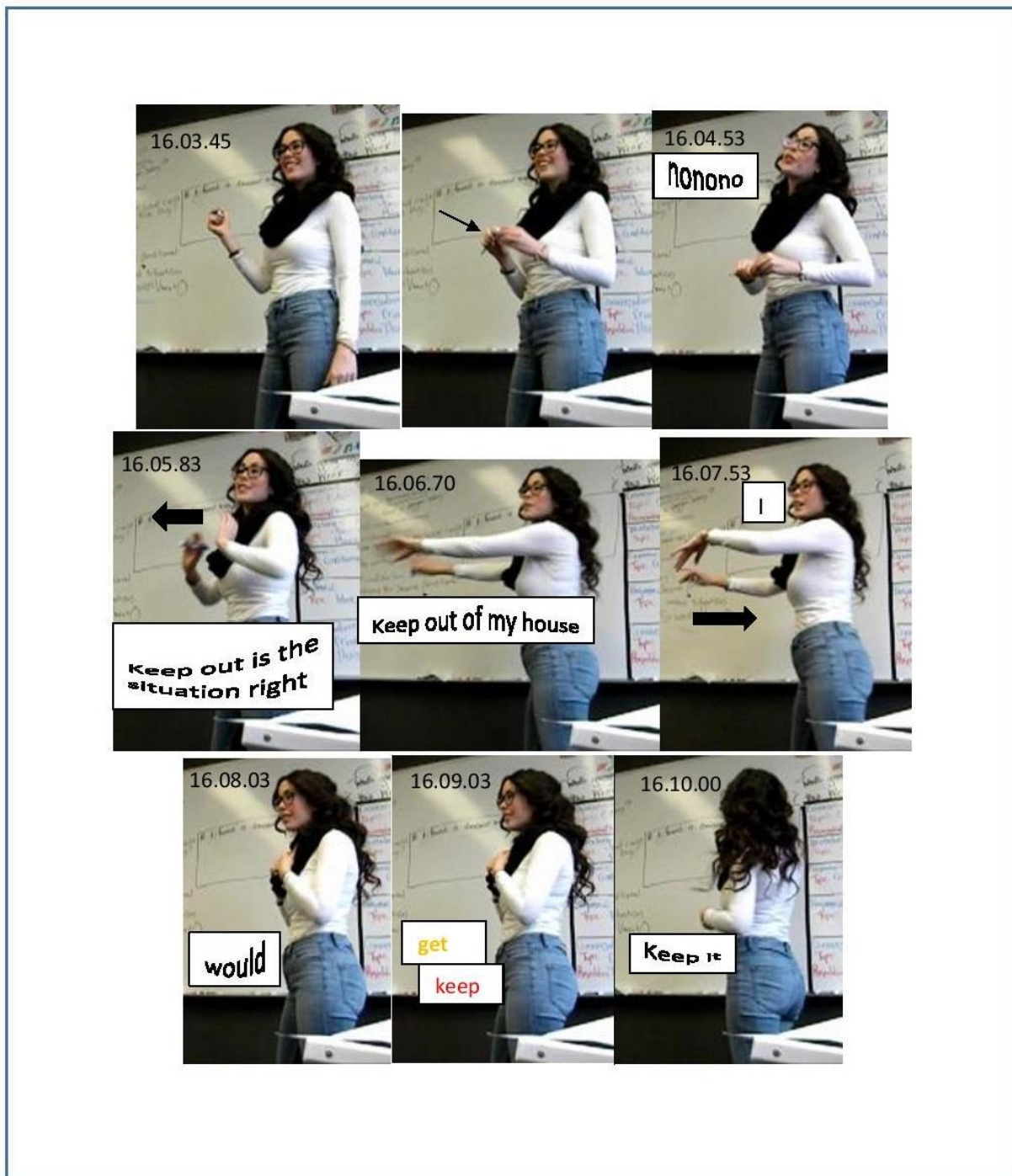


Figure 3. Riley's gestures during her instructions.

Spoken language in black represents Riley's speech, red utterances represent Andres', blue Anwar's and yellow Huang's speech. Several still images have been used to represent specific movements and change of positions. Strokes are represented through arrows. Rising and falling intonations are represented through curved utterances. Overlap of utterances mean their closeness in time.

After explaining what the students needed to do in the activity, Riley said that she would give an example of how to complete the conditional. Instead of completing the sentence by herself, she elicited the example from her students. Riley asked them to complete the conditional “with a result”. In the video excerpt, Riley said, “so, for example, If I found a dinosaur egg”, and extending her arms wide with the palms up (at 15.49.73min) she waited for a response from the students. Andres, a Venezuelan student responded “I would” but did not finish his sentence. Riley uttered *I would* and wrote it down on the board. Then she turned around and gazed at each of the students. Andres (Venezuelan), Maria (Portuguese), Anwar (Saudi), a European student and Huang (Chinese) were sitting from her right to left. At 15.58.27min in the video excerpt, Riley fixed her gaze on Anwar. Anwar responded, “keep out.” Riley said, “keep it?” with a rising intonation and blinked (16.02.20min); she waited with raised eyebrows. Anwar vaguely uttered “keep”. Riley waited for about two more seconds and said, “No no no; keep out is the situation right? Keep out of my house”. During the verbal utterance, she brought her hands close to her chest (at 16.05.83min) and pushed them away extending her arms (at 16.06.70min) as a sign of *keep out*. Afterwards, she brought her arms back (at 16.07.53min) and placed both hands close to her chest again (16.08.03min) while saying “I would” with a rising intonation. She kept holding her hands onto her chest for a second when Huang responded “get”. Almost at the same time, Andres said “keep”. Riley accepted “keep” as the right answer and turned around to write down the phrase while saying “keep it”.

In the data, Riley used hand gestures along with her gaze as semiotic resources to elicit students’ responses. First emblem in the excerpt was made with the extended arms to the sides with palms up (at 15.49.73min). The gesture without speech was directed to the whole class. This specific emblem has been described as a sign of *I don’t know* or uncertainty in the research

literature (Hudson, 2011). However, in this video excerpt, Riley makes the sign after she has finished saying “If I found a dinosaur’s egg” with a rising intonation, presented through the curved lines in the video excerpt. The intonation extends into the emblem, which more resembles a question than a statement. Riley, in fact, used this gesture as a metaphor of asking a question. Her pause afterwards was also a sign that she was waiting for a response, and her gaze to each student corroborated with this wait-time. The students understood the context and responded to the sign accordingly.

In the subsequent images, Riley used two metaphoric gestures to elicit the correct phrasal verb from the students after Anwar had produced an incorrect phrase “keep out”. The first metaphoric gesture, where she pushed away her arms to make the sign “keep out” (16.06.70min) was used to clarify the phrase Anwar had incorrectly used. This was accompanied by her speech “keep out of my house”. The speech and gesture clarified the meaning of “keep out”. Riley did not correct Anwar; nor did she give the students the answer. Instead, her gesture first clarified what “keep out” means. Later, she used another metaphoric gesture without speech, bringing her arms back and placing the hands close to her chest, which represented the action of “keep”. While bringing her arms back, Riley repeated “I would” with a rising intonation and kept holding her hands close to her chest for a few seconds. Her gesture here, however, does not represent “I would”, but has been used as a filler. The rising intonation at the end of “I would” suggests she was asking a question again. And the gesture represents the answer to the question, possibly *to keep* but not *keep out*. The sign, thus, works as an elicitation technique similar to the previous sign made with an emblem/metaphoric gesture. This gesture was read by two of the students correctly. Huang interpreted the sign as “get” and Andres as “keep”. In general, both meanings

are consistent with the sign, but “keep” is more context-specific and aligns with Anwar’s previous response of “keep out”.

The signs made by Riley were motivated signs similar to Tracy’s gestural signs discussed earlier. Riley’s gestures served both cognitive and communicative functions in the activity because they influenced the students’ comprehension of the phrasal verb as well as were used by Riley to communicate her questions to the students. The cognitive function of the gesture was intentionally employed by Riley to elicit responses from the students. Thus, she not only helped them with their comprehension of a new phrasal verb, but also elicited the expected phrasal verb through her gestures. Her emblematic/metaphoric gestures mark an act of *synesthesia* or mode-switching, which is a key concept in the field of multimodality (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015). Riley shifted from one mode to another following a specific strategy without the process of transliteration. She purposefully gave opportunities to her students to transfer the meanings of gestural signs into the meanings of verbal signs. This cognitive process of mode-shifting was a tool for her to engage her students in interaction. These were elicitation techniques in a grammar class where interaction could be a challenge. I will analyze in the following section how her gestures afforded interaction in the class.

4.2.3 Gestural affordances in the ESL classrooms. The teacher participants’ gestures in this study represent their understanding of ESL pedagogy, learning and instruction that are related to their background knowledge and experiences (Kress et al., 2005). The teacher participants said that they were aware of some of their own gestures, and they used those as pedagogical tools. By pedagogical tools they referred to any use of gestures for instructional purposes. Apart from instructional roles, gestures may directly or indirectly influence classroom pedagogy, learning and instructions that often go unnoticed (Kress et al., 2005; Rosborough,

2014). The prescribed use of gestures in educational programs limit its role to superficial learning of vocabulary and concepts (Rosborough, 2014) as observed in studies of AIM (Mady, Arnott, & Lapkin, 2009). Using data from this study, I analyze how the concept of affordances of modes used by Kress (2010) and Jewitt (2009) helps us understand the role of gestures in shaping classroom meanings in specific ways. As discussed in chapter 2, affordances of modes have been explained by Kress (2010) as the possibilities and constrains of a mode, which are shaped by its material, social and historical use in meaning-making over time. The ways gestures were repeatedly used by the teacher participants influenced classroom activities in specific ways according to social and contextual demands that further influenced meanings of classroom pedagogy (Kress et al., 2005), classroom communication (Rosborough, (2014), and more specifically, ESL learning and instruction.

Tracy, for example, in *Figure 2* drew on her gestures to embody the pronunciation of a sound unknown to Cheng. Her iconic gestures provided opportunities for embodiment of the sounds through the use of space and time in which the hand gestures were produced. The space showed how much and how long the tongue needed to be moved within the bounded space around the mouth, and the time/duration represented the time required for the pronunciation of the sound. For Cheng, this possibility of materialization was important in her learning process. The gestures also represented constraints, which led Tracy to take help of the mode of video images using cellphone, as mentioned before. Tracy also modified her own gestural sign and created exaggerated verbal sounds of the word because Cheng's verbal and gestural signs seemed problematic in relation to Tracy's expected instructional goal of the scaffolding session. These examples reflect how each mode may have its own limitations, and how ESL teachers rely on multiple modes in representing meanings in the classroom.

Cheng's gestural signs are significant in understanding her progression in the learning process. Her appropriation of the gestural sign, in fact, proves that she was aware of the connection between Tracy's gestural and verbal signs. This also demonstrates how she transformed meanings of Tracy's gestures into her own. While her verbal utterance of the sound apparently presented her struggle in pronouncing the sound, her gestural signs offered meanings of negotiation and transformation of signs in the process of learning. The evidence of Cheng's learning exists in her appropriation of gestural signs (Kress & Bezemer, 2015) in the scaffolding session. Only looking at her verbal utterance would not have illuminated this transformative process. Both Tracy and Cheng's gestures afforded the meanings and signs within the contextual boundaries; this learning process was interactive, far from the traditional static understanding of learning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015).

On the other hand, the class Riley was teaching was categorized as a level 4 grammar class [see Methodology]. Riley reported that even though this was a level 4 class, there were mixed-ability students. Some students such as Anwar were weaker than others. Therefore, according to Riley, the gestures in Figure 3 were supposed to help them comprehend verbal language. Her gestures were aligned with her activities that aimed at developing students' competence in specific linguistic aspects. Besides comprehension, Riley's gestures provided opportunities to her lower-level students to produce verbal utterances. The gestural resources opened up possibilities for interaction within constraints such as the nature of a grammar class and the level of her students. Riley identified the grammar class as a problem as it had limited opportunities for interaction, and the students had to do grammar exercises on paper. These types of activities in a one-hour grammar class were not interaction-friendly. She said she had to give her students grammar worksheets and writing activities to practice their grammar skills. Yet, she elicited as

much language as possible from her students through her gestural resources and signs. Her gestural signs replaced her verbal language, which she used as gap-filling exercises in the process of elicitation. In spite of being in level 4, the students got interactive opportunities to showcase their competence. Participation in activities, to Riley, is a resource for developing and showcasing competence in a grammar class. Her gestures afforded communicative tasks in a traditional grammar classroom, and her gestural resources transformed the traditional teaching of grammar into a communicative pedagogy that would help her students improve verbal skills according to their levels. Thus, her gestures afforded a specific pedagogy of competence in the classroom.

4.2.4 Verbal and gestural signs: Transliteration of meanings across modes in ESL classrooms. The video excerpt in *Figure 2* represents the study participants' use of iconic gestures and catchments in a pronunciation activity, whereas the excerpt in *Figure 3* demonstrates the teacher participant's use of emblematic/metaphoric gestures in a grammar lesson. Both excerpts present the teacher participants' facilitation techniques using gestures. The acts of facilitation, here, are semiotic work (Kress, 2010; Kress & Bezemer, 2015) that requires the students' participation in reading and interpreting the gestural signs for making the learning/instruction process successful. Learning will take place if the students are able to interpret, negotiate and transform the gestural signs into their inner semiotic resources (Kress & Bezemer, 2015; Vygotsky, 1978). Negotiation and transformation of signs, on the other hand, are influenced by learners' individual and social interests in sign-making (Kress, 2010), which is why the students' interpretation of the gestural signs are affected by their social/cultural background (Kress, 2012). There are also difficulties of transliteration (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015; Kress, 2010), which makes transformation of meaning from one mode to another difficult. In this

section, I will analyze the participants' interest in sign-making and interpretation of the signs in relation to the transliteration process between verbal and gestural modes and the participants' *cultural* background.

The video images in *Figure 2* represent how Tracy and Cheng negotiated gestural signs and their meanings in relation to their needs or the social context. Tracy needed to (re)make verbal and gestural signs that would make her student learn the pronunciation of *eighth* better while Cheng needed to interpret, transform and produce her instructor's signs for the same purpose. For both parties, the verbal signs needed to be aligned with the gestural signs because any mismatch would make learning difficult. In spite of the difficulties associated with transliteration across modes (Kress, 2010, 2012), Tracy simultaneously transformed her verbal instructions into the mode of gesture to teach pronunciation aspects. Nevertheless, her translation did not seem to be equally understood by all her students, especially by Cheng. As discussed earlier, Tracy made the same gestural signs of "more tongue" to the whole class while clarifying the pronunciation of *think*. Cheng got the word right after trying out three times but skipped the /θ/ sound again in *eighth*. It was also difficult for her to understand the gestural signs even though Tracy individually sat down with her and repeated the signs. The catchments made sense to her only after she watched herself in the recorded video on her cellphone and, later on, when Tracy made her hold her lip down to let her tongue stick out. It was indeed Tracy's skilled supervision and use of several modal resources and signs that helped her progress through the activity; however, the gestural signs were not as helpful for Cheng in the beginning as Tracy had expected them to be. The meaning of "more tongue" had been lost for a while in the transliteration process until Tracy took help of the other semiotic signs such as the video images on Cheng's cellphone after she had told her to record herself pronouncing the word. Interview

excerpt 10 below supports this when Tracy acknowledged the difficulties associated with the affordances of gestures.

Furthermore, Cheng's understanding of Tracy's gestures through which she represented "*tongue outside*" was very different from Tracy's intention of using the sign. The sign Cheng made through her gestures was subtler than Tracy's, and it represents her struggle with the verbal sound, too. Because of her experience, or lack thereof, with the unfamiliar sounds in her L1, her gestural signs were different. She produced the gestures according to her verbal (in)competence in the specific English sounds, and this reflects her lack of experiences with the verbal and the gestural signs. It took her a while to use and negotiate Tracy's gestural signs to transform her inner resources in the learning process, which delayed the achievement of shared/better understanding (Smotrova, 2017).

Similar to Tracy's scaffolding session, Riley's elicitation actions in the grammar lesson (Figure 3) represent examples of students' struggles with the transliteration of meanings from gestural into verbal signs. Riley's first sign made with an emblematic/metaphoric gesture, posed as a question, was responded to by Andres (15.51.97- 15.52.53mins). He started saying "I would" but did not finish possibly because of lack of vocabulary. Anwar picked it up, and responded with a phrasal verb, though incorrectly. The subsequent gestural signs were used by Riley to clarify the incorrect phrase "keep out" and to elicit the right phrase from the students. The gestural sign, however, was read by two students differently, even though they were close in meaning. While Huang read the sign as "get", Andres read it as "keep", which was more consistent with the context. These differences in students' interpretation of gestural signs point to the limitations of each mode and difficulties associated with synesthesia across modes. Both data

excerpts present some modification and loss of meanings of the signs in the translation process, which is natural in social sign-making process (Kress, 2010, 2012).

The difficulties related to gestural signs were discussed during the Focus Group. The participants pointed to the complex meanings of gestural signs suggesting that gestures might lead to confusion and misunderstanding as well.

Interview Excerpt 2

Rhonda: I think when these kinds of gestures are know:n, they: (.2) the students fee:l um (.4) more at ease in the classroom. When there are gestures used they don't know what they mean, I think that creates tension. So, making sure or that they (.4) are able to work out or its over t- you know, (.6) we are all going to.

I: Because meanings could be different?

Rhonda: Yeah! So, I mean if you say what the gesture means when you do it, that conveys to everyone that's what it is. So

I: [yeah

Rhonda: [now we all understand what it means=just Like giving like a you know like a (.6) the correction key. It's a mystery when they have all these marks on the paper but when you give=them a key, (.4) then all of a sudden that becomes a tool (.4) that they can use=so if it's used as a tool, its- if it's a shared information then- makes the classroom a bit- bit more (.2) comfortable. If students don't know what's happening (.4) they can (.5)

Elaine: It even never occurred to me (.2) to- I have to interpret um the- the gestures, only because I think most of my: students, are from South America. And yeah

and- and they a:ll use the sa:me- the French, the Italians all (laughter) all like this (the hand purse gesture, in which the thumb and fingers are brought close together and placed upward to make a query such as “what is it?”), if you go like this, everyone knows what it means, this. So its really interesting, because um (.2) now I am going to more (.2) mindful because there=is always someone might be like (.4) what are you doing?

