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Spoken Discourse: Question 6

Look at the transcript headed 'Lesson Planning'. Consider it in the light of two ways of approaching classroom language: Willis (1992: 'Inner and Outer' in Coulthard *Advances in Spoken Discourse Analysis*) and Jarvis and Robinson (1997: 'Analysing educational discourse' *Applied Linguistics* 18). Which approach do you find more useful in evaluating the effectiveness of the lesson in the transcript?

1. Introduction

The need for “the kind of conceptual apparatus that will sharpen our awareness of how a discourse functions as a communicative event, and of how the nature of the event affects what participants do” (CSD March 2000) leads to the creation and development of analytical approaches such as those by Willis, and Jarvis and Robinson tested in this work.

In the course of this essay there will be a detailed examination of parts of the transcript, ‘Lesson Planning’. Firstly, however, summaries will be provided of Willis (1992) ‘Inner and Outer’, and Jarvis and Robinson (1997) ‘Analysing educational discourse’. Following the summaries and the analyses there will be an evaluation of the usefulness of each of these approaches to classroom discourse before a final conclusion.

2. Summaries

There now follow brief summaries of first Willis (1992) ‘Inner and Outer’, and then of Jarvis and Robinson (1997) ‘Analysing educational discourse’.

2.1 Summary of Willis

Willis builds on Sinclair and Coulthard’s IRF model (1975 cited in Willis 1992), examining not content lessons, but language lessons. As Sinclair and Coulthard before her, Willis concentrates on classroom discourse, which despite being too simplistic to be representative of discourse outside the classroom, is fairly rigid and therefore relatively easy to define for analysis.

Willis’s model facilitates the examination of how language is used by adopting two basic analytical categories: Outer and Inner. Outer language, which may be in the students’ Mother Tongue, is used to control the lesson and provides the class framework: instructions for activities, explanations and checking devices. The focus is on what is being said, not the form. Two of the major discourse patterns identified by Willis are based on Outer. The first occurs when all communication is on Outer and the teacher takes a non-participating role not unlike that of a chairperson. In such cases the language can be quite natural. The other pattern uses mainly Outer with a little on Inner Dependent (see below): the teacher, operating on Outer, takes the role of language advisor correcting or helping students with any lexical problems they experience.

Inner language, dependent on Outer for coherence, is concerned with the practice of Target Language. Inner is subdivided as shown below:

OUTER

INNER

DEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT

PSEUDO

FREE

Inner Dependent, which according to Willis is where a large amount of classroom interaction takes place, encourages students to respond in accordance with the model they have been given; practising form, and has little resemblance to normal discourse outside the classroom. In contrast, on Inner Independent students can say whatever they wish: real communication can occur here. Inner Independent is further subdivided into Pseudo and Free. Willis labels exchanges Pseudo when students merely 'display' language, even when doing roleplay. The final category on Inner, Free, describes language that is being practised in a more 'meaningful' way, as students exchange information they are interested in. Even here, however, Follow-up / Evaluation is usually provided by the teacher.

In Willis's data Follow-up / Evaluation is shown to be important in language lessons. It is typically given by the teacher on Outer in response to student utterances on Inner, whether Dependent or Independent. Whilst seemingly straightforward, Willis demonstrates how in Follow-up / Evaluation incorrect form can go unchecked if praise is being given for a student having correctly identified on which level he/she is required to respond: Outer or Inner. Additionally, as shown by Willis, the teacher can choose whether to respond to the form or content of a response.

This can prove problematic for students as their understanding of what an evaluation tells them depends on how they interpret what is happening in class. In Willis's data, 'Socoop's Dilemma', illustrates this difficulty: the student, Socoop, responds to an Inner Initiation in a natural way on Outer, and the teacher refuses to accept it, persisting in her attempt to elicit an Inner response concentrating on form. Socoop becomes increasingly unclear about what he has done wrong and what is required of him. He is unaware of having transgressed in his move from Inner to Outer.

Switches by students from Inner to Outer are, according to Willis, typical. They provide examples of real communication as students try to escape the constraints of the Inner and its Target Language in an attempt to express themselves naturally in the classroom. However, as

described above, Boundary moves are under the teacher's jurisdiction: responsibility for moving the class along rests with the teacher. The teacher always has the right to make a Boundary exchange, Willis points out, either whilst superficially maintaining cohesion, or brusquely. Abrupt changes in particular can confuse students who rely upon their ability to identify a variety of clues to decide if a phrase or question is directed to them on Inner or Outer. The following 'clues' are listed by Willis:

- if the teacher is encouraging debate a response is generally required on Outer; Inner is required if the focus is on language;
- Follow-up, and Initiation indicate what is required in continuation; Willis notes that switches made by the teacher are more commonly from Outer to Inner;
- paralinguistic features, such as, intonation, and body language: slow, deliberate phrases, are likely to be providing examples or Target Language, i.e. Inner.

