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Pakkanen, Marjatta. 2008. Complaint in a dialogic learning environment. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 39 (5), 468–480. — This article examines a discussion sequence recorded during a learning-group meeting in Studies for Adult Educators. The sequence was activated by a turn containing a complaint. The analysis revealed a change in the tone of the discussion when an event in a previous meeting was taken up. First, the event was expressed as a problem, but it turned out to be a positive matter which enabled learning on both the individual and group levels. An important foundation for this progression was the learning group's interest in a dialogical encounter, in which participation, commitment and reciprocity are fostered.

Descriptors: complaint, conversation analysis, dialogue, group interaction

Pulkkinen, Minna – Marttunen, Miika – Laurinen, Leena. 2008. Interaction in small groups engaged in collaborative writing. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 39 (5), 481–494 — This study investigates how university students discuss in small groups when they engage in collaborative writing. The students prepared themselves for the group writing by reading texts on developmental theories and by writing summaries of each theory. Each group was asked first to discuss on the various theories and secondly, to write an essay of one of those theories. The speech turns were divided into 564 conceptual episodes. The episodes were classified into five main categories: 1) directive discussion, 2) writing, 3) conceptual discussion, 4) evaluation and 5) off-task discussion. The results showed that the writing episodes were the most common (50%), whereas there were only few evaluation episodes (6%). The proportion of the conceptual episodes varied between the groups (from 19% to 31%). The results suggest that some groups were mainly oriented to deal with the actual writing task while other groups discussed concepts more extensively. This can be associated with different approaches with regard to performance/learning orientation for this task.

Descriptors: interaction, collaborative writing, collaborative learning

Routarinne, Sara. 2008. Social architecture for learning situations. The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus 39 (5), 423–438. — This article investigates social architecture for learning situations in two educational settings: one is a class setting where the pupils discuss mathematical quantities following the teacher's lead; the other is a game setting where two girls practise French vocabulary by playing a computer game. The settings were video-recorded with multiple cameras and were analysed within the framework of conversation analysis. In both settings, the study locates instances of IRE/IRF sequences consisting of teacher initiation, pupil response and teacher evaluation, but a more detailed analysis reveals

differences in their social architecture. In the mathematics class, the teacher and pupils achieve a model answer as a result of mutual monitoring and modifications. This answer is used as a scaffold for the production of abstract concepts that the teacher prefers. The teacher writes these concepts on a blackboard thus making them more concrete. The French vocabulary game organizes participation in a manner temporally and sequentially different from the mathematics setting. The pupils call timeouts during which they negotiate how they should respond. Evaluations provided by the game elicit responses in which the pupils explicitly assess their results. In conclusion, the three-part IRE sequences proved to be not only a social structure associated with learning situations but also a platform for cognitive processing embodied in words.

Descriptors: interaction, conversation analysis, learning situation, social architecture, computer game

Sahlström, Fritjof. 2008. Ssh! Shushing in classroom. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus* 39 (5), 456–467. — Despite their frequent occurrence in classrooms, shushing, i.e. a single or repeated “ssh”, has received little if any explicit prior research attention, either inside or outside classrooms. This article studies classroom shushings: what they sound like, where they occur, how they are produced, and what their action import is. The analysis is primarily based on Swedish classroom recordings in eighth grade. Of the found shushings, approximately two thirds occur as single ssh:s, most commonly produced within or slightly shorter than one interactional “beat”. The multiples are composed of 2–25 repeated shushings. In the materials, shushings occur most commonly (but not exclusively) in, or as, teacher turns addressing students. The studied shushings are found overwhelmingly in overlap, following and within interaction which challenges classroom norms of participation. Shushings seem to be a remarkably precise and economical resource for resolving overlap. It seems to be very constraining in terms of its sequential implication - if successful, all it produces in the materials studied is either non-response or silence. The results also open up for continued work on “ssh”, and possible other practices for resolving overlap which have not yet been included in the CA understandings of how overlap is resolved in interaction.

Descriptors: classroom interaction, conversation analysis, overlap

Svinhufvud, Kimmo. 2008. Feedback as problem solving: opponent’s textual feedback in a pro gradu seminar. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus* 39 (5), 439–455. — The article analyses the feedback given by the so-called opponent in a Master’s thesis seminar, using the concepts of problem and solution. The problem and the solution provide a model under which the various functions of feedback (e.g. assessing, advising and questioning) take place. There are different ways to express the problem, such as evaluations, highlighting a contradiction and expressing non-comprehension. A typical way to formulate the solution is advising. Even though the opponent takes the initiative in the seminar, she doesn’t always formulate the problem or the solution by herself. Often the opponent highlights potential problems or raises discussion on the necessity of a possible solution. Although the opponent’s feedback also includes functions that do not fall into the categories of problem and solution (e.g. praise and certain questions), feedback that can be analysed using the problem–solution model make up the overwhelming majority of the opponent’s feedback. Furthermore, it can be shown that the participants often interpret questions as signs of a problem and, in doing so, reveal their orientation to the problem and the solution as the primary form of feedback.

Descriptors: interaction, conversation analysis, seminar. pro gradu, feedback, writing