Robin: Yeah [multi-

Elaine: [Really interesting

Robin: Multi- cultural classroom

Elaine: Yeah

Robin: Different way people respo:nd to other peoples body language

Elaine: [Yeah

Robin: [can lead to miscommunication, I think (.5) what I get mostly, it helps all the communication they say its body language, not just body language, its non-verbal

Rhonda: But it just takes you saying

Robin: [It facilitates

Rhonda: [so we are all going to and if you say what you are doing, as you are doing it=then that becomes like the- the narrative.

Robin: Routine, students will [pick up

Rhonda: [And students will pick up and do what you are doing.

(Focus group)

The interview excerpt above represents one of the moments in FG when the teacher participants showed a high level of interest in the topic of discussion, and their interest is evident in the overlaps in the excerpt. Through their interaction in interview excerpt 2, the teacher participants represented and produced an essentialist understanding of gestures as “cultural” tools in which culture was seen as a uniform and inherent characteristic of a group of people from a specific nationality. This essentialist view of culture is also expressed in the second interview excerpt discussed in the beginning of this dissertation. Views as such, in fact, equate difficulties of using and interpreting gestures in communication by students of specific nationalities with their communicative incompetence in English. This is also found in many other studies on gestures and cultural differences discussed in Stam and McCafferty (2008). This view has led the teacher participants in this study to suggest that students from specific countries such as China may struggle with gestures, so teaching of gestures was necessary to help them improve their overall communication in English.

Apart from this, however, Rhonda’s explanations in interview excerpt 2 also point to the use of gestures as meaning-making resources in the social domain of individual ESL classrooms. For example, she suggests that gestures can be agreed-upon resources through their repetitive use by the teacher and her students in the classroom. This provides a broader perspective to gestures as signs that achieve recognition by teachers and students over time through their social/cultural work within the social domain of the classroom (Kress, 2012). Her perspective also provides examples of how gestural signs may become instrumental if they are followed by explicit explanations.

Effective use of gestural signs may also be influenced by students’ individual preferences of semiotic resources and signs in the learning process. Tracy was able to use multiple semiotic

resources to help Cheng learn the pronunciation of /θ/ in Figure 2. In Riley's case, the students seemed to be familiar with her elicitation gestures in Figure 3, and video data from her other activities suggests that she used the metaphoric gesture that looked like an emblem several times on both days of observation. This frequent use of her gestures may have helped her students interpret them without major difficulties. However, if learners are presented with modal resources that they are not familiar with, it may lead to similar confusion discussed by Rhonda in interview excerpt 2. Even though gestural resources are supposed to provide cognitive support to ESL students (Stam & McKafferty, 2008), using them without appropriate understanding in the classroom may have debilitating effects. From Rhonda's class at NCO, for instance, one student participant reported that she struggled with metaphoric gestures used by one of her instructors in a business course. Jihong attended the SR with her friend Jamil, and towards the end of the interview, they were asked if there were any teacher's gestures that they thought were unhelpful. Jihong gave the following example.

Interview Excerpt 3

Jihong: This semester (.4) we have a professor (.4), and he always use(s) his fingers.

(.5) I'm not comfortable with that.

I: oh, so what does he do?

Jihong: ah, He tells me (.4) [showing his finger] asset, [raises the thumb] liability,
[raises the index finger] ah (.4) equity, [raises the ring finger].

I: so he represents those through his fingers?

Jihong: yeah, and then asks you [what] the fingers [represent]. And also [showing the thumb he asks] ↑What's this? I say, ↓asset. ↑what's this?

I: oh okay, [so he uses

- Jihong: [so- so he uses
- I: his fingers to represent something and asks you what it represents?
- Jihong: Yeah.
- I: and you cannot remember which finger was what?
- Jihong: At first I think it was interesting but a- (.4) up- you know we only have ten fingers (.4) and after that, he uses one finger [to] stand [for] two meanings. And I [get] confused. Oh this [is] asset? and [this is] pre-payd rent? I don't know (.4) ↑when it will be asset, when it will be pre-payd rent.
- I: yeah yeah
- Jihong: And then (.5) after class, eh I asked him, [quoted] sir will you please write this- your content, on the board? [ends quote] and he do[es]n't like (to) use the black board.
- I: okay?
- Jihong: He only want[S] to use the fingers. But we only have ten fingers. So he- he- [he
- Jamil: [there are so many terms.
- Jihong; yeah,
- I: did you ask him why he uses only fingers?
- Jihong: Um (.4) he thinks it will be cleverly. He said it will be clev- clever, smart. And he think[s] if you- you have the finger with you, when you want to practice just use the finger and practice. It really confuse[s] me.

(Jihong and Jamil, Rhonda's students, SR)

Jihong's instructor seemed to have used his finger gestures as mediational means to represent major concepts of the course, but seemingly it made the learning process more difficult for Jihong as she failed to relate to the gestures. Written words on the board accompanied with the gestures might have been more effective for Jihong because each mode would have contributed to the meanings of the concepts in the semiotic work. Learners, thus, need a multimodal ensemble that includes different modes of learning so that they can supplement the limitations of one with the other. The gestural signs may become learning tools for them only when they are able to understand the reach and meaning potentials of the modes. Nevertheless, ESL teachers need to have more knowledge and training about the application of not only emblems (Lazaraton & Ishihara, 2005) but also other gestural signs as pedagogical tools in relation to other modal resources, so that they can reflect and analyze the effects of gestures on learning in the L2 classroom.

Similar to the transliteration difficulties across modes, interpretation and production of gestural signs may be related to learners' familiarity with specific cultural resources of meaning-making. Studies on gestures suggest that some languages such as Italian are high-frequency-gesture languages (Busà, 2015) while some such as languages spoken in South-East Asia do not have the same gesture-based communication (Pennycook, 1985). From a multimodal semiotics perspective, the possible differences in semiotic systems among different social groups [the group of people involved in inter-action through conventional use of cultural resources] may influence how differently the members of each social group produce and interpret gestural signs (Kress, 2010, 2012). Each learner in a social domain is exposed to a multiple and diverse range of semiotic work that shapes their experiences in sign-making and usage in the learning process. Therefore, each student's sign-making experiences in a multicultural context will be different,

and it will be hard to generalize which modal resources may benefit individual students. In Figure 2, for example, Cheng showed her struggle in understanding Tracy's gestural signs, and this could be related to her background experiences of semiotic work within previous social domains that provided her limited exposure to the use of gestural resources in meaning-making. After much struggle, as evident in figure 2, she negotiated and transformed the signs in the process of learning. It was Tracy's elongated individual scaffolding session using multiple modal resources that helped her progression.

In *Figure 3*, on the other hand, the student who translated and responded to Riley's gestures before others was Andres. At other occasions, Andres always participated and responded to Riley's questions before any other students. This might have been related to his individual learning style; yet, during the interview with Andres, he pointed to Riley's movements in the classroom as helpful in the learning process even before he had been told about the purpose of this study. As discussed in the methodology section, the participants were unaware of the actual purpose of this study, and they learned about the purpose later. For the interview, Andres met me at one of the empty classrooms at ILS after he had just finished one of his classes. When he was asked how he liked taking classes at ILS, he said that he liked Riley's classes most because of her active movements in the classroom. He also explained that people were usually active like Riley in Venezuela, which is why he liked Riley's movements.

Interview Excerpt 4

Andres: I like move [movement], becau:se in Venezue:la everybody is [shook his hands and body]. [laughter] yeah, because

I: Active always?

Andres: You can you can you- you see o:n the street, all this um

I: You see a lot of people?

Andres: [gestured people moving]

I: Moving?

Andres: Yeah, this active.

I: Okay!

Andres: Maybe. I don't know, She eh [Riley] is moving, is no:t sitting, like [show stomping gesture] hey! guys, take this, write a paragraph, its dynamic.

(Andres, SR)

Data excerpt 4 suggests that Andres was aware of Riley's gestural behavior in the classroom, and he believed them to be supportive of learning. When he was told that the study was on gestures, he became more excited. He said he liked taking Riley's class because of her active movements in the classroom, and her gestures made comprehension easier. The word he used to explain Riley's body language was "explosive". Maria, a student from Portugal, expressed similar ideas. Andres and Maria both reported in the interview that they were familiar with the gestures used by Riley because people in their "country" usually used a lot of gestures. Again, from a multimodal semiotics perspective, their experiences suggest that the previous semiotic work they were engaged in within the social domains of interaction before coming to Canada involved the use of gestures as modal resources. This might have at least partly influenced their understanding of Riley's gestural signs. Anwar, on the other hand, responded to Riley's metaphoric gesture after Andres had started filling in the gestural gap Riley provided them, but he did not respond to her gestures as frequently as Andres or Maria (field notes, Riley's class, observation 1 & 2). Anwar's difficulty, thus, is somewhat similar to Cheng's

struggle with gestural resources, and these might be results of their previous experiences with semiotic work and specific cultural resources of meaning making.

As discussed before, students' sign-making experiences as such that limit their understanding of a specific mode may often be misinterpreted as their communicative incompetence. Riley, for example, described Anwar as one of the lower-level students who had been at the center only for four weeks and was going to leave soon. Riley said that Anwar's L1 was Arabic and because of the differences between his L1 and L2, "Arabic is difficult to translate" into English for Anwar (Riley, SR). During pair work, Riley put Anwar in a group of three because she thought it would help him as "he did not have much input" (Riley, SR). It was ignored how Anwar's struggle might be related to his experiences with using specific cultural resources of meaning making in communication, or how gestures would be used and interpreted in his L1. In a gesture-rich context like Riley's class, where students are offered frequent opportunities to produce, interpret, and transform gestural signs, it could be difficult for him to understand Riley's cues represented through her gestures because of his previous communication experiences and limited exposure to the use of gestural resources in ILS classrooms.

Yet, in a small classroom like Tracy or Riley's at ILS, Cheng, Andres and Anwar got varied levels of individual attention and adequate time to appropriate, negotiate and transform the semiotic signs. This might have helped them overcome the difficulties of transliteration and other social/cultural differences. In a large multicultural classroom, however, such individual scaffolding is time consuming, and the cross-cultural gap between semiotic resources and signs may not get adequate attention, leading to misinterpretation of signs. Classrooms at NCO, for example, were much bigger than those of ILS. NCO classrooms accommodate 40-60 students, so a student like Jihong from Rhonda's class may struggle with the signs.

4.3. A Foucauldian Analysis of Gestures

In this chapter, I analyze video and interview excerpts to understand the meanings of gestural representations from a Foucauldian perspective to discourse (Foucault, 1979, 1980, 1990). I will specifically focus on how the participants' understanding of gestures was constructed within specific discourses that their gestural behavior and practices became subjected to.

4.3.1 Gestures as discursive practices. The participants in this study identified several functions of gestures. In the SRs, in response to the general questions that inquired about their understanding of the roles and functions of gestures, the participants discussed the cognitive, emotional, communicative and organizational functions of teachers' gestures discussed in earlier studies (Gullberg & McCafferty, 2008; Peltier & McCafferty, 2010; Sime, 2006, 2008). One of the common interpretations of teachers' gestures was that they are important learning catalysts because these are helpful in creating an optimal learning environment. Similar to Sime's study, the participants' discussion included two functions of teachers' gestures, such as cognitive and emotional (Sime, 2006, 2008), which positively influence the learning environment. The participants, for example, said that teachers' gestures help in comprehension and learning of vocabulary, linguistic concepts and linguistic rules. The teacher participants reported that they intentionally used expressive gestures to clarify new words/phrases and explain difficult concepts. The student participants also reflected on similar beliefs about gestures, which they commonly referred to as body language. The participants' beliefs as such were evident in both teacher and student interview data, especially in the second part of the SRs that included preliminary questions on gestural behavior.

Hence, understanding the participants' prior beliefs about the roles and functions of gestures is not the aim of this section. Instead, I analyze how the participants' perspectives on gestural functions unfolded through the interview process (Talmy, 2010, 2011), and how these perspectives conformed to and reproduced specific discourses or common sense understanding of gestures. In the second part of these interviews, for instance, the participants were asked to discuss what they understood by gestures and their roles and functions, in general. All the participants discussed the functions of teachers' gestures in response to these questions even though they were not asked specifically about the teacher's gestures. In contrast, the participants discussed students' gestures only when they were asked additional questions about the role of gestures or specific questions about students' gestures. Three specific beliefs were common among the participants in this part of the SRs: a) only teachers' gestures have specific functions in students' learning processes because these help in the process of comprehension, b) learners will automatically comprehend teacher's gestures and use them in the learning process, and c) students' gestures are problematic.

I will use interview excerpt 5 to show how the above three beliefs or perspectives unfolded through the discussion in the data, followed by a discussion on how such beliefs produce, and are produced by, specific discourses. Interview excerpt 5 is taken from the second part of the SR interview with Riley. Riley was asked about the role of gestures in the ESL classroom, and the following conversation took place between Riley and me.

Riley: if they [students] want to know, (.04) if I am describing a situation (0.2) right?
About walking vertically. I have to show them that. You can't explain that (.)
you can't any way. Today I taught bundled up. And so first I write it on the
board. A= a situation about bundling up.

5 I: [hm

Riley: [And they all get it but they don't know it, right? So I am telling them okay in
the morning I have to put this [my clothes] o:n, and this [my shoes] o:n and
instantly they get it.

I: [hm

10 Riley: [then I tell them about a baby. When you have a baby, your- I roll a baby [rolling
gesture with both hands] and I know it sounds funny- (.4) They know we don't
roll a baby but- (.4) we keep a baby tight.

I: [[laughter]

15 Riley: [And I think they remember it. (.4) They remember (.4) the action. with
whatever, what's happened that day. Or, When I ask hey! What's bundled up?
They remembering that something funny happened like about the baby, right?

I: So you are probably talking about teaching vocabulary, or comprehension. For
those two reasons gestures are important= what other functions do you think
gestures might have in a classroom?

20 Riley: (.5) ummm (n.n) (low voice) I don't know! Mostly comprehension. (.4) aa (.2)
↑also attitude.

I: Ok,

Riley: like if you are (n.n) ↑how hh are you sitting, like how are you facing (.2) that person, that shows your attitude if you are interested or not, ah

25 I: d- do you notice them? in the classroom? like Do you really (.4) consciously think about [them?

Riley: [for me, (.2) not so much. but when students come in and they are sitting like this [slouching], so are not allowed to. (.2) Yeah, they have to sit up and sit like correctly, right?—because if I have one student and like (.2) my class is open.

30 I: okay.

Riley: not so much as Tracy's. So one student is sitting here and his legs are in the middle of the class like that, the whole class feels (.2) how he is feeling. So I think it's a bad attitude.

I: aha!

35 Riley: or do you mean about my gesture?

I: No, I mean everyone's

Riley: Okay. I am pretty open, but the last class I usually had my feet out.

(Riley, SR)

In the interview excerpt, Riley was asked about the roles and functions of gestures, and she said that gestures help clarify the content of a lesson. She was asked to clarify her response, and she gave the example in lines 1 through 16. The example reflects how Riley used gestures to clarify unknown vocabulary such as *bundled up*. Similar to all other participants, she interpreted the question “what are the roles and functions of gestures” as “what are the roles and functions of *teachers’ gestures* in the classroom”. In line 19, she was asked about any other functions of gestures she knew of. First, she responded saying that she did not know (line 20), but later said that gestures also reflect *attitude* in line 21. Riley’s long pause in line 20 and the following *I don’t know* in a low voice show her confusion about the multiple roles gestures may play in the classroom, especially its self-regulatory functions (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2008) and its use as multimodal resources by students (Kupetz, 2011). Nevertheless, her ignorance is not the point of discussion here; what is significant in the interview excerpt is that after interpreting gestures as attitude, Riley gave examples of students’ *bad* postures such as slouching in the classroom (line 27-29). While representing teacher’s gestures as positive resources in the classroom, she clearly identified students’ gestures as problematic.

This perspective was reinforced again in line 35 when Riley was confused whether she should talk about her own or her students’ gestures in terms of bad attitude. After being assured by me that she could discuss any of them, she said in line 37 that she is open about her own postures, and she had her feet out in the classroom. Similar data was common across the SR interviews in which teachers’ gestures were identified as positive reinforcement while students’ gestures were understood as problematic body language (Johnson, 2002), or their lack of competence in the English paralinguistic system, such as problematic eye contact or head nods in an interaction (Pennycook, 1985; Busà, 2015).

The first belief that teachers' gestures help in the comprehension process stems from popular views that gestures stimulate cognition within cognitive psychology (Church & Goldin-Meadow, 1986; Gullberg & McCafferty; Kelly, Barr, Church, & Lynch, 1999). Beliefs and practices as such are indeed indicative of the participants' awareness of the significant roles teachers' gestures may play in the learning process in ESL classrooms. Underlying such beliefs and practices, however, are other psycho-educational discourses that claim specific truths about students' learning processes. Gestures have long been investigated as part of speech and thought in psycholinguistics (Alamillo, Colletta, & Guidetti, 2013; Church & Goldin-Meadow, 1986; Gullberg & McCafferty, 2008; Kelly, Barr, Church, & Lynch, 1999; McNeill, 1992). Many of these studies often identify gestures as *non-verbal* communication, and the hyphenation of non-verbal communication makes gestures somewhat subordinated to speech, as pointed out by Norris (2004). Within this regime of truth, gestures are studied to understand how they contribute to and/or obstruct meanings of spoken language, and how such knowledge informs the understanding of language learners' comprehension process.