2.2 Summary of Jarvis and Robinson

Jarvis and Robinson's approach is concerned with "teacher responsiveness to pupils" and builds on ideas from Vygotsky, Nofsinger, Leont'ev, Mercer, and Brown and Wragg (all cited in Jarvis and Robinson 1997). Jarvis and Robinson are particularly interested in "shared meaning" resulting from group interaction, and they focus on a detailed examination of what is commonly known as Follow-up in Sinclair & Coulthard's IRF model (1975 cited in Jarvis and Robinson 1997). Work by Brown and Wragg (1993 cited in Jarvis and Robinson 1997), establishing the importance of teacher response, leads Jarvis and Robinson to determine the possibility of a link between discourse patterns and learning. They state that "responsiveness" forms an important teaching technique. The teacher uses knowledge students already possess by building on their utterances, and either guiding the class towards areas that students seem uncertain of, reflecting back on previous student utterances, or forward to new areas of discourse (Jarvis and Robinson 1997). Jarvis and Robinson name the following six categories of pedagogic functions for use in the analysis of this teacher responsiveness:

- A. Accept
- B. Rephrase
- C. Give clues
- D. Extend/Guide; Extend/bridge
- E. Check; set; summarise
- F. Ignore; Reject

They draw attention to the way in which exchanges in the classroom mesh together and cite Hoey (1992) who like them draws parallels between written and spoken discourse.

Jarvis and Robinson also cite a larger discourse pattern of which they found many examples in their data. It contains three elements: Focus, Build and Summarize. Focus is used by the teacher to concentrate student attention on a topic. Then the teacher uses Build to Extend and Rephrase student utterances and create lexical networks. Student participation in creating these networks is essential as contextualising the language for them in a personal way, that is easy to recall, is the objective. Jarvis and Robinson point out that students working in small groups can also create such networks.

The final phase, Summarize, involves the teacher summarising the digression from the main topic of the class. This is important since such digressions tend to be associated with areas not fully understood by students. Digression is intended to enlighten them and if the teacher bypasses Summarize, then an opportunity for learning has been ignored. Of course, if these digressions are not happening then there is no occasion for Summarize.

Jarvis and Robinson note that there are ways in which use of the pattern may be more, or less, helpful in building meaning when the class is teacher-led. They give an example from their data of a teacher repeatedly using Focus, reducing class interaction to a slot-filling activity.

Difficulties in describing discourse using this model can occur due to what Jarvis and Robinson refer to as “*multilayering* or ‘nesting’ of the pattern within a lesson”(1997). They agree with Hoey (1983 cited in Jarvis and Robinson 1997) that this phenomena, more typical in the Build phase, can lead to a negative evaluation which in turn will set off the start of the pattern anew, causing layers to build up. This, according to Jarvis and Robinson, is what teachers call the class’s “unfinished business” (1997).

3. Analysis of the text

The following comprise two analyses of the transcript ‘Lesson Planning’. The first has been carried out using Willis (1992) ‘Inner and Outer’, and the second using Jarvis and Robinson (1997) ‘Analysing educational discourse’. Since a recording of the lesson is not available, and the transcript does not indicate intonation or phonological prominence, neither of the analyses take these aspects into account.

3.1 Analysis using Willis

Typically the teacher operates on Outer, giving instructions, explanations, examples and a framework within which the class will proceed. This happens (1) – (4) and again in (59) when the second phase of the class begins and the teacher establishes what is involved.

Normally, Outer is used by the teacher to control the class, for example, telling students when to reply, or if their answer has been correct. In the first half of the class control is initially tight as in (7):

OUTER	INNER
7. T: OK? So, let's begin. Hmm?	
Let's break the ice. Estivaliz, can you play with, er...Rocio?	

The teacher, in a typical use of Boundary markers, decides what the class is going to do, who will commence and when. The second part of the class yields more examples of this kind of restrictive teacher control than the first:

OUTER	INNER
63. T: Right, er...Sonia and, er...Fagita. Come on.	
65. T: Good. Another one?	
85. T: Only one?	
OK. But I forgot about Margerita, so I have to for... forget about it. So only one person in each group, all right? What about you two? Come on!	
98. T: What about you, Carmen?	
Tell me something incredible about you.	

There are many instances in the transcript of the teacher reacting to student utterances on Outer; reacting purely to the language itself and not the content, as below:

OUTER	INNER	
	DEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT
65. T: Good. Another one?	On a farm?	

The teacher's Follow-up, is an evaluation of what has been said with regard to form. Such a response, ignoring the content of the student utterance, would be unusual in a real-life context.

Further examples of Follow-up of this type occur throughout the lesson transcript, for example, (10), (14), (54), (56), (61), (67), (71), (106), and (118). All of these show the extent to which the teacher controls the class.

In this transcript there are many examples of the typical pattern of IRF with Initiation and Follow-up proving to be almost exclusively the teacher's domain. Some examples of moves providing both Initiation and Follow-up / Evaluation by the teacher follow:

(10), (25), (33), (37), (41), (58), (67), (75), (85), (98), (102), and (106).

This pattern provides a highly-controlled framework within which the class operates.

Student Initiation is rare and in this transcript there are indeed few examples. However, (88) – (90) includes one such occasion and is particularly interesting due to the teacher's reaction:

OUTER	DEPENDENT	INNER
		INDEPENDENT
88. S8: Er...no, er...		Carmen, the last year, er...met, er...handsome man, er...and she is going to get married with...
89. C: Yes! I am going to marry! This year!		
90. T: We are not using 'used to', but it's OK. And the second one? Try to use	'used to'.	

Student (S8) is responding on Inner (88), when suddenly he/she is interrupted by another student, Carmen (C). Carmen (89) provides a good example of a student trying to escape to Outer from Inner by responding in a genuine way to what has been said. However, the teacher in (90) immediately reacts to Carmen's response in terms of form, by pointing out that the target language has not been employed. In continuation the teacher utterly ignores the content of Carmen's response, and explicitly requests a second sentence in the target language. In this way the teacher ensures a return to Inner from Outer; to pseudo interaction from real interaction.

