

# A Study of Spanish II High School Students' Discourse During Group Work

David C. Alley  
Georgia Southern University

**Abstract:** *Group work offers a viable alternative to the teacher-centered, direct instructional model. However, many teachers have been reluctant to incorporate extensive group work into their teaching repertoire, citing concerns about the amount of English used and off-task behavior. This study reports the results of an analysis of five conversations of Spanish II high school students working on a series of group projects. The researcher established that the majority of student discourse was in English and that there was consistent off-task behavior in the groups. However, the majority of the student discourse was relevant to completing the assignment. A further analysis of this on-task discourse revealed examples of metacognitive discourse (i.e., talk about procedures and strategies) and metatalk (i.e., talk about vocabulary and grammar). Finally, survey data demonstrated that student opinions are generally positive about group work.*

**Key words:** *discourse analysis; group work; metacognitive; metatalk; task-based instruction*

**Languages:** *English, Spanish*

## Introduction

For much of its history, the teaching of foreign languages has been dominated by teacher-centered methodologies. For example, in the grammar-translation method, teachers directly taught rules and corrected errors. In the audiolingual approach, students responded to teacher directives with repetitions and recitations. Long and Porter (1985) characterized this style of teaching a "lockstep" mode of interaction.

Even with recent "communicative" approaches, teachers initiate most classroom discourse in the target language (Mantero, 2002). Typically, the initiation of classroom discourse follows a three-step process in which the teacher poses a question to which a student responds and the teacher evaluates the responses (Kelly Hall, 1995). The constant repetition of this pattern of discourse results in an "Atlas complex" among foreign language teachers who feel obliged to dominate the classroom proceedings for the sake of efficiency and effective use of the target language (Lee & VanPatten, 1995). Group work may represent an antidote to the Atlas complex, freeing the teacher from total responsibility for language use and evaluation. Many researchers have identified group work as critical to second language acquisition (SLA) (Brooks, 1992; Pica & Doughty, 1985), recognizing that the negotiation of meaning and the expression of personal ideas most naturally occur in group situations.

Frustrated with their roles as initiator, participant, and evaluator of all student interaction, many teachers now attempt to include some group work in all their classes. However, other teachers have been reluctant to incorporate group work into their teaching repertoire, questioning whether students are learning one another's mistakes, wasting time on off-task behavior, or using English excessively. Through an analysis of student discourse, the present study considers both the advantages and disadvantages of group work.

---

David C. Alley (EdD, University of Georgia) is Professor of Spanish at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia.

---

**Appendix***Schedule for Semistructured Interviews*

1. Tell me about your education. How long have you taught your language? How long have you taught at this school? Have you taught elsewhere? Have you taught other subjects? If so, at what levels have you taught them?
2. What do you recall about your experiences as a language learner? What approaches and methods were used? Was there any formal analysis of language in those classes? Did you enjoy your learning experiences, generally speaking? Do you feel that your learning experiences have influenced your own teaching? If so, how?
3. How and why did you become a language teacher? Tell me about your formal teacher training. What were the most memorable aspects of the training?
4. What have the greatest influences on your teaching been? What are the most satisfying/most problematic aspects of teaching for you? Can you describe an especially positive experience you've had as a teacher? An especially negative one?
5. Do you think the students have preferences in terms of the kind of work they like to do? Does the school promote a particular kind of teaching? Does the department? Are there restrictions on the materials you use, or on the content/organization of your lessons? Do students expect particular kinds of teaching? Do their parents?

## Advantages of Group Work

Group work may be defined as any activity involving two or more students in which, for a time, the teacher does not have to directly intervene (Davis, 1997). Bruffee (1984) defined group work as a form of indirect teaching in which the teacher poses a problem and organizes the students to solve the problem collaboratively.

Smith (1987) cited two main benefits of group work in general classrooms: (a) Group work shifts the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student; and (b) Group work increases achievement and improves students' attitudes. Ghaith and Bouzineddine (2003) asserted that group work has been shown to be superior to other forms of individual and competitive instruction in terms of social and cognitive outcomes. Goodlad (1984) claimed that group work helps students develop critical thinking skills while Ames (1984) found that group work reduces the perceptions of differences among individuals. Long and Porter (1985) summarized five arguments in favor of group work activities:

1. Their potential for increasing the quantity of language practice
2. Their potential for improving the quality of student talk
3. Their potential for individualizing instruction
4. Their potential for creating a positive affective climate in the classroom
5. Their potential for increasing student motivation (pp. 207–208)