Riley reflected such a belief in line 14 when she explained that the gesture of rolling a baby should help her students *remember the action* even though the ability of recalling the action may depend on other cognitive, individual, social and cultural factors. Thus, the discursive knowledge that gestures help with comprehension may influence ESL instructors' use of gestures, which is why they may adopt prescribed methods of teaching language components through gestures, ignoring other contextual factors. Furthermore, the positive roles of students' gestures got minimal attention by the participants in this study because of the same discursive influences, and so the teacher and student participants focused too much on the teachers' gestures.

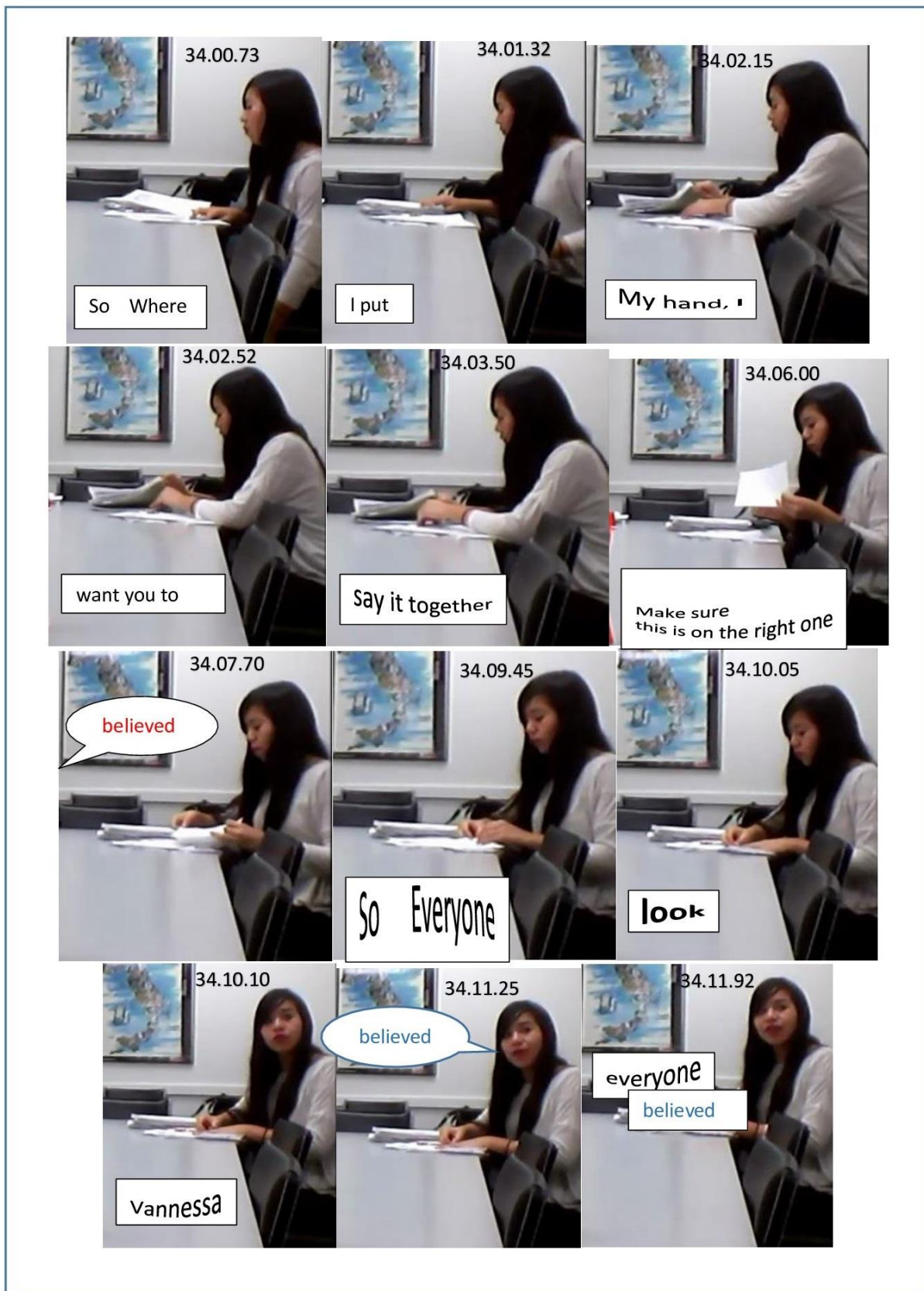
In contrast, students' gestures were considered as problematic because of other discursive influences, which represent students' bodies as obstacles to learning (Johnson, 2002; Leavitt & Power, 1997; Saavedra & Marx, 2016). This could also be a product of developmental psychology which often correlates specific physical development with cognition, and some of these ideas have been adopted in gesture studies such as in the study by Alamillo, Colletta, & Guidetti (2013). All these knowledge forms led to the third assumption that learners would discover the meanings of teachers' gestures by themselves and would use them in their comprehension process. This assumption is also located within the psycho-educational discourses of learners' innate abilities in accessing and processing learning (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Thus, the participants' understanding of gestures was informed by specific discourses about the body and learning. In this study, however, it was evident that the intended meanings of teachers' gestures may not always be interpreted correctly by individual students and may create confusion as discussed in the previous sections.

4.3.2. Regulation of students' gestures. In this study, the concept of discipline refers to a form of power (Foucault, 1979) exercised on students' bodies to normalize their social, linguistic, and literacy skills in the process of developing them as self-controlled civilized subjects (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000). As discussed in chapter 2, different forms of disciplinary regulation are legitimized through specific pedagogical discourses that construct targeted levels of competencies, processes of achieving those competencies, and signs of success. Discipline, thus, makes learners acquire the competency levels according to the normalized standard and transforms them into collective subjects who conform to the school identity (Ford, 2003; Luke, 1992; Toohey, 2000). In this study, students' bodies were subject to and objects of different forms of disciplinary regulation in the ESL classrooms. This regulation

included controlling and regulating students' behavior, movements and activities (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000) and self-evaluation (Ford, 2003). The regulation operated through space, time, curricula, classroom activities, forms of surveillance such as explicit rules on visual display, and direct supervision of students' behavior. For example, students' movements and activities were controlled at ILS through the space and ground rules represented on display boards. Riley explicitly displayed her ground rules on the board prohibiting *slouching* in the classroom. As evident in interview excerpt 5, Riley did not like her students slouching in the classroom because she believed that this would influence other students. All the other teacher participants reported that they interfered with students' gestures if those created aggravated situations in the classroom. In this section, I present a video excerpt from Elaine's class at ILS in which she corrected one of her students Vanessa's eye-contact as Vanessa seemed to be distracted from the classroom activity. Correction of Vanessa's eye-contact has been identified as a disciplinary technique to control students' *unruly* bodies (Foucault, 1979; Marx & Saavedra, 2016). I discuss how regulation of Vanessa's eye-contact stems from specific discourses to produce students as specific subjects (Luke, 1992; Toohey, 2000).

The video excerpt below (*Figure 4*) is an episode from Elaine's pronunciation class. On the day of observation, Elaine was teaching pronunciation of past forms of words in English that ended in /t/, /d/ and /id/ sounds. She gave each of her students a distinct worksheet containing a set of past tenses such as *believed*, *kissed* and *insulated*. The students were asked to individually identify and re-arrange the words into different columns according to their ending sounds. Later, they were asked to go on to the board and write down the words in the right column Elaine had drawn on the board. Vanessa was comparatively slower than others in completing her task. The students finished their work and waited for Vanessa to finish her board-work. Vanessa got back

to her seat after everyone else. The following video excerpt (*Figure 4*) took place after she had arrived at her seat. Elaine asked the students to check each other's work on the board and pronounce each of the words together following her pointing gesture or a *deictic* (McNeill, 1992). The 33-second video excerpt presented below demonstrates Vanessa's actions while Elaine was eliciting the pronunciation of the words from the students written by them on the board. The excerpt follows a multimodal transcription. The transcription conventions follow Norris' (2004) multimodal transcription method described in the methodology chapter.



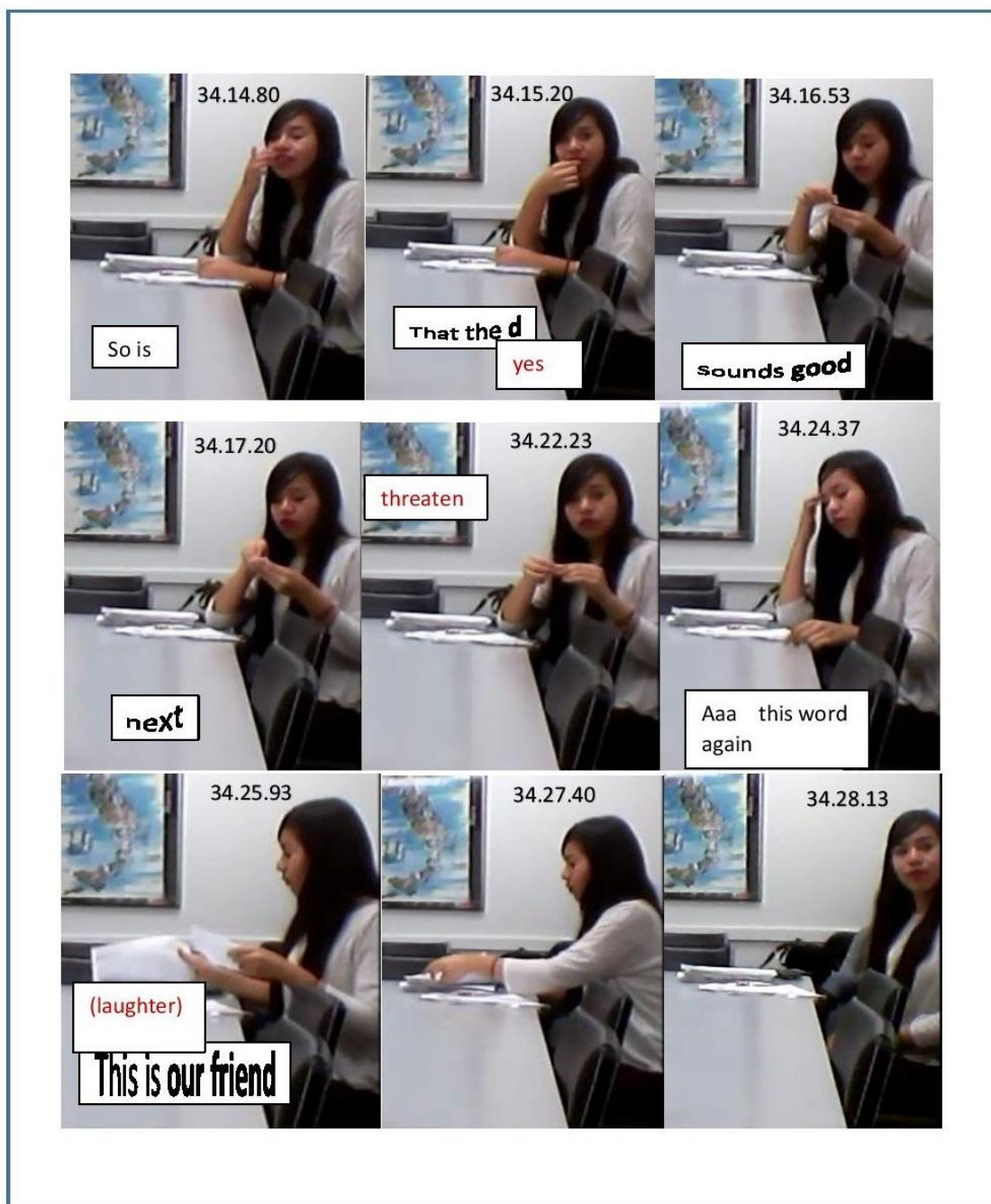


Figure 4. Vanessa's "inattentive" gestures during an activity.

Elaine tries to discipline her eye-contact and responses to engage her in the activity. Elaine's spoken language is presented in black, Vanessa's in blue, and other students' in red. Following Norris (2004), several still images have been used to represent specific movements and change of positions, and rising and falling intonation are represented through curved utterances. Font size represents pitch. Overlap of utterances mean their closeness in time.

In the video excerpt, when Elaine provided instructions about reading the words on the white board after the students had finished their previous task, Vanessa seemed to be busy with something else (from 34.00.73- 34.09.45mins in Figure 4). She grabbed a piece of paper and ripped it off when Elaine pointed at the word *believed* on the board. Elaine asked everyone to pronounce each of the words together, but noticing that Vanessa was not paying attention, she said “look, Vanessa” (at 34.10.05min). Vanessa repositioned her eye-contact with Elaine and uttered “believed” (at 34.11.25min). Elaine asked everyone again to pronounce the word together and confirmed with them that the word ended in /d/ sound. Vanessa continued her eye-contact with Elaine while holding the piece of paper in her left hand and trying to take her chewing gum out of her mouth with her right hand. Elaine pointed to the next word, and other students pronounced *threaten*. Vanessa directed her gaze to her hands, stuck her gum into the paper, rolled it up and put it down on the table (34.14.80 - 34.24.37mins). After disposing of her gum, she relocated her eye-contact with Elaine, sat straight with a tilted head on her right with a smile on her face (34.28.13min).

Vanessa’s posture and downward gaze from 34.00.73 to 34.09.45mins of the video data carried signs of inattentiveness (Busà, 2015; Pennycook, 1985), which caused Elaine to correct her eye-contact. Elaine’s correction of Vanessa’s eye-contact seems to correspond to John’s control of students’ posture that provided signs of authority and teacher’s control in the classroom observed by Kress et al. (2005). The authors state that John normalized his control by explaining that students’ upright posture would ensure their physical wellbeing. In this study the above data excerpt in *Figure 4* apparently corresponds to the discourse that students’ gestures are problematic and need to be fixed for an expected learning outcome. Hence, the episode also carries significant meanings of students’ gestures in ESL classrooms because such gestures are

markers for paralinguistic competence (Pennycook, 1985). Therefore, correction of Vanessa's eye contact is not an ordinary classroom management strategy, but reflects a form of discipline (Foucault, 1979) through which she would develop specific paralinguistic competence in English to conform to the ESL student identity at ILS.

The video excerpt was discussed with Elaine during the SR with some follow up questions. Following is an interview excerpt from the SR in which Elaine discussed Vanessa and her *lower level* of English proficiency compared to other students in class.

Elaine: Okay, so this is a challenge. The challenge is that I have to- there is, okay K [a student] is
I guess the more advanced.

I: umhm.

Elaine: After that is N [student 2] and then Vanessa. Vanessa wanted to come into my class, even
5 though it's pronunciation 8,

I: [yeah?

Elaine: [And I allowed her to come because they know she feels comfortable with me. The truth
is she really should be probably in pronunciation:n (.5) 6.

I: okay?

10 Elaine: So. (.4) I was aware of that, and so I had to kind=of adjust=I speed things up accordingly:
or kind=of like slow things down.

I: umhm

Elaine: I was going to ask her to (.4) not come into my class. She followed me fro- She was in
my speaking class. She wanted to come into the pronunciation (.2) and I (.2) allowed her
15 because (.4) I think that (.2) I am not sure, I feel like she is a learning disability. There is
something very different (.2) and I am not going to ask. An- but (.2) I want her to feel
comfortable and=she feels comfortable with me.

I: okay.

Elaine: So I know that because she came to my speaking cla:ss, and asked me for my
20 pronunciation and so (.2) that. (.4) So, uuumm (.5) so sometimes I have to speed things
up so that the students don't get irritated.

I: okay

Elaine: okay? Sometimes I have to slow them down so that she can (.4) pick=up. when I gave
 them the assignment, [the pronunciation task] I wa:s ↑I thoug:ht I was fully confident that
 25 she would be able to do the assignment

I: [umhm

Elaine: [because when we did past tense, its not the first time I taught it. I have done several
 reviews so I specifically gave her (.4) the one thing I gave her to do was because (.4) for
 all the students it was the ea:siest pronunciation.

30 I: um

Elaine: So when she went up there and it wasn't correct I was horrified! I was horrified because
 it told me oh my gosh! This- I have been asking for wee:ks (.6) and talking to them, and
 the reason when I do that when I have them write down is because sometimes you can
 hide. (.4) It's very easy to hide because everyone nods. So sometimes I go up there to see,
 35 okay she is really understanding and I was (.4) blo:wn away to see that she did not under-
 stand. So aa (hhh) yeah, I don't know if that was a bit of embarrassing for her or
 whatever but I mean.

(Elaine, SR, *interview excerpt 6*)

Elaine's pronunciation class observed in this study was categorized as pronunciation 8 [see methodology chapter]. Elaine taught at the 'academic' campus that accommodated higher level students at ILS. Vanessa got into her level with her advisor's approval because she wanted to specifically be in Elaine's class. Hence, Elaine believed that Vanessa belonged to a lower level as she did not show the same proficiency as other students. Elaine's identification of Vanessa as a lower level student than others in the same class in line 4 represents the on-going classification of students' abilities in modern classrooms (Ball, 2013; Ford, 2003; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000), and manipulation of her eye contact represents a disciplinary technique that is directed to students' physical activities and movements in the ESL context (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000). Therefore, an interpretation of Elaine's action as a form of punishment would be problematic since it involves a bigger purpose of making Vanessa achieve specific linguistic and paralinguistic competence in the process of becoming a level 8 student who conforms to the specific linguistic standard of the level.

Elaine described Vanessa as one of the weakest students in her class. She reported that the students had been working on past tenses and their pronunciation for a while (line 27), and they had practiced the linguistic aspect before the specific board-work discussed above. This activity was designed to test if individual students had learned the pronunciation of the words. Elaine said that the board-work was a strategy to check individual learning outcomes because students usually would hide during whole-class activities, and everyone would nod as a sign of comprehension. This, in turn, would make it difficult to understand the individual learning outcomes (line 31-35). Even after so much practice, Vanessa was not able to demonstrate her competence because she wrote some of the words in the wrong column on the board. Elaine said she was horrified (line 31) because Vanessa had not acquired the verb tense [simple past, regular

verb endings] and their pronunciation after much practice. When Elaine was checking each of the words with the whole class, Vanessa's downward gaze reflected her disengagement in the interaction between Elaine and her students and emitted signs not only of inattention (Pennycook, 1985) but also of what Elaine perceived as failure to learn the verb tense. Elaine described her as "a harder case" during the interview, and her lack of eye-contact corresponded to her hard-to-improve proficiency in English pronunciation Elaine pointed to in the above SR excerpt. Elaine identified Vanessa as a harder case because she did not conform to the competency of *level 8* of the pronunciation class at ILS even after getting the same amount of exposure and practice the other students got. Because she was almost *untrainable*, she had further been grouped into *learning disability*, which is a modified form of psychological categorization in contemporary classroom contexts (Ball, 2013).