This does not mean that the teacher will not allow there to be interaction on Outer. There are a number of occasions when the teacher responds to the content of what students have said, showing interest in their answers:

OUTER	INNER
12. T: Really?	
25. T: Did you? Long hair? What about now? What have you done with your long hair?	
79. T: You were bluffing? Number one?	

The teacher responds on Outer, not Inner, suggesting real communication. However, she does not always expect or wait for an answer, so the opportunity for real interaction is lost.

There are also many instances in the lesson of students escaping from Inner to Outer, with or without teacher consent. In (17) – (33) for example:

OUTER	DEPENDENT	INNER	INDEPENDENT
			PSEUDO FREE
17. T: You didn't?			
18. S4: No.			
19. T: Did you like...er...do you have any, I mean, have you got sisters or brothers to play with?			
20. S4: Yes, er...I wa...well, bueno [=well], I am, er...one, er...sister, but I was, er...ten years, er...he was, er...one year.			
21. T: Oh, I see. So different ages. Good. What about you two, Elisa and, er...Rosa?			
22. S5: Er...			what did you use to look like as a child?
23. S6:			I used to have short hair.
24. S5: Er...			oh, I didn't, I used to have long
25. T: Did you? Long hair? What about now? What have you done with your long hair?			
26. S5: Is more...I don't...comodo [=comfortable].			
27. T: Comfortable?			
28. S5: Comfortable.			
29. T: Yes, good.			
30. S6: Er...			what did you use to do in your spare time?
31. S5: Er...			I used to play tennis.
32. S6: Er...			I didn't. I used to go with my friends.
33. T: Did you? And what did you do with...			what did you use to do with your friends? What did you use to play with, er...your friends? Or what did you use to go, or do?

This rather long extract illustrates perfectly the continuous struggle occurring in this classroom. In (17) it is the teacher who first moves from Inner to Outer showing interest in a student's

response. This occurs again in (19). In (20), having noted this change, the student moves to Outer also, even using some of his/her mother tongue in the response.

In (21) the teacher uses a Boundary marker, summing up the previous exchange and indicating to the next pair of students that they should return to Inner which they do. Their exchange, (22) – (23), momentarily free of teacher control, provides an example of Inner Independent Free. However, the pattern repeats itself as in (25) the teacher’s interruption is on Outer, and the students take advantage in (26) to continue on Outer. Another instance of mother tongue use is also seen here. The interaction continues on Outer until in (33) the teacher, halfway through a question, suddenly revises it to formulate an example of target language on Inner. This is an obvious discourse marker for the students who obediently follow the teacher back to Inner. Further evidence of this kind of interaction can be seen in (37) – (41), and (44) – (58). An examination of the latter will be made below.

Whilst (44) – (58) is an extended excerpt it is worth reproducing here due to the variety of patterns contained therein.

OUTER	DEPENDENT	INNER INDEPENDENT PSEUDO
44. T:	To Europe?	
45. S1: French, and...and sometimes, bueno [=well] ...when I have, er...a big time, I, er...I pass my...my holidays on, er...on climb mountains.		
46. T: Yes, you spend your holidays, ermm... practising exercise, you mean? Climbing up and down the mountains?		
47. S1: Yeah.		
48. T: With your friends?		
49. S1: Yeah.		
50. T: And you...and you?		
51. S2: No, no I didn't.		
52. T: You didn't. You don't look like a ...being a climber!		
53. S2: No! I spend...		I used to spend my holidays in Palencia. Or, er...I used to, ermm...go to know, er...the ous... the outskirts, the...Mad...of Madrid.
54. T: Good.		
55. S2: Er...		the bor...bordering province.
56. T: Yes. Good. So you...		
57. S2:		Such as Toledo, Segovia...
58. T: Right. It's a very good thing, at least you know places. And, er...anybody can tell me...		

In (45) the student takes advantage of the teacher's comment in (44), which is probably initially intended to be a correction of the previous student utterance, but is used by the student as an invitation to provide a more detailed response. The teacher does nothing curb this and in fact reinforces it in (46) by showing interest on Outer. The exchange continues on Outer until the beginning of (53).

This extract is of particular interest as it is a student, and not the teacher, in (53), who determines the move back to Inner from Outer. Despite the fact that the teacher, in (52), has given no indication of this being required, the student is praised in both (54), and (56) by the teacher on Outer, but this time reacting to the form not the content of the utterances. Finally, in (58) the teacher concludes this interaction, provides a Boundary move and indicates that they will continue on Inner.

The last example of a student moving from Inner to Outer that will be examined follows:

OUTER	DEPENDENT	INNER	INDEPENDENT
107. S3: your name?	I think, er...		
108. S4: Arantza.			
109. S3:	Arantza is bluffing.		

This excerpt is interesting in that the student uses Outer temporarily to discover information that he/she genuinely wants to know before returning to Inner. This shows an awareness on the part of the student of the different of the different levels of interaction in the classroom.