Vygotsky's (1987) description of a zone of proximal development is relevant to a discussion of group work. According to Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is any situation in which learning occurs through problem solving in collaboration with more capable peers. Initially, the more capable peer is the teacher who does most of the work of modeling the linguistic forms and applications that students are expected to master. Through group work, however, the students are given time and opportunities to practice and peer-teach the new structures and concepts on their own. As Kelly Hall (2001) pointed out, "the more competent member and learners begin by doing the task together. At first the more capable individual does most of the work, gradually handing over to the learners the responsibility for contributing particular actions until the learners can perform them without help" (p. 31). As a result of this process, group participants produce more than the sum of their individual abilities. Cohen (1992) suggested that the benefits of group work are best derived when teachers adhere to the following guidelines: (a) Prepare the students adequately for group activities; (b) Create authentic group tasks; (c) Avoid micromanagement of group conversations; and (d) Establish firm time limits and group checkpoints.

The communicative language teaching movement has lent support to the use of group work in foreign language instruction. Larsen-Freeman (1986) defined the goals of communicative language teaching as enabling learners to "use the language appropriate to a given social context . . . and to manage the process of negotiating meaning with their interlocutors" (p. 131). Swain (1985) argued that learners will learn to use appropriate language and negotiate meaning when they are pushed to produce the target language and given feedback on this output. While it is possible to provide learners with limited output opportunities in a teacher-centered classroom, group activities maximize the chances for this type of "Output + 1" interaction. The Input-Response-Evaluation (IRE) discourse pattern typically found in teacher-directed foreign language classes usually yields one- or two-word responses from students and fails to create sustained conversations (Shrum & Glisan, 2000). Group work shifts the responsibility of initiating and sustaining a conversation from the teacher to the students and provides valuable practice in negotiation of meaning, turn taking, and confirmation checks. Individual practice time increases by 500% per year when half of the available instructional time is devoted to group work (Long & Porter, 1985). As mentioned previously, group work promotes greater negotiation of meaning (Brooks, 1992; Varonis & Gass, 1985), more turn taking (Pica & Doughty, 1985) and more frequent use of confirmation checks (Rulon & McCreary, 1986).

A final advantage to group work is related to longer instructional periods typically found in block scheduling. Block scheduling, with its 75- to 90-minute classes, is now found in one third of American high schools; in some states, like North Carolina, almost 75% of the high schools have some form of block scheduling (Videro, 2001). A major concern about block schedules is the difficulty of maintaining student attention over the longer instructional period (Wallinger, 2000). Changes in the style of instruction, however, can have a significant impact on levels of student attention. Group work assignments make more productive use of longer instructional periods while at the same time taking advantage of the general teenage preference for working in peer groups (Fotos, 1994).

## Obstacles to Group Work

Despite the many advantages discussed in the previous section, many teachers have been reluctant to implement group work in their classrooms. Novice teachers who are struggling to establish classroom control may perceive group work and its attendant noise as a threat to the teacher's authority (Davis, 1997). Teachers trained in teacher-centered, grammar-based classes may fear that group work is detrimental to the learning of grammar despite research evidence to the contrary (Pica & Doughty, 1985). Another concern is that group activities inevitably slow down the

teaching process. For the teacher whose main concern is "covering the material as rapidly as possible," group work can be a time-consuming distraction.

Another criticism is that group work allows too much off-task talking. Traditionally, teachers have judged group discourse according to measures of grammatical and lexical accuracy. Student discourse that is predominantly in the first language (L1) or that diverges from native speaker norms (such as code switching) is often considered to be off task and inappropriate. However, student discourse about the task itself and/or the meaning of certain words or phrases can have a functional purpose that is critical to the successful completion of the assignment or activity. Brooks, Donato, and McGlone (1997) proposed a reevaluation of student discourse in groups that includes two functions of interaction that are typically ignored or discouraged in second language (L2) classrooms. These two categories are *metacognitive talk* (learners talking about how to do a particular task) and *metatalk* (learners talking about their own talk). According to Brooks et al. (1997), much of the initial work of an L2 group is focused on establishing priorities and procedures. Although the group participants may be provided with explicit instructions, true engagement with the task does not occur until students reformulate the task in order to create for themselves a mental image. In other words, the group participants speak in order to act rather than act in order to speak. This talking about the task is almost always in the native language and constitutes metacognitive talk.