Elaine also reported that Vanessa was given an easier worksheet than what the other students got in the class, and thus, she was excluded from the rest of the group during the activity. From line 31 through 36, the emphasized words *horrified* and *blown away* express her surprise that Vanessa still could not correctly identify the right pronunciation of the words. Through the descriptions and word stresses, she justified her opinion that Vanessa had a learning disability, so her correction of Vanessa's distracted eye-contact was necessary to help her achieve specific linguistic and paralinguistic skills. The distracted eye-contact also coincided with her *hard-to-improve* proficiency in English. Her action of making Vanessa attentive in class aligns with the objectives of ESL classes and represent improved supervision, which is done through the individualized regulation of her activities, including embodied actions. The disciplinary measure of correcting her eye-contact was supposed to improve her perceived communicative (in)competence in English to make her an optimal level 8 student.

Regulation of students' behavior was a theme of discussion in the FG. In this discussion, Elaine reported that she regulated her students' behavior if those interfered with the learning context. For example, she narrated an event from her speaking class at ILS, where her students were showing disrespectful gestures to one of the students by patting hands on their own heads and rolling eyes as a sign of "oh, there he goes again". Elaine said that the students were aggravated by the student because he used to interrupt others in the classroom. Elaine said she had to interfere and talk to the students to reduce tension. This intervention aimed at creating an optimal learning environment for every ESL learner who would learn to maintain social relations by self-monitoring (Saavedra & Marx, 2016) their participation in classroom discussion while giving others opportunities to talk.

Categorization of students' English level and skills was a major form of disciplinary regulation at ILS, and students' gestural practices became subjected to regulation when they were perceived as problematic in the learning process. ILS is a private language school that offers English classes to ESL students from a diverse background. The school categorizes ESL into different levels and skills of competence such as reading, writing, speaking, grammar and pronunciation. Each cluster has multiple levels and the students are tested into their appropriate level during admission. The school has about 55+ categories of classrooms like this that offer about 300 classes every day, and each one accommodates about eight students, as advertised on their online website. The school also promotes that they have classes for *all levels and language needs* with a flexible schedule for everyone (Field notes and the school website). Each student is tested into their appropriate level of the appropriate component of English. For example, a student may be tested at writing 5, grammar 4 and/or pronunciation 6. The students, however, can move from one level to another within specific parameters upon their advisor's approval.

This classification aimed at improving multilingual students' abilities and skills according to a standard (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000).

Within such a complex teaching/learning context, the teacher participants had to plan and execute their lessons according to the appropriate competency level. Each level, for example, had a specific descriptor according to the (sub-)skills such as reading, writing, speaking, grammar, pronunciation, and idioms, and each offers a range of linguistic aspects such as specific verb tenses and their pronunciation, idioms and sentence structures. Some of the linguistic aspects taught in the classrooms might overlap across different levels, but each student had to pass each level to reach the following one. The teachers, therefore, had to ensure that the expected lessons were covered in each level, and the descriptors of the levels apparently become a prescribed form of syllabus for that level.

The teacher participants' understanding of the cognitive functions of gestures also aligned with the school objective. Elaine, for example, said that she had learned from her teaching practicum in her TESL [Teaching English as a Second Language] training program that *the lower the level, the bigger the gestures had to be*. She believed that the students somehow connected to the images represented by gestures and comprehend better. This belief also corresponds to the principles adopted in the instructional approaches such as AIM that derive from cognitive theories of gestures. Within AIM, gestures are used in the lower level to teach vocabulary and are gradually reduced at the upper level (Mady, Arnott, & Lapkin, 2009). Riley expressed a similar view while explaining that she did not like standing in front of her students facing backward:

Interview Excerpt 7

Riley: This is my philosophy. (.4) If you are a level one student, and I am telling you present da da da, (.2) you need my face.

I: okay.

Riley: you need to be looking at my l:ips, You need to- also see my body.

I: okay.

Riley: And when I am doing this (backward) first of all you can't see what I am writing,

I: [aha

Riley: [and you can't (.4) really (.2) understand me as much as (.4)

I: okay.

Riley: you would like.

(Riley, SR)

The teacher participants believed that specific gestures would help their lower level students comprehend better. The first interview excerpt presented in the beginning of this dissertation [see chapter 1] also points to the teacher participants' view that they need to have appropriate gestures/body language in the classroom that would engage their students in interaction to improve their existing level of English. Thus, the teacher participants seem to have adopted, or at least hold the view of, a prescriptive model of gestures to deal with the students' proficiency levels like the instructors who implemented the *Direct Instructions* in Saavedra and Marx's (2016) study.

4.3.3. Use of teachers' gestures as a form of disciplinary mechanism. The teacher participants discussed the function of teachers' gestures in classroom management during the third part of SRs and FGs. For example, they suggested that hand movements, gaze and head

nods are used to defuse aggravated situations and to control students' participation and engagement. The teacher participants reported that they used waving gestures and flashing palms towards students to resolve tension and to manage participation in the classroom (Video data, SR interviews and FG). Gestures as such have been discussed in Sime's study in which the student participants identified the organizational function of teacher's gestures (Sime, 2008). In this section, I discuss how such organizational functions of teacher's gestures may also reflect discipline (Foucault, 1979) in ESL classrooms.

During the FG, a specific hand gesture by flashing the palm to someone was discussed as an important way to manage disruption in the classroom. The teacher participants discussed the relevance of this gesture specifically for ESL classrooms. The participants reported how the gesture helped them manage students' participation in discussion. They were specifically asked to discuss if gestures sometimes may be overpowering.

Interview Excerpt 8

Rhonda: that kind of gesture [flashing palm at someone], right? That's an indication (.2)
to (.6) like

I: so you are saying,

Rhonda: So if you do that [flashing palm] (.2) to them. (.4) if somebody is talking over
5 here [on the left], and somebody is talking over here [on the right] and if you
do this [flash palm]

Robin: [yeah yeah

Rhonda: [first you are tell-, you are indicating to them that they have to be quiet.

I: o:kay

10 Rhonda: because they need to

Robin: [yeah

Rhonda: [wait their turn (.4) so that

Robin: talk to the ha:nd.

Everyone: [laughter]

15 Robin: [yeah

Rhonda: [any any kind of talking or stopping the wo:rd's or stopping

Elaine: I do that as well.

Robin: [[inaudible text segment]

20 Elaine: [usually you know maybe everyone is energized about the topic, a:nd just too
many people in there (.4) sort of overwhelming the one person who is trying t-
(.4) to speak, maybe it's a more shy person and=so Im like [flashes her palm
forward], (.6) the only thing to indicate the only person to speak and for
everyone else, oh the partygoers, keep down! So the shy person can speak.

(Elaine, Rhonda and Robin, FG)

The teacher participants' discussion in interview excerpt 8 suggests that they understood the organizational functions of gestures in ESL classrooms in a very specific way. They discussed how gestures could be used in controlling individual students' participation in the classroom. They categorized students into shy and extrovert, which Elaine referred to as *the partygoers* (line 23) and suggested that the shy students needed more opportunities to speak. Therefore, the other students had to be quiet when the shy student was speaking. Here, the hand gesture becomes a tool for disciplining the extrovert students to give each ESL student adequate opportunities to speak in the classroom. This is based on the knowledge of the importance of participation in ESL classrooms. The student participants were also aware of this regulation in the classroom. Elaine's student Alice, for example, reported that Elaine sometimes ignored her if she raised her hand to ask questions or to respond to her in the speaking class. She believed that she was *more advanced* than other students, which is why Elaine did not let her speak. This conversation took place in the third part of the SR while discussing specifically about Elaine's gestures in the classroom with Alice.

Interview Excerpt 9

I: so what gestures of Elaine's have you noticed when she teaches?

Alice: when she knows you(hhh) [laughter] when you when- for example (.4) eh if I have some questions to a:sk or something to sa:y, I have put my hands up, and she would ignore me [laughter].

I: ok?

Alice: I am not letting all the others speaking [I don't let them speak].

I: [[laughter]

Alice: [[laughter]

I: so, she does- she

Alice: Because I understand she must give other people to speak eh (.2) because they are the basic students. Because they are mo:re, (.4) not as advanced as I am. (Alice, SR)

Alice points to how she notices Elaine's gesture through which she stops her from answering questions to let other students speak. She also said that she was aware of her being more *advanced* than other students. As I discussed before, hand gestures such as flashing the palm was used by the teacher participants as a form of disciplinary control to regulate ESL students' gestures to help them learn self-regulation (Ball, 2013; Haque, 2017) to maintain social relations (Saavedra & Marx, 2016). Similar hand gestures were also found to be regulating individual students' language skills and strategies in this study. Video excerpt 1 in Figure 2 in which Tracy used her gestures to supervise Cheng's pronunciation skills is also an example of a disciplinary technique. In the excerpt, Tracy regulated Cheng's hand and lip movements so that she could self-regulate her own tongue for a better pronunciation.

Tracy's gestures played a significant role in regulating Cheng's pronunciation by regulating her finger, lip and tongue movements for a standard pronunciation of the /θ/ sound. As discussed earlier, the episode took place after Cheng showed difficulties with the sound several times. Tracy identified her difficulties in pronouncing the sound, which led her to sit down with her and individually work on her pronunciation skill. Following Cheng's struggle with the sound, Tracy used her gestural resources in the first two images of *Figure 2* to show Cheng how the *tongue must be outside* for a comprehensible pronunciation of the sound /θ/. Tracy used her catchments first to explain to Cheng how the pronunciation would look like. The visual

representation, however, did not help in the beginning. Therefore, she modified her gestures of pressed fingers into a bigger arm movement (Figure 2 at 01.33.60min) to demonstrate how much the tongue had to be manipulated for the pronunciation. Cheng was still having difficulties with the sound, which prompted Tracy to mediate Cheng's tongue movement through direct intervention.

During the scaffolding, Tracy not only used her own gestures, but also regulated Cheng's gestures in the teaching/learning process. Cheng made a vague gesture of "tongue outside" with her index finger at 01.27.27min of the video excerpt. This is the point when Cheng seemed to have realized that her tongue was not coming outside, but her gesture was as vague as her almost inaudible sound of /θ/. Tracy could also see how Cheng's gesture was very different from her own just like her pronunciation of the word (01.27.27min). This time, instead of showing Cheng more gestures, she asked her to follow her to let her tongue out while pronouncing the word. Cheng's gesture of more tongue, thus, prompted Tracy to regulate Cheng's finger and lips to let the tongue out. Cheng's gesture led Tracy to take additional measures to directly supervise her pronunciation techniques and regulate her finger and lips to let her tongue out.

Tracy asked Cheng to use her finger to hold her lower lip down so that the tongue could come out at 1.50.20 through 01.53.00 mins. Tracy made Cheng use her finger to self-regulate the placement of her lips and tongue. These were important physical features of the sound, so they needed to be self-regulated by Cheng. Tracy acknowledged towards the end of the video excerpt that Cheng's difficulty of pronouncing the sound was a product of her linguistic background. By saying that Tracy normalized the native-like pronunciation of the sound and her own native-speaker identity while implicitly categorizing Cheng as a native-speaker of Chinese, who might have difficulties with inter-dental sounds when learning English (Hui-Yin, 2016). The

normalization of the native/non-native identities rationalized her regulation of Cheng's accent and pronunciation strategies. Tracy's gestures worked as disciplinary technique (Foucault, 1979) to regulate Cheng's non-native pronunciation according to the norms of native-like pronunciation of English sounds.

Tracy's gestures in the above data excerpt also represents how Tracy accommodated multiple objectives of ESL instruction. The episode reflects signs of Cheng's interest in using Tracy's gestures as modal resources and transforming the signs into learning resources (Kress & Bezemer, 2012). Tracy's gestures, on the other hand, represent her self-defined role of an ESL facilitator who ensures the best use of the available resources in the classroom to improve her students' existing abilities. Such important perspectives to gestures were absent in the teacher participants' general understanding of gestures, which started to unfold during the Focus Group. Following is a discussion on how the participants' discursive knowledge about gestures within the classrooms restricted specific understanding of gestures.

4.3.4. Limitations of the common-sense knowledge about gestures. In this section, I briefly discuss the limitations of the participants' understanding of the cognitive functions of gestures. As I mentioned in section 4.3.1, the participants' knowledge about the functions of gestures reflect what is considered to be common-sense knowledge, and they seem to be influenced by developmental psychology and psycho-educational discourses such as learners' innate abilities in accessing and processing learning. In spite of stating beliefs in *cultural differences* in gestural behavior, for example, the teacher participants took it for granted that all students' may benefit equally from their gestural signs in the classroom. Teachers' gestures or other multimodal resources in the classroom, in fact, may not necessarily express the intended meanings, and students always interpret meanings according to their previous experiences of

sign making (Kress et al., 2005). In fact, in this study, there were examples of situations when students struggled with the meanings of teachers' gestures. This discussion, as illustrated below, also helps us learn the importance of using other theoretical perspectives such as performativity (Butler, 1999) to understand how teachers' and learners' frequent use of gestures may contribute to their multimodal performances through which their identities are constituted.

One of the aims of the SR and FG interviews in this study was to foreground dialogic work in meaning making using examples of gestural practices that took place in the classrooms. FG also focused on some major findings from the video data and the SRs. Meanings were co-constructed (Talmy, 2010, 2011) in these interviews. Some new perspectives to gestures were brought in only after the participants were asked specific questions, or they saw their own gestures in the video texts, and thus the interview processes were important to investigate as well. These interviews brought important insights into how meanings of gestures may go unnoticed because of the common-sense knowledge about teaching and learning in the classroom.

Interview excerpt 3 discussed before presents Jihong's difficulties with understanding one of her instructor's gestures in a Business course. Jihong's struggle with the meanings of her instructor's gestures suggests that gestures, sometimes, may confuse meanings rather than clarify them. Jihong found her instructor's gestures confusing because the way the instructor was using them was not very comprehensible to Jihong. She also said that she asked the instructor to use writing along with the gestures, but the instructor did not agree. Similar confusion was identified by Tracy when she observed her own gestures during the SR. She said that she used a lot of hand gestures, and sometimes they were confusing because they were distracting. She was surprised when she saw her frequent hand rotating gestures used as beat gestures (McNeill, 1992; see

chapter 1) that usually emphasize speech without adding any new information. After showing a video text in which Tracy was explaining phrasal verbs through her gestures, the following conversation took place.

Interview Excerpt 10

I: So, what's your impression about your own gestures?

Tracy: I think when I sit down, I am telling them it's not my turn anymo:re, yea, so I tend to do tha:t. (.4) um which I did not really think about be:fore, it's like washed out. (.6) yea! Um it's really weird watching yourself.

I: I know [laughter]

Tracy: To hear your own voice? Strange and different.

I: Okay, so, do you think your gestures influenced their understanding?

Tracy: Sometimes! (.6) they do, sometimes I think they are clarifying, I think sometimes they are confusing for them. If I haven't thought about, is it just my, (.2) you know, I am talking with my ha:nds nonsense [laughter] that can sometimes be distracting for them.

I: [Okay?

Tracy: [Um (.5) Sometimes they're clarifying stuffs, but I think sometimes they were a little bit confusing.

I: So, was there anything surprising?

Tracy: Yeah, noticing how much I am always doing this [rotating hands] [laughter]. I had no idea I did it that much yea, sometimes its contextual but often not.

I: You mean the rotation?

Tracy: Like a helicopter [laughter]. (Tracy, SR)

Tracy identified some of her gestures as confusing because they seemed to be unnecessary in the explanation of the lesson. Usually, such gestures are avoided in gesture research as they are considered redundant or unintentional gestures (Kendon, 2004). Nevertheless, as Tracy pointed out, those gestures may, in fact, affect the explanation by making the meaning confusing. It is, however, noteworthy that Tracy became aware of the gestures only after watching herself in the video texts. She was also surprised that she used many of these gestures. Her discomfort with her too many hand gestures could be related to her uneasiness in watching herself in the video as she pointed out how strange she felt at that moment.

This confusion related to gestural representations was discussed in the FG with the teacher participants. The participants first identified them as related to cultural *miscommunication*, but later pointed to how they might be confusing even within the same culture because gestures may not always express intended meanings. The participants also reflected on how unknown gestures might create further tension if students failed to interpret them. Elaine, for example, admitted that she never realized before that gestures might create confusion; she said that most of her students were from South America, so she never thought about the possible interpretations of her gestures by students from different “cultural” backgrounds. She said that she would be more mindful because some students may find her gestures confusing (Interview excerpt 2).

The participants’ beliefs about, and practices of, gestures were constructed within specific social realities. The interviews also created new realities, and new discourses about gestures were co-constructed through the interactions. The interview data provide insights into the ways in which gestural representations are overlooked in the classroom. Some of the discussions in the data also represent how gestures may help us understand power-relations and resistance in the classroom. These two important findings are discussed in the following sections because they are

more relevant to the understanding of language teaching as performative acts of identity (Butler, 1999).

4.4. Gestures and Performativity

In this study, *Performativity* refers to the ways in which identities are (re)constituted through repeated acts of meaning-making within a restricted and regulatory frame (Butler, 1999). More specifically, I use the concept of performativity in the ways it has been adopted by applied linguistics/TESOL researchers such as Morgan (2004), Miller (2012) and Pennycook (2004) to demonstrate new ways of understanding language, learning and subjectivities in ESL classrooms. The studies, for example, suggest that language and identities are not predetermined, but outcomes of repetitive acts of identity. Furthermore, I follow Pennycook's (2004) idea that the sedimented acts that constitute the subject are multi-/trans-modal. In the following sections, I demonstrate how ESL teachers' and students' identities are (re)constituted through their repeated multimodal acts of ESL teaching, which is discursively understood across different pedagogical contexts. Following Vick and Martinez (2011), I also focus on how the reiterative nature of performative acts that represent moments of the teachers' and students' resignification of their subjectivities may also offer a new understanding of agency and power relations in the classroom.