In addition to the above, students sometimes use Outer because they have failed to understand moves intended by the teacher to signal the use of Inner. In the second half of the class there are a number of misunderstandings concerning Outer/Inner, maybe due to the fact that there is a variety of target language in use. In (103) a student responds on Outer, clearly shown to be incorrect by the teacher's hasty intervention:

OUTER	INNER
102. T: Oh! Good. And, er...another one.	She used to work as a nurse.
103. C: Er...Santa Marina, er...	
104. T: No, another sentence. A new one. Another one, yes.	

Mistakes are easily made:

OUTER	DEPENDENT	INNER	INDEPENDENT
85. T: Only one?			
OK. But I forgot about Margerita, so I have to for... forget about it. So only one person in each group, all right? What about you two? Come on!			
86. C:			When did you...?
87. T: [laughs] Don't be so impatient, Carmen!			

In (86) Carmen (C), responds when she is not required to do so as revealed once again by the teacher's swift interruption.

Due to the limited scope of this essay no further analysis of the transcript using Willis will be offered. An evaluation of the usefulness of Willis's approach will be given later.

3.2 Analysis using Jarvis and Robinson

In the first half of the text there is a not insignificant amount of teacher responsiveness in the form of Build. The first extract to be examined comes from (15) – (21):

	15. S3: I used to play with my sisters, at home.	
	16. S4: I...didn't.	
Check	17. T: You didn't?	
	18. S4: No.	
Extend/Guide	19. T: Did you like...er...do you have any, I mean, have you got sisters or brothers to play with?	Build
	20. S4: Yes, er...I wa...well, bueno [=well], I am, er...one, er...sister, but I was, er...ten years, er...he was, er...one year.	
Accept	21. T: Oh, I see. So different ages.	Summarize
Accept	Good.	
Encourage		

In this excerpt the teacher Extends in (19) what has been said previously by the student in (15). Following this, in (21) an example of Summarize can be seen.

Another example of Build occurs in (25):

	24. S5: Er...oh, I didn't, I used to have long hair.	
Check	25. T: Did you? Long hair?	
Extend/Guide	What about now? What have you done with your long hair?	Build

The teacher is Building on the student utterance of (24).

In (32) – (39) a series of Building moves occurs:

	32. S6: Er...I didn't. I used to go with my friends.
Check	33. T: Did you?

Extend/Guide	And what did you do with...what did you use to do with your friends? What did you use to play with, er...your friends? Or what did you use to go, or do? 34. S6: Mmm...we used to...to walk, er... 35. T: Mm hmm.	Build
Prompt	Along...	
Complete		
	36. S6: Along, er...Las Arenas.	
Accept	37. T: Right. Mm hmm.	
Extend/Guide	Did you use to go and...for a picnic, from time to time, with your friends?	Build
	38. S6: Yes. Some...sometimes, ermm...on Saturdays, for example.	Build
Accept	39. T: Mm hmm. Yes.	
Extend/Guide	Did you enjoy it?	
Prompt	Yes?	

Firstly, in (33) the teacher is Building on the student utterance of (32). She Builds on (32) again in (37), and then goes on to Build on the student utterance of (38) in (39).

In the final excerpt to be examined with reference to Build, (43) and (58) a series of Build moves can be identified:

	43. S1: I used to go...Europe...	
Rephrase	44. T: To Europe?	
Check		
	45. S1: French, and...and sometimes, bueno [=well]...when I have, er...a big time, I, er...I pass my...my holidays on, er...on climb mountains.	
Accept	46. T: Yes,	
Extend/Bridge	you spend your holidays, ermm...practising exercise,	Build
Rephrase		
Check	you mean?	
Rephrase	Climbing up and down the mountains?	
Check		
	47. S1: Yeah.	
Extend/Guide	48. T: With your friends?	Build
	49. S1: Yeah.	
Prompt	50. T: And you...and you?	
	51. S2: No, no I didn't.	
Accept	52. T: You didn't.	
Extend/Bridge	You don't look like a ...being a climber!	Build
	53. S2: No! I spend...I used to spend my holidays in Palencia. Or, er...I used to, ermm...go to know, er...the ous...the outskirts, the... Mad...of Madrid.	
Encourage	54. T: Good.	
Accept		
	55. S2: Er...the bor...bordering province.	
Accept	56. T: Yes.	
Encourage	Good.	
Prompt	So you...	

	57. S2: Such as Toledo, Segovia...	
Accept	58. T: Right.	
Encourage	It's a very good thing, at least you know places.	Summarize

It can be seen that in (44) the teacher Rephrases the student utterance of (43). In continuation the student utterance of (45) is repeatedly Extended and Rephrased by the teacher in first (46), then (48), and finally in (52). The last move in this excerpt from the teacher in (58) Summarizes the exchange: student utterances from (53), (55), and (57).

As mentioned above, Rephrasing, which forms a part of Build, appears quite frequently in this transcript. In the above example Rephrase is one of a number of moves used in conjunction with Extend. Below, however, Rephrase is not used with Extend, but in a controlling capacity:

Rephrase	69. T: She used to speak five languages.	Summarize
Check	Or you? Fagita or you?	
	70. Sa: Fagita.	
Rephrase	71. T: Fagita used to speak five languages.	Summarize
Accept	Good.	
Encourage		
Talk now	And another one?	
Prompt		
	72. S: Er...when she, er... he was, er...four I used to help, ermm...his mother.	
Rephrase	73. T: You used to help her mother.	Summarize
	74. S: In the cooking.	
Rephrase	75. T: Cooking. Doing the cooking	

Rephrase, used as the teacher's response to the students serves to control here and Summarize what students have said.