The second category of student discourse discussed in Brooks et al. (1997) is metatalk—which includes assessing one's comprehension of a text, identifying sources of difficulty, and isolating problematic portions. Once the problem areas of a text are identified, group participants may predict content based on visual clues and cognates, and use their background knowledge and knowledge of genre to logically deduce the story line, actions, and relationships. Rather than constituting off-task behavior, both metacognitive talk and metatalk are critical to helping group members delineate what they do and do not know. Even when predominantly in the L1, this type of discourse is crucial to successful group functioning.

Teachers frequently judge both metacognitive talk and metatalk as off-task behavior since they typically occur in the L1 (i.e., English), particularly in beginning language classes. Extensive use of English and the invention of foreign-sounding words while students work in groups has been described as "unacceptable among classroom teachers" (Walz, 1996, p. 482). Brooks (1992) was equally critical of the use of English in group work. "Allowing students in the conversation course to request lexical items in English may only serve to frustrate their efforts at communication when they come in contact with native speakers of

Spanish who do not know English or who are unaccustomed to talking with nonnative speakers" (p. 66).

However, Cook (1999) maintained that since foreign language students have their native language permanently embedded in their minds and are reluctant to restrict its use, teachers are well advised to channel L1 usage to the most appropriate situations, such as group work. Cook (2001) argued that an appropriate situation for L1 use is metacognitive and metatalk discourse as students "explain the task to each other, negotiate roles they are going to take, or check their understanding or production of the language against their peers" (p. 418).

The current study focused on a group of high school students studying elementary Spanish in a class where group work occupied a majority of daily instructional time. The study considered the following research questions:

1. What percentage of student discourse while working in groups is metatalk?
2. What percentage of student discourse while working in groups is metacognitive talk?
3. What percentage of student discourse while working in groups is off-task talk?
4. What percentage of student discourse while working in groups is in English versus Spanish?
5. What are student opinions of group activities to practice speaking?
6. What are student opinions of group activities in the overall study of foreign languages?

## Procedures

The sample for the present study consisted of 18 Spanish II students from a comprehensive high school in rural south-east Georgia. Of the 18 students, there were 14 boys and 4 girls; 12 of the students were White and 6 were African American. The research was conducted over a 5-month period from January to May 2000.

The instructor of the sample class utilized the Project TALK methodology, an approach to teaching foreign languages that was created by two high school teachers in a suburban Atlanta high school in the mid-1990s. These teachers attributed the lack of student participation in their classes to the teacher-centered methodology they were using. When their school adopted a block schedule with longer class periods, they were further motivated to make some fundamental changes in the way foreign languages were taught (C. Johnson, personal communication, October 12, 1998).

Project TALK was created in an effort to increase student proficiency in the four language areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking while at the same time developing a more positive attitude toward L2 learning. Project TALK begins with the premise that the purpose of either native or foreign language is the exchange of information to accomplish certain tasks. Project TALK provides daily prac-

tice for students with tasks in a variety of skill areas while at the same time taking advantage of the general teenage preference for working in peer groups.

In Project TALK classrooms, students are organized into five or six groups that collaborate on a series of tasks. The groups rotate through six centers completing one center assignment every one or two class periods. A typical Project TALK class begins with the teacher reviewing the previous day's activities, going over homework, and presenting new material. The teacher then directs the students to sit with their preassigned groups and reminds these groups of the day's center rotation schedule. The center assignments reinforce and expand concepts presented in the text. For example, in a unit designed to practice numbers, shopping, and bargaining, the assignment at the computer center is for students to consult a particular Web site, to write the names of each target language country's national currency, and to find the current rate of exchange. The group seated at the speaking center is asked to develop a dialogue between a salesperson and several customers in an open-air market in which prices are discussed. Audio- and videotaped materials are used at two other centers for students to practice listening for price comparisons between various items. At the grammar and writing centers students work on exercises which practice the written forms of numbers in the context of writing checks. Five minutes before the end of the class period, the teacher calls the class together again, reviews the major concepts of that day and assigns homework.

During a pilot study, the researcher collected data by recording student conversations while they worked in the

six language centers of the Project TALK classroom. Procedures for data collection consisted of placing a cassette recorder in the center of each one of the six language center tables at the beginning of each group work session. For this pilot study, student conversations were recorded for the entire duration of the activity lasting approximately 45 minutes. After reviewing the tapes, the researcher determined that there was minimal student interaction in the listening, reading, writing, computer work, and video centers. As a result of this pilot study, the researcher decided to focus only on the groups working on the speaking centers for analysis.