4.4.1. Understanding ESL pedagogy through a performative approach. The ESL classrooms observed in this study represented how the ESL teachers' identities were (re)constituted through their repeated performances of pedagogical acts. The pedagogies, however, were not pre-given, but were discursively produced and (re)signified through the teacher participants' repeated multimodal acts of identity, in which gestures played a significant role.

4.4.1.1. (Re)constituting identity through repeated pedagogical acts at NCO. While some classrooms represented a unified and explicit English curriculum and pedagogy, especially at NCO, others had a diverse ensemble of pedagogical activities that represented English in a distinct way. Similar to Springton school in Kress et al.'s (2005) study, the multimodal ensemble in the classrooms at NCO represented ESL as an explicit and detailed set of competencies to be taught through a specific curriculum, syllabus and course outlines designed and delivered by a group of course coordinators in collaboration with the Chair. Although there were different levels of English at NCO, the school seemed to treat English language holistically at each level. Rhonda and Robin explained during the SR that learners tested at a specific level were expected to demonstrate competency across all the skill areas such as reading comprehension, writing compositions, presentations, critical thinking, grammar and sentence structure skills. Each level, thus, offered a combination of the skills to prepare learners for the next level and measured their overall competency across all the skill areas in English. Highlighting the aspects, Rhonda and Robin both described English at NCO as “a post-secondary school subject” and highlighted the importance of writing skills to be successful in the subject. Robin, for example, said that speaking was “more fun”, but he had to focus on writing more although many students would find it “boring” (Robin, SR). Within this institutional regulatory framework, as Robin and Rhonda explained, they focused on specific set of skills while deemphasizing the others.

Rhonda's and Robin's repeated multimodal acts of meaning making that constituted them as specific ESL teachers also signified the ESL pedagogy in specific ways. NCO had a very traditional sitting arrangement for students and a fixed space for the teacher marked by a podium [see Methodology]. Robin and Rhonda taught their students from the front as well as frequently moved around the class to help them with group work. Each of them used some identical as well

as individualized gestures and movements over the two hours of classroom observation with the aim of making students achieve the language skills in a particular way. For example, as the observation and field notes demonstrate, Rhonda was teaching an English class for ESL students in the Business Foundation program. The content of the lesson focused on grammar and sentence structures, specifically *gerunds and infinitives*. The lesson was divided into small tasks and activities accommodating individual, pair and group work. Amongst the major activities, students were asked to write a few sentences on the *dos and don'ts during an interview* and a small paragraph on *a job or profession they would/not like to have*. In the writing activities, they were required to use gerunds and infinitives. During her instructions every time, Rhonda moved to the front and gave information facing the students, whereas during any individual or group activity, Rhonda roamed around the room using any available space to go close to students as much as possible (Field notes, Rhonda's class). Her hand gestures such as pointing to the board, her gaze directed to students all around the classroom and other movements during student activities were synchronized with the language activities she was executing. Some of these gestures have been discussed in Vick's (2000) analyses of *English-language teaching manuals of pedagogy*, in which teachers' positions at the front of the classroom have been identified as *instructing* while their positions near students have been described as *helping*.

Rhonda's multimodal acts of *teaching* reflected the view of teaching as both *instructing* and *helping students*. The act of instruction was signified through Rhonda's movement to the front most of the times when she wanted to deliver information to the students. This reflects the meanings of what signify "teaching" (Vick, 2000, p. 258), in which the teacher is "the centre and focus of pedagogical transaction" (p. 258). While at the front, Rhonda provided instructions for each task using specific hand gestures such as pointing to the data projector, the board and the

book chapter. These pointing gestures have also been discussed by Vick as part of the act of instruction. Rhonda also elicited information from several students to make sure the students understood the tasks and their objectives. She was still at the front but gazed at each student who responded to her questions. Followed by this, she gave students the writing tasks and asked them to finish them within a scheduled time. When the students started their task, Rhonda demonstrated a set of what Vick and Martinez (2011) identify as “de-intimidating gesture” (p. 186), through which the pedagogy of *helping* was reiterated. For example, she slowly moved through the rows checking each pair if they were doing the activity right. The space between the rows was wide enough to accommodate her moving body, and she took the full advantage of the space by pausing a few seconds at each desk while keeping her hands close to her chest. She used several hand gestures as feedback, such as showing a thumbs-up to praise a pair and pointing to an incorrect answer with her index finger.

The meanings attributed to the ESL pedagogy by Rhonda through her multimodal acts of teaching were reiterated in her interaction with the researcher during SR and FG interviews. Rhonda viewed the objective of teaching as “making students learn”. She said during the SR that she felt successful when she saw that a learner came to the classroom without skills and left getting those skills. She also emphasized the importance of having well-planned lessons at NCO as the courses were “grade-restricted”. Rhonda explained that the foundation courses determined students’ admission into their program of study; the students had to obtain a “B” grade on the course to get into their programs. Therefore, she felt obligated to prepare tasks and activities that would ensure learning. She, for example, said, “They [students] should be doing work, not chatting in the class. I’ve tried to give them flexibility to see what happens, they go out of control.” Rhonda, thus, seemed to have adopted her position at the front of the classroom and

movements around the classroom as ways of bringing that control. She also pointed to the importance of monitoring in understanding what students were engaged in during in-class activities, which is why she often used facial expressions and eye-contact to make students participate. She, furthermore, believed that her movements influenced students' behaviour and attention in the classroom. One example she discussed during the SR was her instructions on how students should write on a separate piece of paper, which they needed to submit at the end of the lesson. During her classroom activities, she was observed to use metaphoric gestures using both hands to indicate "a separate piece of paper". Later, Rhonda explained that the gestures were necessary so that the students took the activity seriously as it involved submission of an assignment to the teacher.

Rhonda's ESL teacher identity was performative in the sense that her view and representation of herself as an ESL teacher, like Morgan (2004), were not stable, but emergent through her ongoing pedagogical acts. During the SR, Rhonda had an opportunity to watch herself change locations/positions in her classroom. Rhonda identified that she found herself more at the front in the video recordings. She said that the front is the position/location where everyone can see the person, so teachers move to the front while giving instructions. The following conversation took place during the SR.

Interview excerpt 11

I: How do you see yourself in the video?

Rhonda: I (.) actually, a lot more than at the front than I thought I was.

I: Ok.

Rhonda: So I have the impression I am m::ore (.) I'm mo:re in the class. But I guess it's, I spent a lot of time at the front.

I: Is that a problem?

I: Well, no, the front (.) center is the place where everyone can see you, hopefully↑ but it's not necessarily the place where you can see everyone. You can see the people at the front, but you can't really see what's happening at the back.

In the above excerpt, Rhonda (re)positioned herself as the teacher who should be at the center so that everyone could see her, pointing to the disadvantage of not being able to see all the students. Her expression of “a lot more than at the front than I thought I was”, however, seems to reflect a sense of unease. It seems that she did not expect herself to be at the front that much, but she justified her central role by emphasizing the importance of *instructing* in the postsecondary “grade-oriented” context. Later, she explained, “I think I try to give instructions more at the front. Not that that's a good idea all the time, but that's where I tend to be when I give instructions. It's not surprising.” The moment of discomfort expressed in line 2 in interview excerpt 11 and her comment above “that's not a good idea” to be at the front all the time also reflect a discursive construction of how a teacher should *look* like in the ESL classroom. Vick's (2000) study, for example, suggests how *good* and *effective* teaching are often distinguished from *intimidating* teacher behaviour through prescribed body images and movements of teachers in ESL teaching-manuals. While being at the front represents the teacher as “central and dominant” (p. 258), it is distinguished from embodied practices in which the teacher stays close to students promoting “intimacy” (p. 258).

The teacher's *central role* in the classroom has been a subject of debate since the 1980s after the emergence of the *learner-centered pedagogy* in educational contexts. The approach focuses on the teacher's role as a “helper to students” (Mascolo, 2009, p. 4) to engage them in

active participation in the learning process while criticizing the teacher's authority in the classroom. The teacher-centered pedagogy is often conceptualized as "to involve the use of lecture" as a dominant mode of teaching, and the students' active role is (mis)understood "against the backdrop of a weakening of the role of the teacher in pedagogical activity" (p. 7). Such normative constructions of teachers' and students' roles in the classroom, especially in the ESL context, which focuses on students' skills-building through their active participation in activities, have impacts on teachers' embodied practices in the classroom. Because the front symbolizes dominance, Rhonda's discomfort with watching herself at the front reflects a moment of *resignification* of her identity as a teacher who should not be the center-of-attention all the time.

During the interviews, Rhonda equated the front position with power several times [see interview excerpts presented in the beginning of chapter 1], and her closeness to students during group work echoed *helping* them actively participate in the classroom activities. Thus, in her conversation in interview excerpt 11 and her following remark on being at the front all the time is not a good idea, Rhonda negotiates between the discursively distinguished embodied acts and repositions herself as an ESL teacher who knows how to balance between the acts of *instructing* and *helping* learners. In and through her classroom practices and interactions with others, she reproduces the pedagogy of *instructing as usual* and *resignifies* herself as what is discursively constituted as an ESL teacher in the post-secondary school context.

4.4.1.2. Riley's performative acts of identity and ESL pedagogy at ILS. At ILS, multiple language skills and their sub skills including pronunciation, speaking, reading, writing, idioms, and grammar were discretely divided into various levels, as discussed before. Each skill was viewed separately, and learners' proficiency in that skill was assessed separately from other

skills. The teachers were provided only with skills level descriptors for each class that ran for about 50mins every weekday. The teacher participants, however, said that there were no specific curricula or course syllabi, and they had freedom to prepare their own lesson plans and teaching materials following the descriptors. As I mentioned before, the descriptors determined what language components the classes will cover over a specific period, but they were not static entities when adopted by the teachers in their classrooms. Each teacher was observed to be continuously remaking the pedagogy through their transmodal acts.

At ILS, the classroom space and course objectives were very different from that of NCO, and as discussed earlier, there was no specific syllabi or weekly course outlines at ILS. Therefore, the teachers were more flexible than the teachers at NCO in planning their lessons, which made teaching activities more diverse in each classroom. Riley, for example, signified the ESL pedagogy in her classroom practices in a grammar class through speech, gestures and visual displays in a very specific way. Riley explained her grammar-teaching activities in the following way:

Interview Excerpt 12

Most of mine [classroom activities] are (.4) task-based. I also like group work, I like my students to work together, and I like them to teach each other, right? So instead of me: the one always talking and talking, I prefer them to work together, and they come up with a solution and correct each other. And then they come back to me for (.4) like overall feedback. (Riley, SR)

Riley viewed grammar teaching as a way of developing ESL students as independent learners so that they took their own learning responsibilities. In the above interview excerpt, she mentioned that she liked her students to teach each other instead of her “talking and talking” all

the time. This philosophy echoes the learner-centered pedagogy discussed before. Riley, however, was more specific in describing what constitutes a pedagogy of grammar in ESL classrooms by referring to task-based activities. Her philosophy, in fact, aligns with the approaches of *communicative competence* that emphasizes communicative interaction in language classrooms (Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1991; Spada, 2007). Riley discussed her preferences towards small tasks, which stems from the methods of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). TBLT also emerged from the CLT approach (Spada, 2007), which was a product of communicative competence. Riley's classroom practices represented a version of TBLT, in which learners were required to complete guided tasks following specific linguistic structures that have already been presented and practiced. Tasks as such aim to "both improve their communicative skills and their grammatical accuracy... grammar is considered as a means towards communication and not as the end itself" (Rama & Agulló, 2012, p. 184). Riley's beliefs about language instructions included competence in English through the completion of small tasks that required adequate interaction opportunities so that her students could acquire specific linguistic rules/structures. Her lesson was deductive in nature in which she introduced the rules of second conditionals in the very beginning. The students then got opportunities for practice, individually and in groups. She finished the lesson with a game in which students had to apply the same grammar rules in conversation and writing. Each activity was directed to improving individual students' use of second conditionals, and through her practices, she signified ESL grammar teaching as a communicative and task-based pedagogy.

The meanings of an ESL grammar class that were reflected in her classroom practices were re-enacted through the visual displays in her class. Riley decorated her display board with ground rules and examples of students' best written work. The ground rules pointed to the

importance of specific behavior and activities students needed to follow. Some of the rules included restrictions on cellphone use and certain gestural behaviors such as slouching in the classroom. Riley said that those regulations were important to hold students' attention. As Riley pointed to in interview excerpt 5, students' gestures reflect attitude, and "bad attitude" such as slouching may distract others while use of cellphones may lead to self-distraction. Thus, both embodied practices of students were prohibited in her classroom because she wanted her students to actively engage in communication. She also highlighted elsewhere how difficult it was to make a grammar class interactive. Therefore, she justified her rules by emphasizing the importance of attention in a communicative task-based grammar class in which students would need uninterrupted attention.

Riley's gestures also (re)signified a task-based grammar pedagogy, and her repeated pedagogical acts re-constituted her identity as a communicative grammar teacher of ESL. In *Figure 3*, as discussed before, Riley's gestures were significant for her grammar class because those created opportunities for improving students' comprehension of specific linguistic aspects through communication. The gestures repeated during specific acts over two hours of classroom observation in two consecutive days, however, also contributed to the multimodal acts that (re)produced the meanings that Riley attributed to the pedagogy in her discussion during the SR. During the SR, Riley discussed the meanings of her own gestures. She said she believed that the function of her gestures was mostly comprehension, and those were important to improve the existing level of her students (interview excerpt 5). Her gestures in *Figure 3*, thus, reflect the same practices Riley believed to be important to improve students' existing competency levels. Her gestural practices also afforded communicative tasks in a traditional grammar classroom, and her gestural resources transformed the traditional teaching of grammar into a communicative

pedagogy that would help her students improve communicative competence according to their levels. Teaching grammar to ESL students, thus, became more about teaching communicative competence through interaction in English in Riley's class, and her repeated acts of presenting herself as a communicative grammar teacher were performative in constituting her ESL teacher identity.

The above discussion suggests, even though the pedagogy in each classroom apparently reflected pre-existing formalized practices/methods, the perceptions of methodological *formality*, in fact, were emergent through the teacher participants' shared acts of teaching/learning. The teacher participants viewed themselves as specific ESL teachers with their own teaching philosophies and were continuously engaged in forming the pedagogy of ESL according to their perceptions of ESL within the specific institutional boundaries. The meanings of the pedagogies, thus, were emergent in the processes of repeated performance of the acts of identity, or more specifically "from the repeated occasions of sedimentation" (Miller, 2012, p. 89). Gestures constituted a significant part of their performative work through which they negotiated the ways they viewed and presented themselves as ESL teachers of particular institutions.

4.4.2. Moments of *resignification*, *unstable selves* and *alternative embodied pedagogy*.

The teacher participants' identities were (re)constituted through their repeated multimodal acts in their classroom practices and interview discussions. From a performativity perspective (Butler, 1999) subjects never repeat an act the same way, so citationality of the participants' performances may represent moments of *resignification* (Vick & Martinez, 2011). Consequently, identities are constituted "as always already unstable, subject to continual reconstitution" (p. 188), and so are the socio-cultural processes that constitute those identities. Thus, as Vick and Martinez state, the very notions of multiplicity and ambiguity involved in citationality open up

spaces for the teacher who is “continually forced to make choices among alternative possibilities” (p. 188). In the following sections, I provide examples from Tracy’s class to show how the moments of resignification of teacher subjectivities may *resignify* classroom practices that produce meanings of alternatively embodied pedagogies.

4.4.2.1. Tracy’s alter-native embodiments of ESL pedagogy. Although Tracy’s beliefs and practices, like Riley’s, conformed to many of the normalized aspects of CLT, they represented moments of *resignifying* practices that illuminated “multiplicity, ambiguity and instability” (p. 188) of normative practices. Like Riley, Tracy emphasized the importance of communicative functions of a language, but her idea of CLT, as the following interview excerpt suggests, projects a “performance-based account of language learning” (Rama & Agulló, 2012, p. 181). This concept of performance refers to language learning as *doing* of linguistic rules, rather than competence in, or *knowledge* of, the linguistic structures (Halliday, 1978; Rama & Agulló, 2012). Her views of CLT were more reflective of the early version of communicative approach which was influenced by linguistic theories in the 80’s such as Halliday’s (1978) notional-functional view of language [see chapter 2]. After watching herself in the video excerpt in Figure 2, Tracy discussed her gestures in the following excerpt.

Interview Excerpt 13

Tracy: So in that class, in particular (.4) we bring in different ideas so: (.5) we were working on phrasal verbs, We were talking about stress=but it brings i:n phrasal verbs as well. We all do a *little bit of grammar* for practicing stress,

I: umhm

5 Tracy: um we also spend a lot of time on vocabulary. So the week before we were doing
word stress,

I: um

Tracy: we=were talking about adding suffix:es, how the stress change:s, talking about
 like (.2) morphologies things like tha:t. So: (.4) this class=I think (.5) they get to
 10 use their language, in way they don't necessarily in a grammar class.

I: [umhm

Tracy: [even though they are also *using* the grammar. So it forces them (.2) to (.2) pay
 attention, to the grammar (.2) in a different way.

I: okay.

15 Tracy: and then just [in a

I: what is that different way?

Tracy: so (n.n)

I: you mean in a communicative way?

Tracy: yea, in a communicative way: (.4) like it helps them I think listen (.2) *as well as*
 20 pronounce, because they start to notice like [quoting voice] oh okay well this is
 the rhythm [quoting voice ends] and they stress the words that are important, then
 they can kind of relax

I: [hm

Tracy: [*while hearing* every word.