Throughout the transcript it can be seen that there is a great amount of teacher control being deployed not only via the use of Rephrase (as seen above), but also through Set, and Check, as multilayering occurs, and Talk now, Accept, Prompt, and Reject.

The first part of the class, (1) – (4), yields some early examples of the use of Focus: Set, and Check. To illustrate this (4) is reproduced here:

4. T: Now, I would like you to work in pairs, with your partner, and, er...let's try to reproduce, sort of dialogue. [writes on board] You can talk about, er...your appearance...you can talk about, er...your spare time, or...the books...you read, or...the places... you went to...and so on. So thi...there are some cues, but of course you can speak about whatever you like. Er...the dialogue will consist of, er...A, for example, says, er...'What...', make a question... makes a question to B, for example, 'What did you use to look like when you were a little girl?' And B answers, 'Well, I used to have	Focus
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	long, curly hair'. And A agrees, or disagrees.	
Check	Hmm?	Focus
Set	If she agrees, 'Oh! So did I'. If she disagrees, 'Oh, I didn't'. And then B makes another question, to A; 'And what about you, did you use to wear glasses?' for example, and A answer 'Oh, yes, I did'. Right, so try to use short answers, 'yes I did',	
Check	hmm?	
Set	'No, I didn't', or 'Nor did I'.	
Check	Hmm? Is it clear?	
Set	Just two minutes in pairs, and then you will speak aloud.	
Check	Right?	
Set	And you want to ask me any question, I will be ready to help you.	

This shows how Check can be used in a non-responsive way: no response is given, or indeed, expected. This pattern of Set, Check is repeated later in the lesson, in (59), and again shows the teacher organising the class. This provides an example of what Jarvis and Robinson call "multilayering" (1997).

The following excerpt (7) – (14) is interesting for the insight it provides not only into the use of Set, and Check, but also Talk now, Accept, and Prompt:

Check	7. T: OK?	
Set	So, let's begin. Hmm? Let's break the ice.	Focus
Talk now	Estivaliz, can you play with, er...Rocio? 8. S3: Er...what did you use to look like as a child? 9. S4: Er...when I was a child...I used to be very fat, but now I don't eat too much, and I was thin.	
Accept	10. T: Yes,	
Encourage	great!	
Talk now	What about you,	
Prompt	can you make...? 11. S3: No, I didn't. I was very thin, and...I used to have short, blonde hair.	
Check	12. T: Really?	
	13. S4: And, what did use to...to do in your spare time?	
Accept	14. T: Good!	
Encourage		

These categories reveal a high degree of teacher control being exerted at this point.

The second part of the class, which comprises (59) – (118), provides many more examples of the kind outlined above. Talk now features prominently, as in (60) – (67):

	60. S: True. And the second is false.
Accept	61. T: Right, so. You have a...perfectly right.
Prompt	So, er... 62. S: Two points.
Accept	63. T: Two points, for group B. Two points.
Talk now	Right, er...Sonia and, er...Fagita. Come on.

	64. F: Er...Sonia w...when Sonia was ten, er...she used to live on a farm.
Check	65. T: On a farm?
Accept	Good.
Encourage	
Talk now	Another one?
Prompt	
	66. F: Er...when Sonia was, er...five, er...she used to have bl...very blonde hair.
Accept	67. T: [laughs] Good.
Encourage	
Talk now	What about you?
Prompt	

The discourse here is dominated by the teacher; specific students are involved only at the express desire of the teacher.

The use of Prompt also helps to reveal the extent of teacher control, as in (75) – (79):

Rephrase	75. T: Cooking. Doing the cooking
Check	and so on?
Talk now	What's your opinion, er...[inaudible] on Fagita's sentences,
Prompt	true or false?
	76. S7: I think, er...the last sentence in...is true, and, er...first is false.
Talk now	77. T: What's your opinion?
Prompt	Were you bluffing, or were you telling the truth?
	78. F: I, er...wa...bluffing.
Check	79. T: You were bluffing? Number one?
Prompt	So?

This shows the teacher continually pushing and prodding students into replying in a certain way.

This is repeated in (90) – (94):

Reject	90. T: We are not using 'used to',
Accept?	but it's OK.
Talk now	And the second one?
Prompt	
Prompt	Try to use 'used to'.
	91. S8: OK, er...er...she used to...to have, ermm...ermm...ermm...I don't...know...
Prompt	92. T: A small...? Cat, at home?
	93. S8: No...in the...
Prompt	94. T: A what?

The above excerpts provide two examples of Prompt being used extensively. Although Prompt is used throughout the class, it never again occurs to such an extent as here.

Teacher responsiveness is not always positive as has been seen above. In addition to this, overt Rejection of student utterances can occur. Examples of this appear in the transcript. One example is included in the excerpt given above, in (90). Further examples, which will be given

below, also come from the second part of the class, near its conclusion. The first is from (103) – (104):

	103. C: Er...Santa Marina, er...
Reject	104. T: No,
Prompt	another sentence. A new one. Another one, yes.

The student is cut off mid-sentence and given new instructions immediately. The last example shows the teacher using Reject, and Rephrase in conjunction in (117) – (118):

	117. S: Two points. [pron: as French]
Reject	118. T: Poi...no,
Rephrase	two points [pron: correct].

There is also one example of the teacher actually telling a student not to speak at that moment:

Talk now	What about you two?
Prompt	Come on!
	86. C: When did you...?
DON'T	87. T: [laughs] Don't be so impatient, Carmen!
Talk now	

Looking at the transcript we can see how it may have been possible for the student to mistakenly think that she had been given her cue to speak.