25 I: umhm

Tracy: So I=am trying (.5) t- get them into the idea that (.6) you don't have to hear
 everything, (.6) and you don't necessarily have to say everything perfectly. So: I

hope that they can relax a little bit, (.4) and get comfortable *using the language*,
 (.4) and thinking about how they are saying something,

30 I: um

Tracy: mo:re and- like- how they are *communicating an idea* (.5) *more than structure*.

More than just worrying about did I get the right. (.5) *helping verb.*

I: okay.

Tracy: um (.4) yeah! So like now we are working on intonation I=am giving them the

35 idea that like you don't actually have to make a question, you can just repeat what
 somebody ↑says and ↓*make your voice go up*. and that tells if you want=to know
more. So trying to give them strategies, (.2) whe:re (.2) they *don't have to know*

all the rules. They can just pay attention to (.5) what the speaker may say:, or if

you want to just communicate just make something really big, and then yeah (.4)

40 they don't have to worry so much about getting everything perfect.

(Tracy, SR, researcher's emphasis added through italics)

Although Tracy does not reject the importance of grammar, the phrases in italics *use their language* (line 10), *using grammar* (line 12), *communicating an idea (.5) more than structure* (line 31), and they *don't have to know all the rules* (line 38) in the interview excerpt point to her inclination to, what Thornbury names, *the deep-end approach* of CLT (as cited in Rama & Agulló, 2012). The approach eliminates the necessity of explicit teaching of linguistic structures because it is believed that “grammar is acquired unconsciously during the performance on communicative situations” (Rama & Agulló, 2012, p. 281). She emphasized the importance of *using* language by students rather than following rules. One of the examples provided by Tracy was that students do not have to learn the structure of making a question, but they can *make their voice go up* (line 36) to achieve the required intonation for asking a question. The example also seems to characterize, what Canale and Swain (1980) call, strategic competence in L2. Strategic competence refers to a learner’s ability to solve communication problems using verbal and nonverbal strategies such as repeating, guessing and avoiding words while speaking. Tracy considered such strategies along with other sociolinguistic competence such as “how they are saying something” (line 29) as very important in learners’ communicative performance. Nevertheless, Tracy’s repetitive citation of what refers to performance-based language learning (Rama & Agulló, 2012) in her classroom practices and interaction with me represents moments in which she resignified her ESL teacher identity. The moments of resignification help us understand how some of her practices *reproduced* meanings of a “differently embodied pedagogy” (Vick & Martinez, 2011, p. 189).

Tracy’s classroom practices, for example, seemed to have been influenced by her personal interests in theatrical performance, which might have affected her view to the pedagogy of pronunciation as *doing* sounds, stress and intonation. Theatrical performance, as the way Tracy

used the term, is different from Butler's (1999) idea of performance used in this study because it involves deliberate and strategic performance. This is somewhat similar to the "intentional strategic and expressive" (Vick & Martinez, 2011, p. 188) acts through which a subject may express themselves through personalized and individual practices. Tracy perceives herself as a theatrical performer, and similar ESL teacher beliefs have been identified in Hudson's (2011) study in which the ESL teacher incorporated her dance and theatre experiences into ESL lessons by using gestures. Tracy explained how her pronunciation instruction activities were often done with expressive gestures and movements. In interview excerpt 1, she related her theatrical background to her classroom practices (line 1-16). This was reinforced through line 29 to 31 when she focused on modeling pronunciation activities for students as well as making them model those for her. Thus, many of her classroom activities reflected her personal interests in theatrical performances more than her TESL training. Tracy's classroom decorations also re-enacted the meanings of her personalized teaching style. For instance, besides charts and tables representing the places and manners of articulation of English sounds, Tracy displayed excerpts from newspapers and pamphlets of theatrical performances on two display boards. These included movie posters, music concert, and theatre ads, and notices of upcoming theatre performances. Thus, her teaching pronunciation strategies also seemed to be related to her background as suggested in line 41 to 44 in interview excerpt 1.

On other occasions, Tracy emphasized how she preferred acting out in the classroom to give students realistic ideas about the use of language. Tracy, by the phrase "acting out", re-presented herself as a theatrical performer. In such pedagogical acts that relate to her personal interests, Tracy's ESL teacher identity is *re*-signified as a teacher similar to a theatrical performer who may employ strategic acts of teaching. Figure 2, in which she made Cheng

regulate her own pronunciation strategies by modelling her own, is an example. By showing her how to pick her finger up [see Figure 2] while using a deictic gesture (McNeill, 1992) of pointing upwards, Tracy instructed Cheng to pick her finger and put her lip down to pronounce the sound (at 01.50.20min of the video excerpt). Thus, she made Cheng perform both the sound and the gestures required for the pronunciation. Her gestures were significant here to make Cheng do the sound both verbally and gesturally. While discussing the role of her gestures, Tracy also emphasized how her gestures, postures and movements in the classroom were important to create a “comfortable” environment, which would help students “feel confident”. One of her own gestural behavior Tracy identified and discussed in the SR interview was how she sits down with students during scaffolding sessions (interview excerpts 10). She said that through this posture she reflects that she gives the power over to her students. Tracy said that she did not realize before what her sitting-down posture in the classroom would represent. However, while watching the video clips during the SR interview, she related her sitting postures to shifting of power. Even though this posture seemed to be unintentional during the classroom activities, this aligns with her beliefs about learning by acting out or performing language components (Halliday, 1978; Rama & Agulló, 2012), which requires a stress-free environment and decentralization of power. Through her sitting posture, she created a relaxed environment for the students, which would help them take risks in learning English. Thus, Tracy’s repeated performances of her identity as an ESL teacher who emphasizes learning a language by doing provide evidences of Butler’s (1999) notion of identity as performative, but also reflect instances of resignification of her-*self* as an ESL teacher who “is already (discursively, performatively) constituted, of particular possibilities, for both self and pedagogy” (Vick & Martinez, 2011, p.

188), while also “constituted as always already unstable, subject to continual *reconstitution*” (p. 188) and, thus, has the capacity to “enact change” (p. 188).

4.4.2.2. *Reproducing and resignifying discourses through gestures.* Analysis of the video data presented above suggests how ESL pedagogies were emergent through the teacher participants’ repeated identity performances. In this section, I will discuss how discursive knowledge about teaching and learning was (re)created through the same performative acts of identity. I also demonstrate how the repeated multimodal acts that (re)signified broader sociocultural influences and power relations also provide insights into the possibilities of altering the discourses through the same embodied practices.

Tracy’s pronunciation activity in Figure 2 represents specific discourses of ESL teaching and learning. The discourses of native/non-native accents are evident in the excerpt in which both Tracy and Cheng actively (re)made English as an object of such knowledge through their multimodal acts that constituted them as native and non-native speakers of English. Through her verbal utterance and gestures of “more tongue”, for example, Tracy reconstructs the distinction between native/non-native accents and the *appropriate* ways of pronouncing English sounds. This, in turn, reproduces the discourses of linguistic norms and native/ non-native speakers (Miller, 2012). Tracy performs the native-speaker identity of an expert in pronouncing and teaching the English sound. Accordingly, her verbal assurance that Cheng’s difficulties with the pronunciation is *normal*, constructs Cheng as a non-native speaker who needs to fix her accent. This also (re)creates the discourses of *otherness* in the ESL context (Kubota, 1999) and constructs Cheng’s linguistic background as problematic and responsible for her *non-native* accents.

In the previous section, I discussed the moments in Tracy's repeated multimodal acts through which Tracy's identity was *reconstituted*, which in turn, somewhat transformed her expressive and embodied pedagogical practices. These moments of resignification also point to possibilities of change/transformation of discursive practices. Tracy's strategic and expressive performance related to her theatrical background, for example, reflects instances of her agency through which she resignified her teacher identity to challenge normative beliefs and practices in the classroom (Morgan, 2004; Vick & Martinez, 2011). In figure 2, Tracy used her gestures to choose from socio-culturally available multiplicitous roles (Vick & Martinez, 2011) during the scaffolding session. Her subjectivity of a native-speaking-ESL teacher is performatively constituted, but also was constitutive of other alternative subjectivities represented "through an embodied repertoire of words, gestures, postures, facial expressions, and outward appearances" (Liew, 2013, p. 263) that "open up space for more deliberate, intentional change" (Vick & Martinez, 2011, p. 189). Tracy's sitting-down posture, as discussed before, represents a moment of *resignification* of the native-speaking-ESL teacher identity. Although she was not aware of this posture during her classroom practices, in and through her comment "it's not my turn anymore" (Interview excerpt 10, line 2), she *resignified* herself as a teacher who deemphasizes her power. This moment of resignification, which may have an effect on Tracy's embodied pedagogical practices in her future teaching may *reproduce* power-relations in a different way. Her sitting posture could be seen as synonymous with the specific embodied practices such as "to use silence to open up space for student dialogue" (p. 190) mentioned in Vick and Martinez (2011). Such practices, as the authors suggest, may contribute to the transformation of what reproduces teaching-as-usual. I also find these embodied practices identifiable with classroom

conduct, in which the teacher takes the leading role in potentially creating collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2009)

As Cummins (2009) suggests, educators have the opportunity to empower students through the interpersonal negotiation of identities, which are an intrinsic part of cognitive and academic engagement in classrooms. Cummins calls this a *collaborative creation of power*. Some of Tracy's gestural practices also reflect embodied actions that may positively reinforce the collaborative creation of power. As discussed earlier, Tracy identified her own sitting-down posture as empowering for the students because it represented a shift in power from the teacher to the students. Tracy was observed sitting down in front of her students several times whenever they needed any individual attention. Along with the posture, Tracy used other gestures to empower/comfort her students; for example, in Figure 2, she used her hand to comfort Cheng when she was struggling with the pronunciation. She placed her right hand on Cheng's hand and said, "I know it feels uncomfortable." (Figure 2 at 01.37.20min). At the end of the data in Figure 2, she used a thumbs-up gesture to appreciate Cheng's learning. Along with her subjectivity of a native-speaking-ESL teacher, she performed the role of a caregiver and a counselor, and her embodied performance positively reinforced Cheng's learning throughout the scaffolding session.

In the SR, as mentioned earlier, Tracy resignified her ESL teacher identity by renouncing what might be identified as the *legitimate power*, which is "bestowed on teachers by virtue of the status of their positions" (Quinlisk, 2008, p. 34). Jane White calls such power as the institutionalized authority of a teacher (as cited in Manke, 2016). Tracy also pointed to moments when she sometimes had to negotiate her teacher identity to make her students more comfortable in the class [See interview excerpt 14 below].

Interview Excerpt 14

Tracy: I like I am not a kind of - as a teacher I don't care, for example how students present themselves in the class, because they are sitting up straight or they are u know slouching, none of that really effects me, and I often slouch or like sit casually or whatever. Um so for me, like as a student they need to be more comfortable. Then I can just be who I am in the classroom

5

I: [ummHm

Tracy: [So I try not to: restrict

I: So who are you in the classroom?

Tracy: I tend to, I've always been a student who slouched, and I do not make a lot of eye contact, but I listen[↑] and I might make notes, or I might make doodles or whatever. But that doesn't mean that I wasn't focused on content.

10

I: [Okay.

Tracy: [so I try not to control too much what's (.) happening (.) around me unless, there=s somebody not paying attention, and causing problems. Because of that (.) I just try to let them do whatever makes them feel comfortable. If they are playing with something, or (n.n) For example, I had a student, not so long ago who was always (.) playing with her phone.

15

I: umhm

Tracy: which as a teacher makes me crazy. But, I also noticed that she was contributing. A lot in class. And as the class progressed, it was a conversation class, so it came up

20

that she had a very severe ADD [Attention Deficit Disorder]. And that was one of her coping mechanism.

I: Okay!

Tracy: So I was really happy that I didn't get on her about that [laughter]

In the interview excerpt, Tracy discusses how she gives up her *control* and does not *restrict* students' behavior if that is not causing any harm. Giving up control can be interpreted as abandoning the exercise of coercive power Cummins (2009) points to; it is "the exercise of power by a dominant individual, group, or country to the detriment of a subordinated individual, group or country" (p. 263). Tracy says how she tries "not to control too much" (Interview excerpt 14, line 13). Through her discussion, she re-signifies herself as the teacher who gives up and/or negotiates the exercise of coercive power a teacher identity brings along with it. Instead, her practices such as letting students do whatever they are comfortable with seem to create a space that promotes cognitive and academic engagement (Cummins, 2009). The example of the student with ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) Tracy provided also reflects her efforts of challenging the normative assumptions about student engagement and attention in the classroom. The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited in ILS classrooms, and there were posters restricting cell-phone use on the classroom walls and desks. Still, Tracy ignored the student's use of cell phones even though, as she said, the use of cell phone "as a teacher makes me crazy." (line 19) She, however, presented herself as an alternative persona who focuses on the students' academic engagement instead of superficial policies. Her resignification of her ESL teacher identity, thus, reflects the possibilities of creating collaborative power relations in the classroom while her gestures emulate micro-interactions between educators and students that "form an interpersonal space within which the acquisition of knowledge and formation of identity are negotiated" (Cummins, 2009, p. 263).

This significant finding of the empowerment potentials of gestures was brought into discussion during the FG, and the teacher participants acknowledged that both teacher and student participants' gestures can be strategically used to enable or empower students in the

classroom. During the Focus Group discussion, the teacher participants identified specific gestural practices that can be used to empower learners. These gestures can be utilized to create collaborative power relations in the classroom. The participants, for example, identified the standing position as a position of power. Rhonda said, “I think when people stand up, that creates power too. (.4) So in the class. So for example when you are sitting, and somebody gets angry they stand up! (.4) because they=are they=are you=know (.4) passionate about something so they usually stand up so that’s interesting.” She also said that she brings students to the front during presentation activities, which may make them feel empowered. Robin said that students could frequently be given work to make them stand-up or move to the front so that they feel empowered. It is noteworthy that positions as such may also be threatening to students from specific cultural background as they may feel intimidated, so these should be adopted with caution. Nevertheless, as observed in Kress et al.’s (2005) study, teachers and her students’ positions and movements in the classroom often recreate the separation between teacher and student space in the classroom by reinforcing the teacher authority. Following is a description of one of the teachers’ movement and its effects on the meaning of the classroom space in Kress et al.’s study.

The teacher moves slowly, deliberately; occasionally he comes to rest – when he is ‘invigilating’ rather than teaching – from his desk. The path of his movement describes an arc, between his desk and somewhat to (his) left of the door (which is always open). It is the reason why we call his movement a ‘patrol’: it reconfigures or transforms the space into ‘teacher’s space’ and ‘pupils’ space’. (p. 26)

Quinlisk (2008) discusses how power relationships influence the classroom space in which teachers’ legitimate power provides them with more space in the front than the students who are

separated from the teacher by a large desk or a podium in a typical classroom. When a classroom space is defined by teachers' and students' specific gestures and movements as such, what embodied actions the students are allowed to display may affect the power relations in the classroom. Furthermore, from a multimodal semiotics perspective (Kress 2010, 2012), the teacher and her students in a specific classroom are also considered as a social group, which is engaged in remaking/reusing semiotic signs within the classroom context. Therefore, as Rhonda's discussion in interview excerpt 2 points to, repeated use of specific embodied practices become recognised semiotic signs in individual classrooms, and these may be used purposefully to transform power relations. Therefore, in spite of cultural connotations of different gestures and postures such as bringing students to the front, a careful use of such gestural practices may help contest coercive power emerging from the institutionally defined classroom space.

4.4.4. Resignification of student-subjectivities and negotiation of discourses.

Interview Excerpt 15

Sujal: My body language is really bad.

I: why?

Sujal: I always do like that [slouch], sometimes like that [lean]

I: And why do you think that is bad?

5 Sujal: That's bad! (.5) but I really enjoy it like I always be a- comfortable in the environment. I always want=to be like relax and comfortable in class

I: Okay

Sujal: Right? so that I could enjoy. even if I am bored or I don't want to attend that class, so I (.4) always want me to get in the environment (.2) to know something
10 or study something. (.5) That's why I always like relax myself to- [slouch]

I: okay, It's called slouching.

Sujal: seriously? Hah

I: But then why do you think its bad?

Sujal: Because some people don't like (.5) the way I ah... [a student] was sitting right
15 behind me? she was like why are you talking so much? I was like (.4) I enjoy to learn (.2) in that way. So that's the reason.

I: So you think it's a [problem

Sujal: [sometimes people think that it's a kind of problem for them.

(.4) Because some people don't like they just want to be serious in class or just want to listen to teacher right?

(Sujal, Robin's Student, SR)

I use the above interview excerpt to discuss how Sujal, a student participant from Robin's class, signified his student identity and embodiments in interaction with the researcher that reproduced discourses of student behaviour in the classroom. The above conversation took place in the beginning of the SR with Sujal after he was informed about the purpose of the study. Sujal was an international student from Robin's class studying automotive power [technical] in the school. Sujal reported that he had been at NCO for almost a year even though he had no interest in coming to Canada. He initially planned to study in Australia, but his parents sent him to Canada. Sujal said that he had never liked English classes because he found the classes boring. He was also confused because he was placed at a lower level English during his admission to NCO. He said he had studied in an English medium school in India, and he believed his English language skills were good. After his admission to NCO, he successfully finished his first English course, but failed the second one. When asked about his failure, he said he did not like the teacher, and he skipped classes. It was his second time taking the same ESL course, this time with Robin. Sujal, however, said that he was fine with his current ESL teacher Robin.

Interview Excerpt 16

I: What about your English courses here? Is it helpful?

Sujal: Yeah, you know what? If a person has interest in a course, (.4) then he have to do it, right?

I: Yeah

Sujal: He want(s) to do it! Or pass a- .hh seriously I don't have any interest in comm or GenEd cla:sses, (.2) but I am doing it.

I: Yes!

Sujal: But like last class, last teacher, (.5) I don't want to attend any class or (.4) do any stuff but this teacher, he is really nice! Helping out the students. so (.4) I just want to pass it with good grade like b or c (.2) at least. so-

(Sujal, SR)

Robin, however, identified Sujal as very weak, and said: “seems like he is getting to fall behind. I suspect he is resisting the course.” (Robin, SR) Irrespective of the difficulties Sujal was going through, it seems that he had a lack of interest in the ESL classes he was taking. It could be related to his parents' interference with his decision of studying in Australia, or his general disinterest in English. However, he seemed to have adopted specific embodied actions to deal with the overall situation. Sujal's embodied practices are synonymous with a male student participant's use of linguistic expressions to perform masculinity in Qin's (2018) study. Qin demonstrates that the male ESL student used humorous language such as “in order to study adequately for the test for the exam, I plan to skip [the class] to take my girlfriend to relaxing for exam” (p. 443) in response to in-class language activities. The student's intention was to make a boring lesson “fun”. The response was, however, criticized by the teacher, who positioned him as a *bad student*. Through her analyses, the author suggests that the student's performative act of identity, in fact, was a resistance to the formalized classroom practices and his discursively constructed *deficit* identity. The author, in addition, refers to studies that point to the use of humor by students as resistance to classroom practices. Sujal's embodied practices discussed above may also reflect his specific embodied practices through which he negotiated the classroom practices.

In the interview excerpt, Sujal identified his body language as *really bad*. In this interaction, he reproduced the discursive knowledge about students' gestures discussed earlier. Like most other teacher and student participants, Sujal believed his gestural practices of slouching and leaning in the classroom did not reflect a *good* attitude. However, when asked several times, he pointed to how others may feel uncomfortable because of his postures. On the other hand, he seemed to have adopted such postures for other reasons, and as he mentioned through line 5 to 10 in interview excerpt 15, he, in fact, enjoyed being in those positions in the classroom. Here, Sujal, *resigned* his identity as a student who needs a comfortable environment to learn. Sujal later also reported that he sometimes chose to sit at the back when he did not feel comfortable or wanted to do other activities such as listening to music or just sleeping. He also said that he had problems with a teacher in the previous semester, which is why he had to approach the Dean. Such actions may apparently suggest his resistance to the course, and Robin also understood this resistance. Yet, his embodied practices and his reiteration of the meanings of those practices during the SR point to his continuous (re)signification of his identity as an ESL student and negotiation of the classroom pedagogy and activities (Toohey, 2000).

In interview excerpt 16, Sujal's discussion (re)signifies his ESL student identity that has already been constituted in the discourses of *good* and *bad* students. He stated in the interview that he did not like English or General education courses. However, he also understood that he needed to pass this course to graduate because he had failed it before. He also knew that his lack of attendance would affect his performance in the course, which is why he was regular in his classes this time. The whole situation led him to attend the classes in spite of his personal disinterests. Through his discussion he reproduces the discourses, but also points to how his gestural practices might have given him opportunities to negotiate the discourses of attention and

participation. His gestural representations, thus, offer an understanding of alternative embodied practices that might transform the discourses that produce learning-as-usual.

The teacher participants reported in the FG that they were aware of their students' embodied resistance to and negotiation of classroom activities. Rhonda, for example, said that she knew of students who would always sit at the edge of rows in order to hide themselves from the teacher. Tracy's narrative about the student with ADD discussed earlier also suggests how students may adopt specific strategies that are not supported by the institutional policies to cope with learning difficulties. Thus, they may adopt institutionally unacceptable activities, including gestural practices that are apparently considered as *bad attitude* to negotiate or even challenge normative policies and practices (Toohey, 2000).

4.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed gestural representations of teacher and student participants of this study using four different theoretical perspectives: sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), multimodality in communication and learning (Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010), embodied actions as shaped by discursive knowledge (Foucault, 1979; Kubota, 1999; Luke, 1992; Ramanathan, 2010; Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000) and the concept of performativity (Butler, 1999; Miller, 2012; Morgan, 2004; Nelson, 2009; Pennycook, 2004). Each theoretical approach provided specific meanings to the gestural practices. The teachers, for example, used their gestures to mediate their students' pronunciation and grammar activities (McCafferty, 2004; Smotrova, 2017) as well as signs (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) to elicit linguistic aspects. The signs were made based on the teachers' and students' individual interests but were also influenced by socially acceptable conventions. Both teachers and students negotiated the signs and their meanings while taking part in the teaching-learning process (Kress

& Bezemer, 2015). This finding provided important insights into how the process of learning is negotiated between the teacher and the students. Furthermore, students' gestures were found to be regulated by teachers for specific purposes: to help them achieve specific academic behavior (Toohey, 2000). Nevertheless, the teachers' gestures also point to how ESL pedagogy in each classroom is a product of the teachers' and students' repeated performative acts through which their identities are reconstituted. Finally. The teachers' gestures also suggest how they can be used to challenge normative practices and to empower students in the process of creating collaborative power relations (Cummins, 2004).

5. Discussion

5.1. Introduction

In this dissertation, I have analyzed five ESL teachers' and students' gestures in the classroom from multiple theoretical perspectives. My aim was to gain an understanding of diverse meanings of their gestures using a transdisciplinary approach that may represent the classroom pedagogy, learning and instruction in specific ways. Therefore, I conducted multimodal research to be able to gather data that focuses on multiple forms of communication with a particular focus on gestures. In this chapter, I revisit the research questions to address each of them by summarizing specific findings of this study. I also discuss implications of the study for ESL teacher education and gesture research. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the study while providing directions for further research.

5.2. On the Participants' Understanding of Gestures

The first research question was how the study participants would interpret and negotiate the meanings of gestures in the classroom. In the interviews, the participants were asked about their general understanding about gestures, and they also discussed the meanings of gestures occurring in selected video excerpts. As the *findings* chapter suggests, the teacher and student participants' knowledge and practices were influenced by discourses, but they also negotiated the meanings and functions of gestures during the teaching-learning processes. Following is a discussion of how their gestural representations were influenced by discourses, how they negotiated the discursive and contextual meanings of gestures, and how their overall understanding of the role of gestures was somewhat limited.

5.2.1. Meanings of gestures are discursive. The teacher and student participants identified teachers' gestures as helpful in comprehending vocabulary and other linguistic aspects,

while most of them interpreted students' gestures as problematic. In the findings chapter, I discussed how such beliefs are associated with psycho-educational discourses. Student bodies have always been subjected to discipline and supervision (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000). Students' specific gestures such as slouching, eye rolling, and hand movements were discussed by both teacher and student participants in this study, and these were criticized given that they might create distraction in the learning environment. One student identified his own gestures as *bad* although he could not clearly explain the negative influences of such gestures. Furthermore, one of the student participant's distracted eye-contact was corrected by a teacher as it emitted signs of inattention.

Because of the discursive influences, current beliefs and practices of gestures within language teaching contexts are mostly influenced by the cognitive theories of gestures as evident in the introduction of the AIM method in French language teaching [see chapter 1]. Such teaching practices usually apply gestures in teaching of vocabulary in a superficial way like many other instructional approaches (Rosborough, 2014). Because of too much emphasis on cognition and speech, many of these practices seem to overlook the meaning potentials of gestures as distinct modal resources (Kress, 2010) or mediational tools (McCafferty, 2004; Negueruela & Lantolf, 2008; Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013) used by individuals and social groups in and outside the classroom.

5.2.2. Meanings and functions of gestures are negotiated in the classroom. In the beginning of the SRs, the teacher participants showed an essentialist understanding of gestures by identifying teachers' gestures as cognitively beneficial in students' learning process, while pointing to students' gestures as problematic. I have discussed before how their knowledge about gestures was partly influenced by discourses. Hence, through the data collection process, the

participants became somewhat aware of the sociocultural influences and power relations that shaped meanings of gestures in the classroom. After they saw themselves teaching in the video excerpts and discussed different aspects of their own and the students' gestures, they discovered some of the complex issues related to the use and (mis)interpretations of gestures. Afterwards, when some of these findings were combined and brought into discussion during the FG, they gained a broader perspective of gestures. For example, during the FG, one of the teacher participants expressed how she would never have realized how her gestures might be interpreted and negotiated by students from other national cultures, if she had never paid attention to her video-recorded gestures.

Irrespective of what the teacher participants knew about gestures, the classroom practices in this study demonstrate a more complex representation of gestures in each classroom. The findings show how the gestural meanings-as-signs (Kress, 2010) are (re)constructed in their classroom interactions within specific contexts through which they constantly (re)create, negotiate and transform classroom meanings and practices. The participants re-created the signs based on the contextual demands, as observed in the video data, and used these signs to negotiate the teaching-learning process. In spite of the difficulties of transliteration such as Jihong's struggle with transferring the meanings of her teacher's gestures into words/concepts [See Interview Excerpt 3], some of the participants, such as Cheng in Figure 2, were able to do it taking help from other modal resources such as technology. Tracy and Riley's classes represent the complex negotiation of gestural signs and meanings between the teachers and the students. The negotiation of the signs also occluded the normative understanding of gestures as cognitive tools; rather, it represents the multiple functions gestures may carry within the same interaction, including comprehension, supervision, positive reinforcement, and enhancement of collaborative

relations of power (Cummins, 2009). Such practices made the lessons more interactive, meaningful and powerful contexts for agentic actions.

5.2.3. Limited perceptions about the functions of gestures. One of the important findings of this study is how gestures are understood in a somewhat narrow and normative way by the study participants. In spite of the growing interests in gesture research in linguistics and education, the implications of the research seem to be vaguely implemented in language learning contexts. Most of the teacher participants in this study hardly knew what to do with gestures even though their classroom practices reflected a different picture. Like Tracy, some of the teacher participants were aware of their own gestural practices, but most of them did not know about the multiple functions of their own and students' gestures in the classroom. It was only Tracy who seemed to have directed Cheng to use gesture as a mediational *learning* tool (Smotrova, 2018), similar to a few other teachers observed in other studies (Rosborough, 2010). The ignorance to gestures as mediational *teaching* and *learning* tools (Smotrova, 2018) and powerful pedagogical strategy is partly related to the discursive knowledge that influences our understanding of body language in the classroom.

5. 3. On Multiple Representations of Gestures

The second question I sought to answer was how gestures could carry multiple meanings in relation to the ESL pedagogy, learning and instruction. To understand the meanings of the participants' gestures, I used four different theoretical lenses in chapter four. As the findings suggest, teachers' and students' gestures in ESL classrooms can be interpreted in multiple ways. Within each theoretical lens, gestures attained specific meanings, and they informed the classroom pedagogy in a particular way. In the following, I summarize the meanings of the

participants' gestures identified in this study according to *what gestures are* and *what gestures do* in ESL classrooms.

5.3.1. Gestures as mediational tools. Gestures were employed as mediational tools in three major ways in this study. First, the teacher participants' gestures worked as symbolic artifacts or signs (Vygotsky, 1978) that mediated their students' language learning process. The teacher participants' gestures such as iconic gestures, emblems and catchments mediated the students' learning of vocabulary, pronunciation of English words and grammatical rules. Teachers' use of gestures was intentional at many occasions as observed in the video excerpts; the teachers deliberately used their gestures in the scaffolding of their students' language production and class participation.

Second, students' gestures worked as mediational learning tools (Smotrova, 2018) as observed in their self-regulatory functions (Smotrova, 2014). They used their own gestures as well as imitated teachers' gestures in self-regulating, for example, pronunciation of English sounds and other linguistic aspects. Some teachers such as Tracy were also observed to encourage the students to use their own gestures to mediate language learning.

Finally, students' gestures regulated teachers' behavior in soliciting assistance from them (Rosborough, 2010; Smotrova, 2014, 2018), thereby, mediating the teaching process. Student participants, for instance, were observed to use their teachers' gestures in the learning process through creative imitation (Smotrova & Lantolf, 2013), which provided an opportunity for shared learning in the classroom. As observed in Video excerpt1, Tracy and Cheng used each others' gestural signs through which they appropriated and negotiated each others' gestures of *more tongue*. Cheng's gestures were externalization of her understanding of the pronunciation aspect that helped Tracy respond to Cheng's needs and provide further assistance by modifying

her mediational strategies. In other studies, this mediational function of students' gestures has been identified as a part of *co-regulation* in the classroom (Smotrova, 2018). Hence, Cheng's gestures also mediated Tracy's understanding/learning of her students' difficulties with the pronunciation, so she was able to appropriate her gestural signs of "more tongue" and transformed them into psychological tools (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). Both Tracy and Cheng learned from each other's gestures and improved their gestural signs of the pronunciation aspect. This process involved much struggle, but this also reflect signs of internalization for both Tracy and Cheng. Therefore, both the teaching and the learning processes were mediated by the gestures and facilitated by the ZPD collaboratively created by the teacher and her student in the classroom.

5.3.2. Gestures as modes/meaning-making resources. The teacher and student participants in this study used gestures as modal resources (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) in interaction, learning and instruction. Gestural signs were made, negotiated and interpreted by the participants based on social conventions and the immediate context of teaching-learning. Tracy, Riley and Elaine were observed to use gestures along with other modes to represent their teaching objectives and ideas while facilitating their students' learning processes. Students, on the other hand, appropriated, negotiated and transformed the signs to communicate their learning outcomes and difficulties. In the process, their struggle with and negotiation of learning activities became visible through the signs that the teachers utilized to modify their own teaching processes. In this way, the teaching activities were also facilitated by the gestural signs of their students. Both the teachers and students learned from each others' signs as observed in other studies (Kress & Bezemer, 2015) and transformed their activities. The student participants, as observed in Cheng's case, also

switched from one mode to another if necessary. Transliteration of meanings across modes and mode-switching were “complementary, supplementary or perhaps disruptive” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015, p. 19), but they carried evidence of comprehension and learning. This also suggests that teaching-learning is a negotiated process, and in the process of negotiation, students always reflect evidences of learning through their gestures although their classroom performance may not necessarily represent appropriate learning outcomes. Learning is a nonlinear and dynamic process (Larsen-Freeman, 1991), and gestures may work as a *window* (Stam, 2017) onto the complex process of teaching and learning. Likewise, meanings of ESL pedagogies are “‘produced’ in the interaction of a multiplicity of (social) factors at work in the classroom” (Kress et al., 2005, p. 21).

This research study also suggests how meaning-making resources such as gestures can be difficult to interpret if they are in isolation in the classroom. Because students from specific backgrounds may not be familiar with some modal resources, it is important to provide them with a multimodal ensemble that includes different modes of learning. Furthermore, students may demonstrate learning differently through different modes. It is, therefore, important to make ESL students familiar with multiple contemporary modes and meaning-making resources, including gestures. Hence, teachers and students may have access to more meaning-making resources such as gestures and other available modes than they are aware of. Therefore, identifying and using those resources in a pre-planned and purposeful way may provide more learning opportunities for the students. Existing studies on multimodality such as Toohey, Dagenais, and Schulzey (2012) and Yang (2012), for example, suggest that L2 learners can strategically be engaged in creating multimodal texts such as videos and digital storytelling in the classroom. Practices as such that give learners access to diverse semiotic resources may offer

“opportunities for meaning making that extend beyond their present L2 capabilities” (Toohey, Dagenais, & Schulzey, 2012, p. 90). These studies also provide insights into how gestures may be part of a multimodal pedagogy, in which learners might be given exposure to gestures as important semiotic resources in classroom activities. I will elaborate on this issue in one of the following sections on gesture as a pedagogical strategy.

5.3.3. Gestures emit signs of *discipline* in the classroom. Gestures are used for classroom management as identified in other studies such as Sime (2006). Such a function of gesture, however, should be interpreted with more critical perspectives. As evident in this study, ESL teachers may use specific gestures such as flashing the palm towards a student or head nods with a purpose bigger than just to control students’ behaviour or to bring order in the classroom. Controlling students’ behaviour is primarily done with the objective of regulating them in the process of producing appropriate ESL students according to their proficiency levels in English. For instance, gestures as above are often used to stop outspoken students from speaking to provide speaking opportunities to shy students. Likewise, students’ unruly gestures are also controlled in the classroom to create an optimal learning environment to let them achieve appropriate academic skills. In some cases, students with lower proficiency level get more attention, and their gestures are corrected to make them more paralinguistically competent in English. All these disciplinary techniques seem to be part of the constant surveillance and regulation observed in ESL classrooms (Saavedra & Marx, 2016; Toohey, 2000), and they are likely exercised as productive power that will produce individual students as *normal* ESL learners who will perform according to a specific standard. What’s important to internalize from this implication is that, as Saavedra and Marx (2016) point to, how as educators we may become

aware of the discursive practices and their influences on learning, instruction and learner identities in the classroom.

5.3.4. Gestures comprise performative acts of identity that (re)produce classroom pedagogy. Each of the teacher participant's gestures in this study reflect their beliefs about second language learning and instruction. The participants used their gestures in specific ways to teach ESL contents according to those beliefs. While some teachers viewed ESL as a group of skills that the students need to acquire through instructions and facilitation, others viewed second language learning as acquiring proficiency in specific English language components such as grammar and pronunciation through communicative tasks. The teacher participants, thus, used their gestures in accordance with other modes of representation such as technology, speech, and visual displays in the classroom in accordance to their beliefs regarding the substance of ESL teaching/learning, and their repeated multimodal performances (Butler, 1999; Pennycook, 2004) (re)constituted their ESL teacher identities. This investigation of the teachers' gestures reveals that the classroom pedagogies did not follow any formalized teaching methods but were outcomes of their performative acts of identity. It is also noteworthy that this might have influenced the students' understanding of ESL learning in specific ways.

5.3.5. Gestures represent both conformity and resistance to discourse. The findings in this study point to how teachers' gestures may reflect discursive knowledge about ESL learning and instructions. Gestural behaviour may (re)produce discourses of attention, participation and (non)native-speaker dichotomies in ESL classrooms. For example, as discussed before, teachers' head nods and hand gestures used in classroom management, including the supervision of student participation, reflect specific psycho-educational discourses. The teacher participants conformed to such discourses through their multimodal practices including gestural

representations. Some student participants also showed conformity to discourse; for example, they identified students' gestural behavior as problematic although they could not explain the reasons.