Overall, due to the large amount of Set, Check, Talk now, Accept, Prompt, and Reject, used as means of tight control in the above discourse, the use of Extend/Guide and Extend/Bridge, whilst considerable at some points, is overwhelmed when the class is examined in its totality. Moves such as Rephrase, and even Encourage, to some extent, become part of the mass of moves used to tightly control the classroom discourse.

In this class the teacher, besides showing students how to use 'used to', also shows them how to decide if something is true or false, the idea that someone can be bluffing. Learning different skills occurs here too, albeit in a very limited way.

Further analysis of the transcript cannot be included here due to the limitations of the scope of this essay. However, an evaluation of the usefulness of the approach devised by Jarvis and Robinson will be given later.

4. An Evaluation of the Usefulness of the Analytical Approaches Described Above

Chaudron (1988: 39) indicates the need to examine what has been said in context so that the true nature of it is recognised. He stresses how important it is that “observational instruments...be reliable in application and validly related to the events they describe” (Chaudron 1988: 39).

Thus, both of the models evaluated below in enabling the detailed examination of classroom discourse, fulfil Chaudron’s criteria and can prove very useful in classroom discourse analysis.

4.1 An Evaluation of the Usefulness of Willis’s ‘Inner and Outer’ Approach

On first examination of the transcript using Outer and Inner the interaction on Inner can appear strange, since Follow-up is largely omitted. Only by looking at Inner in conjunction with Outer can the classroom situation be fully appreciated. This highlights the whole concept of Willis’s model: all language in the classroom is important, and Outer and Inner, in not being exclusive, facilitate the recognition of ‘real’ interaction on whichever level it occurs.

Despite proving to be a time-consuming method of analysis, benefits do emerge. Inner and Outer enable the easy identification of Pseudo, as opposed to real, interaction, meaning that when teachers and students do not react in a natural way to information given; when they react in response to the language not the content, or with more target language, they are exposed.

Thus the sub-categories on Inner prove very useful even though they can occasionally be difficult to categorise due to ambiguity concerning the intention of an utterance. Yet this could also be conceived to be a positive aspect of the model since this self-same problem is faced in the classroom by students, and subjecting the researcher to a similar experience can prove enlightening: awareness is necessary before change can occur.

Outer/Inner also exposes situations in which students ‘escape’ from Inner to Outer in search of genuine interaction. The identification of such situations allows us to see when the teacher is in collusion with such moves, and when he/she actively suppresses them, dismissing the opportunity presented.

Superficially the transcript may appear to show a lot of communication, but on the application of Willis’s model, discourse providing nothing more than display, or the practice of target language, as above mentioned, is more readily discernible. The work carried out on the transcript thus supports the idea that:

“Willis’s analysis shows that much of the language produced in classrooms is...produced as a sample of language to be evaluated, not as a contribution to communicative discourse” (CSD March 2000).

This is the strength of the model: interaction previously simply labelled as interactive is now further scrutinised to discover the true nature of that interaction. In this Willis proves invaluable.

4.2 An Evaluation of the Usefulness of Jarvis and Robinson’s Model for Measuring Teacher Responsiveness

This model concentrates on the relationship between teacher and students: the role of teacher responsiveness. It is useful in its examination of whether or not students are being helped to find the answers for themselves, or being spoon-fed, and if teachers are taking full advantage of the opportunity to Build and Summarize. It is useful in that it reveals how, and how often, the teacher seizes opportunities to Build and extend student utterances, a process commonly referred to as “scaffolding” by other researchers (Hatch 1992: 95; Donato 1994 cited in Kennedy 1996).

The category Summarize allows examination of the extent to which a particular teacher aids students in their understanding by Summarizing any digressions from the central topic of the class. Jarvis and Robinson’s approach could therefore prove invaluable in that opportunities for alleviating student confusion are highlighted and can be acted upon.

This model also makes it possible to look at multilayering: how Focus, Build, and Summarize are used at various stages of the class; how many different patterns are occurring within the class, and how they are all interconnected. This is important as all too often it is assumed that classes follow a linear pattern without deviation.

Categories such as, Talk now, Accept, and Prompt are useful in exposing superficially interactive exchanges, which in reality are examples of highly-controlled question and pre-ordained response: instances where the teacher knows what he/she requires as an answer. Thus, using a model such as Jarvis and Robinson’s enables us to see when students are actually learning something and when interaction is merely a display of what they already know.

However, due to the complex nature of the model, ascertaining which category to apply, of the many provided, can occasionally prove problematic. Category definitions are not always absolutely clear: Dismiss, as opposed to Reject, for example. In addition to this, instances occur

when teacher utterances do not fit neatly into the categories, but could be said to be representative of more than one.

Another weakness would be that Check can give the impression that interaction is occurring when in reality Check is being used with no expectation of a response. Thus, identifying the move does not necessarily involve a correct identification of the purpose of the utterance. Only by returning to the transcript itself could this be satisfactorily decided. Caution should therefore be exercised with regard to this category.

Despite these shortcomings, this model is useful in exposing teacher control of superficially interactive exchanges. By showing what is happening in the class in terms of teacher responsiveness and multilayering it affords the teacher the opportunity to incorporate little-used features should he/she so wish.

5. Conclusion

It is important for teachers to be aware of what is really happening in their classrooms; it is all too easy to think that all classroom discourse is real and become complacent. The use of the models provided by Willis, and Jarvis and Robinson has shown that in reality the majority of class time is being used to practise target language whilst real communication is ignored, or dismissed. In addition to this teachers are restricting interaction, and missing opportunities to alleviate student confusion and doubt.

Both Willis and Jarvis and Robinson provide a means by which the true nature of classroom discourse can be demonstrated. They reveal the superficial nature of this interaction by showing that for much of the time what the teacher is reacting to is not the content, which is what the listener would react to in real-life conversation (McCarthy 1991: 123), but the language itself in this lesson. Follow-up, or Evaluation, can be scrutinised using Willis, and Jarvis and Robinson, allowing for a clear division between discourse, which is communicative, and discourse which serves only display purposes (Hatch 1992: 95).

This is possible because in contrast to other models, such as ARC, or IRF, the models devised by Willis, and Jarvis and Robinson, are more flexible. They allow the researcher to look at individual utterances, not just whole chunks of interaction. It is possible to look in detail at the way that many different moves are occurring within one single piece of interaction.

Understanding the different roles of classroom discourse constitutes the first all-important step towards being able to take action to improve it. In this way the usefulness of models like Willis's in particular, and Jarvis and Robinson's cannot be underestimated.

APPENDIX: Full transcript of Lesson Planning

1. Teacher: [writes on board] 'I didn't use to' pay attention to the negative. 'Use to', 'use to', hmm? Different from 'used to'. I didn't use to...work...as a teacher.
2. Tape: Woman 1: Exercise one. Dialogue.
Voiceover: The students then listen to the structure being used in a recorded dialogue, and answer some questions.
3. Tape: Man: There's the school I used to go to, when I was little.
Woman 2: It looks a bit old and depressing!
Man: I know! But it's all right
inside. And you see that house over there?
Woman 2: What, the one with the white fence?
Man: Yes. I used to live there.
4. Teacher: Now, I would like you to work in pairs, with your partner, and, er...let's try to reproduce, sort of dialogue. [writes on board] You can talk about, er...your appearance...you can talk about, er...your spare time, or...the books...you read, or...the places...you went to...and so on. So thi...there are some cues, but of course you can speak about whatever you like. Er...the dialogue will consist of, er...A, for example, says, er...'What...', make a question...makes a question to B, for example, 'What did you use to look like when you were a little girl?' And B answers, 'Well, I used to have long, curly hair'. And A agrees, or disagrees. Hmm? If she agrees, 'Oh! So did I'. If she disagrees, 'Oh, I didn't'. And then B makes another question, to A; 'And what about you, did you use to wear glasses?' for example, and A answer 'Oh, yes, I did'. Right, so try to use short answers, 'yes I did', hmm? 'No, I didn't', or 'Nor did I'. Hmm? Is it clear? Just two minutes in pairs, and then you will speak aloud. Right? And you want to ask me any question, I will be ready to help you.

[Students work in pairs]

5. Student 1: What did you use to go, in the...
6. Student 2: I, er...used, er...to spend my holidays in Bilbao or Palencia because I used to live in Madrid.

[Fade out and in]

7. Teacher: OK? So, let's begin. Hmm? Let's break the ice. Estivaliz, can you play with, er...Rocio?
8. Student 3: Er...what did you use to look like as a child?
9. Student 4: Er...when I was a child...I used to be very fat, but now I don't eat too much, and I was thin.
10. Teacher: Yes, great! What about you, can you make...?
11. Student 3: No, I didn't. I was very thin, and...I used to have short, blonde hair.
12. Teacher: Really?
13. Student 4: And, what did use to...to do in your spare time?

14. Teacher: Good!
15. Student 3: I used to play with my sisters, at home.
16. Student 4: I...didn't.
17. Teacher: You didn't?
18. Student 4: No.
19. Teacher: Did you like...er...do you have any, I mean, have you got sisters or brothers to play with?
20. Student 4: Yes, er...I wa...well, bueno [=well], I am, er...one, er...sister, but I was, er...ten years, er...he was, er...one year.
21. Teacher: Oh, I see. So different ages. Good. What about you two, Elisa and, er...Rosa?
22. Student 5: Er...what did you use to look like as a child?
23. Student 6: I used to have short hair.
24. Student 5: Er...oh, I didn't, I used to have long hair.
25. Teacher: Did you? Long hair? What about now? What have you done with your long hair?
26. Student 5: Is more...I don't...comodo [=comfortable].
27. Teacher: Comfortable?
28. Student 5: Comfortable.
29. Teacher: Yes, good.
30. Student 6: Er...what did you use to do in your spare time?
31. Student 5: Er...I used to play tennis.
32. Student 6: Er...I didn't. I used to go with my friends.
33. Teacher: Did you? And what did you do with...what did you use to do with your friends? What did you use to play with, er...your friends? Or what did you use to go, or do?
34. Student 6: Mmm...we used to...to walk, er...
35. Teacher: Mm hmm. Along...
36. Student 6: Along, er...Las Arenas.
37. Teacher: Right. Mm hmm. Did you use to go and...for a picnic, from time to time, with your friends?
38. Student 6: Yes. Some...sometimes, ermm...on Saturdays, for example.
39. Teacher: Mm hmm. Yes. Did you enjoy it? Yes?
40. Student 6: Yes.
41. Teacher: Right. What about you two?
42. Student 2: Er...what did you use, er...to...er...spend your holidays?
43. Student 1: I used to go...Europe...
44. Teacher: To Europe?
45. Student 1: French, and...and sometimes, bueno [=well]...when I have, er...a big time, I, er...I pass my...my holidays on, er...on climb mountains.