Hence, teachers' and students' gestures may also create possibilities for negotiating and opposing discourses as discussed in chapter 4. The teachers' performative acts of identity reproduced them as what was discursively constituted as ESL teacher, and the moments of resignification represented opportunities of negotiation of selves and pedagogies. The teacher participants in this study also represented specific embodied practices within those moments of reconstitution of selves, which re-signified the power relations in the classroom. Likewise, students' gestures such as slouching in the classroom, which is often identified as *unacademic*, may reflect some of their embodied practices as ways of resisting a specific lesson or activities in the classroom. If gestures work as windows onto our thoughts, they may work as powerful tools to understand the complex processes in which teachers and students continually negotiate discursive beliefs and practices emerging from institutional ESL policies in the classroom.

5.3.6. Gestures and power relations. As this study suggests, gestures may influence coercive or collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2009). Teachers' gestures may intimidate a student as well as work as a positive reinforcement. A simple thumbs up, which is often used as positive reinforcement in the classroom (Hudson, 2011), may encourage students to cognitively and academically be engaged in learning activities. Pre-designed pedagogies that integrate purposeful use of gestures may be used to empower students. As the teacher participants discussed, allowing students to produce hand gestures and standing positions may give them a sense of power. Furthermore, gestures that may emit signs of coercive power can be replaced by gestures that emit signs of collaborative power-relations. For instance, Tracy's

postures and positions in the classroom contributed to an embodied pedagogy that promoted collaborative power relations. Other gestural behavior such as standing positions and specific hand gestures may also influence power relations in the classroom.

5.3.7. Gestures and other identity categories in ESL classrooms. One of the important issues that has not been explicitly discussed in this dissertation is the relevance of gestures in the study of identity categories such as race, gender and sexuality in language learning contexts. Lack of interview data in this study was one of the aspects that led to this limitation; however, I also found how the concepts of race, gender and sexuality are almost overlooked in gesture studies within the field of applied linguistics. In fact, Lovaas (2003) points to how the majority of nonverbal communication scholarship represents an essentialist understanding of gender- and sexed-binaries while normalizing heterosexual pedagogies and practices. Nelson (2009) suggests that the hidden heterosexual curriculum is often reinforced by the ignorance of gender and sexual identities in the language learning context. In this study I pointed to how a teacher's embodied practices may reproduce the discourses of otherness (Kubota, 1999). Similarly, teachers' and students' gestures may reflect discursive meanings of race, gender, and sexuality that may (re)position as well as marginalize them (Nelson, 2009) in specific ESL contexts.

Understanding gestures from a performativity approach (Butler, 1999) may illuminate the ways in which embodied practices are often signified through performative acts of gendered and sexed identities in ESL classrooms. This may also help us learn the normatively understood gendered and sexed identities in ESL classrooms and their relevance to pedagogical practices. Morgan's (2004) study points to how reiteratively discovering identities through students' points of view can be strategically employed for pedagogical purposes, and this may offer opportunities to counteract students' stereotypes of gender relations and family issues. Nelson (2009) also

emphasizes the importance of making language learners aware of how heteronormativity works around us. On other hand, as Qin (2018) points to, ESL students' performative acts of gendered identity [that involve linguistic and gestural practices] may represent appropriation of, and resistance to, normatively defined classroom practices. Therefore, understanding gestural practices using poststructuralist concepts like discourse (Foucault, 1979) and performativity (Butler, 1999) may provide a broader understanding of the relevance of race, gender and sexuality in ESL classrooms. As Lovaas (2003) suggests, queering nonverbal communication is necessary to challenge "heteronormative assumptions...[to interrupt] the systematic silencing of the queer...[and to present] gender and sexual identities as complex, contingent, and political constructions" (p. 100).

5.4. On the Implementation of Gesture Research in Classroom Pedagogy and Teacher Education

The third question I sought to answer was how the findings of gesture research could be realized in classroom pedagogy and teacher education. To answer this question, I discuss how gesture research can be applied to TESL teacher education and research by detailing on some specific examples from this dissertation while focusing on some contemporary issues discussed in recent gesture research.

5.4.1. Gesture as pedagogical strategy. Smotrova (2018) points to the limitations in understanding gestures as powerful pedagogical strategy in language teacher education in her review of gesture research on mediation. In this dissertation, I have emphasized some of the pedagogical implications of gestures that could be realized in TESL teacher education. For instance, the use of gestures in creating ZPD and mediating teaching-learning processes in the classroom was an important finding of this study. The teacher participants also used gestures to

manage student participation, to (self)regulate their learning activities and behavior for specific pedagogical purposes, and to empower them in the classroom. Understanding and analyzing how gestures have been strategically used by individual teachers within specific language learning situations as such may have powerful implications for TESL. Video excerpts from real life classroom contexts, for example, can become important teacher education tools. There exist numerous teacher training videos that can be used as models to understand how expert teachers, intentionally or unintentionally, use specific gestures as pre-planned pedagogical strategies (Smotrova, 2018), and how students respond to, imitate and/or negotiate gestural behavior.

Gesture can also be employed in multimodal pedagogies, in which learners are given opportunities to engage in meaning making through multimodal activities such as videomaking projects (Toohey, Dagenais, & Schulzey, 2012) and drama classes (Ntelioglou, 2011). Ntelioglou's (2011) study conducted among adult ESL learners who were studying in an Ontario secondary school diploma program in Canada, for example, focuses on a mandatory drama-ESL class. The class engaged them in various activities including writing scripts based on their own experiences and stories and performing them in class. While describing how the students moved across multiple modes during the activities, the author points to their engagement with non-verbal modes such as gestures, movements, and facial expressions that provided them opportunities to experience an embodied pedagogy. The embodiment of different story elements such as the plot and characters not only helped them represent their own identity texts through their performances but also let them understand linguistic aspects in a meaningful way. One of the participants, for example, discussed how the drama performance helped her understand the functions of punctuation marks in written texts. She said she realized their importance when she was reading the script while watching someone performing a scene that ended with an

exclamation mark on the script. Such transmodal activities may work as powerful tools in the classroom to help learners take agentive roles in the learning process.

5.4.2. Explicit Instruction of gestures in TESL Programs. One of the major issues emerged in this study was the lack of awareness and resources to address the applications of gestures in language teaching to prepare TESL teachers in Canada. The focus group discussion emphasized this limitation, which has not been discussed explicitly in this dissertation. In most cases, as the participants discussed, the idea of non-verbal communication is superficially dealt with in TESL programs by mostly adding a small section on the topic in the course outline. Nevertheless, considering the numerous influences and benefits of gestures on language teaching and learning processes identified in this study, and the recommendations of other researchers (Gullberg, 2010; Kusanagi, 2015; Smotrova, 2018), it is certain that gestures require much more attention in language teaching contexts. Without explicit training, it is difficult to process the pedagogical significance of gestures and their dynamic influences on learning and instruction in the classroom. For instance, a novice TESL teacher may struggle to understand the effects of her own gestural behavior on her students, and this may result in coercive power relationships as a teacher's careless gestures may be intimidating, and at times, confusing to students.

Lack of time and resources related to explicit gesture training can also be addressed in many practical ways, and reflective teaching practices is one of them. To enhance reflective teaching practices, use of videos is becoming popular in teacher education because watching videos of self-teaching, independently and in collaboration with supervisor, seems to make pre-service teachers more reflective and self-evaluative towards their teaching practices (Kaneko-Marques, 2015; Syndor, 2016). Kaneko-Marques (2015), for example, demonstrates through a study conducted in an EFL teacher education course in Brazil that through reflective practices,

the pre-service language teachers were able to “understand the reasons behind their pedagogical actions, indicating possible ways to change language teaching and learning situations according to the needs of their educational contexts” (p. 75). As part of reflective teaching practices as such, brief but explicit instruction on observing and analyzing self-gestures can be included, and this may have a positive impact on understanding one’s own gestural behavior. This can also benefit teachers in their on-going professional development if they are instructed in using online tools and software during their real classroom practices. Because of the growing interest in videoconferencing in the virtual learning environment, many emerging online software and tools such as Adobe Connect are becoming popular (Kaufmann & Frisby, 2013). Adobe Connect is available in most Canadian university and college classrooms. Use of software as such is very simple, and they can be useful in face-to-face teaching as well. Adobe Connect can be used for many different purposes including recording of classroom sessions. Using the software, teachers can record themselves teaching, which could be used for self-analysis later.

5.4.3. Uniting theory and practice- a praxis approach to research. Following Lantolf and Poehner (2014), Smotrova (2018) suggests that an integration of theory and practice is important to incorporate gesture into pedagogies that are carefully designed. Such practices are termed as a *praxis approach* or a *pedagogical imperative* in which, for example, SCT is not merely used to understand L2 leaning and instruction, but to apply its concepts and principles as organized pedagogical practices to promote L2 learning (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). With such objectives in mind, gesture researchers need to focus on creating and analyzing specific instructional practices integrating gestures that would provide clear directions to pre- and in-service teachers to use gestures as pedagogical strategy. Gestures, for example, can be employed as a mediational teaching tool, while teachers can engage students to use gesture as a mediational

learning tool as discussed before. Studies such as Rosborough (2010) point to how students can be directed to use gesture as a self-regulatory tool, which was somewhat evident in Tracy's classroom in this study. Such examples can be used to design instructional practices by assessing their potentials through classroom research.

Although the praxis approach to research stems from SCT-based studies, the approach could be adopted in research on any pedagogical practices that include gestures to intentionally improve L2 learning in the classroom. Within such initiatives, for example, the theoretical concept of gestures as signs and modal resources will be adopted as pedagogical strategies, while investigating their scope in the classroom. The pedagogical strategy may include ways to engage teachers and students in gestural behavior that promotes transformative learning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2015) in which they take agentive roles in meaning-making processes in the classroom.

5.5. Drawbacks and Direction for Future Research

One of the limitations of this study stemmed from the ethics review and the research design of this study. First, the review process took comparatively longer than usual as this study involved video data. In spite of having ethical approval from the university, this study had to go through a second ethics review by the community college ethics board, which disapproved the use of participants' faces in the video data. This affected the research design and analysis process as a whole since I was not able to use much of the data because the transcription process used in this study would be compromised if faces were blurred. Second, Because of the same videography method, I received minimal response from ESL teachers to participate in this study. Some of the teachers I observed at ILS had low enrolment of students in their classes, and many of the students like Cheng were at the end of their stay in Canada. Therefore, I experienced difficulties in conducting interviews with them within the limited time. There would have been

much more insights into the student participants' experiences with gestures if I could include their SRs.

Gesture research has its methodological challenges owing to the difficulties of transcription and analysis process. SCT gesture studies, for instance, usually follow microanalysis in which gestural movements are transcribed into verbal descriptions (Smotrova, 2018). This requires a rigorous process of detailing the gestural movements while making the description precise and simple for nonexpert readers. On the other hand, as discussed in this study, multimodal researchers usually use multimodal interaction analysis in which video data is presented following multiple transcription conventions including multimodal transcription. Each methodology has its own strengths and drawbacks. Future research on how each type of transcription such as microanalysis or multimodal transcriptions may influence the findings of gesture research would be helpful. Furthermore, more studies are required to understand the difficulties involved in video data collection and analysis processes to be able to address the challenges with more caution.

Apart from the methodological challenges, the possibilities of incorporating gestures into L2 curriculum and teacher education need more critical investigation. The teacher participants in this study agreed with the urgency of integrating gestures into TESL courses as well as L2 pedagogical instructions as, during the focus group, they realised the dynamic influences of gestures on learning and instruction. Elaine expressed her worries that she might have put many international students in discomfited situations through her gestures, and she would be more mindful of students with different cultural backgrounds. Such realizations were the result of the in-depth discussion on gestures in the FG, which let the participants reflect on and re-evaluate their teaching practices and subjective positions in the classroom. Studies as such that allow

participants to understand and negotiate gestural practices and subjectivities may bring more insights into the relevance of gestures as pedagogical strategies L2 and TESL contexts. More studies need to be conducted to understand how novice and expert teachers view the idea of integrating gestures into learning and instruction of L2.

5.6. Conclusion

This study was an attempt to theorize gestures from multiple theoretical perspectives. Each theory illuminated distinct aspects of gestures in the classroom by reflecting on how gestures produce multiple meanings that may influence teaching and learning a language in specific ways. This study, on the one hand, contributes to existing gesture research by showing the necessity of implementing multiple theoretical approaches to gesture research, and on the other, complement the emerging trends in applied linguistics research that encourages to move away “from privileging one body of knowledge to the productive and coherent integration of multiple theoretical perspectives on language, learning, and learners” (Teemant, 2018, p. 533). The new perspectives to gesture studies and ESL education in general will help pre- and in-service TESL teachers move beyond the essentialist understanding of communication by providing critical insights into verbal and non-verbal communications that may have multiple influences on learning and power relationships in the classroom. I would like to conclude by quoting one of Teemant’s (2018) remarks: “The field of ESL must continue to challenge the very fundamentals of the profession: Who are we preparing to teach what in which contexts under what conditions and for what purposes” (p. 533).

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Appendices

Appendix A: Major Interview Questions for Students

A. Examples of Profile Questions

Where were you born? How long have you been in Canada? How long have you been learning English? How long have you been at Hansa? Why did you choose Canada/this institution? How do you think this institution has made a difference in your learning? Have all your expectations been met at the school? What is your future plan?

B. Preliminary Questions on Gestural Behaviour

1. What are the best ways to learn English?/What makes you learn English the best way?
2. Do you look at how your teacher moves/gestures in the classroom? Give examples of any incidents related to your teacher's gesture if you remember.
3. How do you feel about your teachers' gestural behaviour such as facial expressions, head nods, eye-contacts, movements and so on? In what ways do they make you comfortable/uncomfortable in the classroom?
4. Does any of your teachers' gestural behaviour help you understand/learn your lessons? How? In what ways do you think a teacher's gesture might be helpful?
5. Does it confuse you or interfere with the lesson? In what ways do you think it might be a problem for the students?
6. How do you feel about other students' movement or gestural behaviour in the classroom? Are those helpful for you in any ways?

C. Question for Stimulated Recalls on Selected Video Excerpts

1. How do you explain the situation in the video clip?
2. What do you consider as gestures in the clips? How many of them did you notice before?
3. How do you feel about your teachers' gestures in the clips? Do you think they were helpful for your learning in any ways? What could be changed? (eye contact, movement)
3. What do you think about your own gestures?

Appendix B: Major Interview Questions for Teachers

A. Sample Profile Questions

Tell me about your education background and ESL teaching Experiences. How long have you been teaching ESL? How long have you been teaching at the school? How do you like it? What do you like the most about teaching? Which language skills do you like to teach most? Why? What is your teaching philosophy/best teaching practices? How do you think English should be taught in an environment like this school (specific methods, pedagogical activities)?

B. Preliminary Questions on Gestures

1. What functions gesture might have in the classroom? Give examples.
2. Do you consider yourself a performer in the classroom? How?
3. How do you think your gestural behaviour is related to your performance?
4. Are you aware of your gestural behaviour in the classroom? Have you ever intentionally used any specific gesture or movement in the classroom? Give examples.
5. Do you think your gestural behaviour is influenced by your personal beliefs/ideology? How? How do they influence your perspectives to students' gestural behaviour and movements in the classroom?
6. Do you have a code of conduct for teachers at your institution?
How do you think your gestural behaviour is influenced by the code of conduct? How does that affect the way you view your students' gestural behaviour?

C. Stimulated Recalls on Selected Video Excerpts

1. Comment on the functions and meanings of your gestural behaviour in the video excerpts.
2. Do you consider your gestures a part of students' meaning-making in the video excerpt? How do you think those might have affected students' understanding? How do you think those were important in teaching that lesson?
3. Do you think your gestures are related to the pedagogical activities? How? (comment on specific activities in each lesson)
4. To what extent were you aware of those during the lesson? Do you find anything surprising about your own gestural behaviour? What gestures would you like to modify next time you teach that class?/what would you do differently next time?
5. What do think about the students' gestural behaviour in the excerpts? What meanings and functions might they have in that specific situation?
6. Does anything surprise you about your students' gesture? How do you think their gestures might have been influenced by yours' and vice versa?
7. How do you think your students might develop an understanding of learning ESL
8. How do you think the classroom space influences your gesture and movement in the classroom?
9. How do you think the time allocated for each lesson and activities effect your gestures and vice versa?

Appendix C: Sample Topics/Question for Discussion in the Teacher FG

A. Gesture and Meaning-Making

1. How do you use gestures to make meaning?
2. How do you think your students interpret your gestures?
3. How do you think your gestures help/confuse meanings?
4. How do you interpret students' gestures? How would you use the understanding of students' gestures in the teaching-learning process?

B. Teacher Movement and learning

1. How much movement do you think is desirable? Why? How is that related to learning?
2. Discussion on meanings of teachers positions at different places in the classroom and their effects on students

At the front (centre)

moving around

Close to students

Keeping a distance from the students

Keep standing/sitting

C. Gesture and Norm

1. How are our gestures (teachers and students) related to classroom etiquette?
2. How do the norms influence learning? Do they have any negative effects on learning?

D. Gesture and power

1. How is gesture related to power in the classroom?
2. Are there specific gestures/movements that may empower students?
3. What gestures may intimidate/ suppress them?
4. How may all these influence learning?

E. School Policies, Teacher Agenda and gestures

1. Teachers have their own agenda and perspectives to learning, and that has a strong influence on their use of specific gestures or movements. And students are aware of those. How do you think this influence students understanding of learning in the classroom?
2. How may this influence students' self understanding and learning styles?
3. How do you think this influence overall ESL teaching/learning scenario?

F. Implications

1. How do you think we may address this issue in teacher education? Specific lessons?

Contents? Methods? Strategies?

2. What specific areas of gestures should be researched more?

Appendix D: Transcription Conventions (Adapted from Talmy, 2011)

I	The Researcher
.	falling intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	rising intonation
!	exclamatory intonation
<u>underline</u>	Emphasis
–	abrupt sound stop
(.)	pause less than 0.2 second
(n.n)	Long pause for about a second
[Overlap
[
word=	latched speech
=word	
wor:d	sound stretch
[comment]	transcriber comment
↑↓	rising/falling shift in intonation
hhh	breathiness; audible outbreath
.hh	audible in-breath
italics	Researcher's emphasis