46. Teacher: Yes, you spend your holidays, ermm...practising exercise, you mean?
Climbing up and down the mountains?
47. Student 1: Yeah.
48. Teacher: With your friends?
49. Student 1: Yeah.
50. Teacher: And you...and you?
51. Student 2: No, no I didn't.
52. Teacher: You didn't. You don't look like a ...being a climber!
53. Student 2: No! I spend...I used to spend my holidays in Palencia. Or, er...I used to,
ermm...go to know, er...the ous...the outskirts, the...Mad...of Madrid.
54. Teacher: Good.
55. Student 2: Er...the bor...bordering province.
56. Teacher: Yes. Good. So you...
57. Student 2: Such as Toledo, Segovia...
58. Teacher: Right. It's a very good thing, at least you know places. And,
er...anybody can tell me...

[Fade out and in]

59. Teacher: Right, so...Umm...you are going to...for example, every pair of students,
every pair of you, er...is going to think...or to say aloud three...well, three would be too
much, two...two each, eh? Two each, four altogether. Two sentences talking about,
er...past habits, eh? Past routines. But the more incredible the better, do you know why?
Because then the other group, hmm?...has to tell if the sentences they said, hmm?...were
true or false. Right?

[Fade out and in]

60. Student: True. And the second is false.
61. Teacher: Right, so. You have a...perfectly right. So, er...
62. Student: Two points.
63. Teacher: Two points, for group B. Two points. Right, er...Sonia and, er...Fagita.
Come on.
64. Fagita: Er...Sonia w...when Sonia was ten, er...she used to live on a farm.
65. Teacher: On a farm? Good. Another one?
66. Fagita: Er...when Sonia was, er...five, er...she used to have bl...very blonde hair.
67. Teacher: [laughs] Good. What about you? Oh, I have forgotten about yours,
Margerita. All right?
68. Sonia: Er...when Fagita was ten I used, er...to speak five language.
69. Teacher: She used to speak five languages. Or you? Fagita or you?
70. Sonia: Fagita.
71. Teacher: Fagita used to speak five languages. Good. And another one?
72. Sonia: Er...when she, er... he was, er...four I used to help, ermm...his mother.
73. Teacher: You used to help her mother.

74. Sonia: In the cooking.
75. Teacher: Cooking. Doing the cooking and so on? What's your opinion, er...[inaudible] on Fagita's sentences, true or false?
76. Student 7: I think, er...the last sentence in...is true, and, er...first is false.
77. Teacher: What's your opinion? Were you bluffing, or were you telling the truth?
78. Fagita: I, er...wa...bluffing.
79. Teacher: You were bluffing? Number one? So?
80. Fagita: No.
81. Student: Yes!
82. Fagita: No, the two. The two sentences are, er...bluffing.
83. Teacher: So, how many points?
84. Student: One.
85. Teacher: Only one? OK. But I forgot about Margerita, so I have to for...forget about it. So only one person in each group, all right? What about you two? Come on!
86. Carmen: When did you...?
87. Teacher: [laughs] Don't be so impatient, Carmen!
88. Student 8: Er...no, er...Carmen, the last year, er...met, er...handsome man, er...and she is going to get married with...
89. Carmen: Yes! I am going to marry! This year!
90. Teacher: We are not using 'used to', but it's OK. And the second one? Try to use 'used to'.
91. Student 8: OK, er...er...she used to...to have, ermm...ermm...ermm...I don't ...know...
92. Teacher: A small...? Cat, at home?
93. Student 8: No...in the...
94. Teacher: A what?
95. Student 8: A snake.
96. Teacher: A snake?
97. Student 8: Yes.
98. Teacher: My goodness! She used to have a snake at home. Right, remember them. What about you, Carmen? Tell me something incredible about you.
99. Carmen: I used to, ermm...working a nurse.
100. Teacher: As a nurse?
101. Carmen: As a nurse.
102. Teacher: Oh! Good. She used to work as a nurse. And, er...another one.
103. Carmen: Er...Santa Marina, er...
104. Teacher: No, another sentence. A new one. Another one, yes.
105. Carmen: Only one, now.
106. Teacher: [laughs] Just one sentence! And enough, for you. A lot of work. All right. Could you tell me if, ermm...just to finish, if, er...it is false?

107. Student 3: I think, er...your name?
108. Student 4: Arantza.
109. Student 3: Arantza is bluffing.
110. Teacher: Yes?
111. Student 3: In both.
112. Teacher: In both?
113. Student: In both.
114. Teacher: Were you bluffing?
115. Student: Yes, I was.
116. Teacher: So you are completely right. So...
117. Student: Two points. [pron: as French]
118. Teacher: Poi...no, two points [pron: correct]. Team B. OK, so we cannot go on, so we can say that...the winner is...group B!

[Fade out]

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