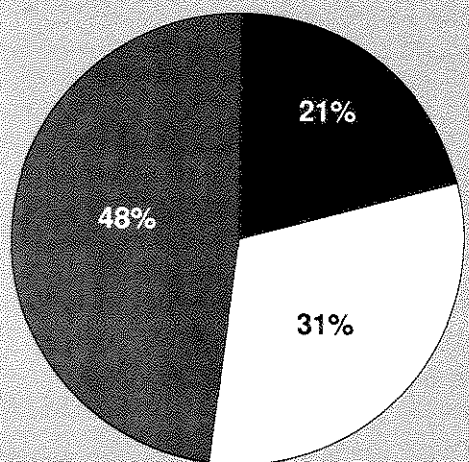
Five sessions in the speaking groups were recorded over a span of 4 months. The assignments for these five speaking sessions were as follows:

1. Interview a classmate about his/her daily routine
2. Role-play a conversation between a store clerk and a shopper
3. Describe a fictitious and funny dining experience
4. Role-play a conversation between a doctor and a patient
5. Role-play a telephone conversation

The researcher transcribed the recorded student conversations following procedures described in Green and Wallat (1981). The researcher included in the analysis any discourse that occurred between students while they were working in their groups. All discourse was categorized into one of the three categories: *metatalk*, *metacognitive talk*, and *off-task talk*. A summary of this analysis is found in Figure 1. Transcriptions of students' discourse were further analyzed to compare the number of times students used English to the number of times students used Spanish in

**Figure 1**

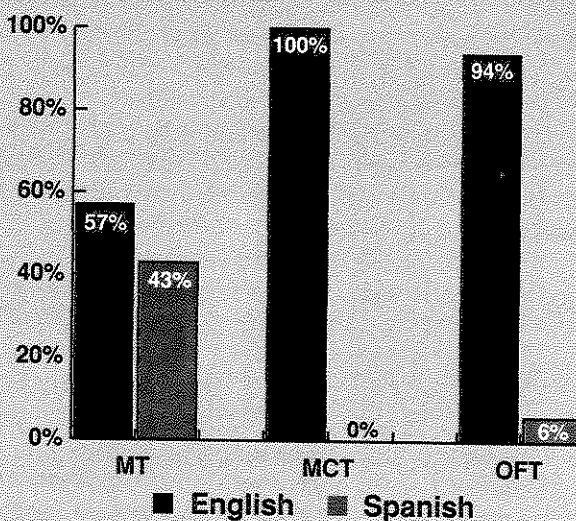
CLASSIFICATION OF GROUP INTERACTION



■ 48% Metatalk (MT)  
 ■ 31% Metacognitive talk (MCT)  
 ■ 21% Off-task talk (OFT)

**Figure 2**

USE OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH BY DISCOURSE CATEGORY



■ English ■ Spanish

each of the three classifications of group discourse. A summary of this analysis is found in Figure 2. Student discourse was analyzed for the overall use of Spanish and English while working in groups. A summary of this analysis is found in Figure 3.

At the conclusion of the research period, the researcher administered a 19-item questionnaire to all students at the research site who had participated in Project TALK during the school year. (See Appendix for a copy of the complete survey). Responses were tabulated on a Likert scale ranging from 5 = Strongly agree to 1 = Strongly disagree. A total of

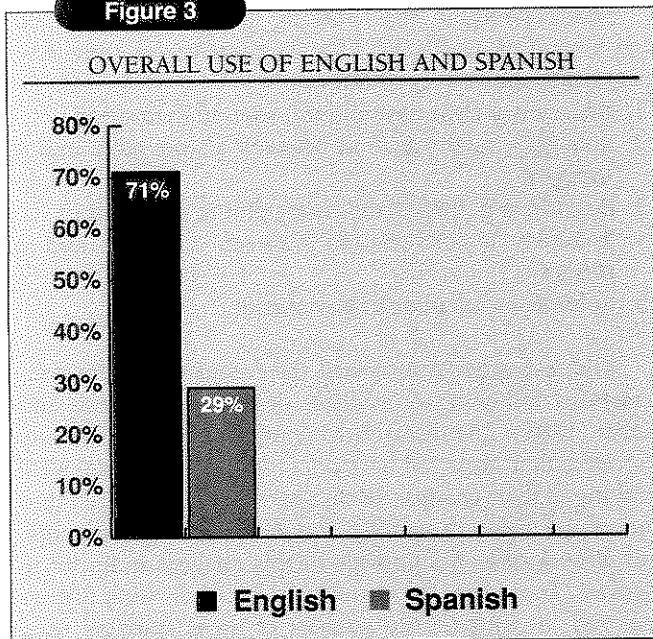
56 students responded. The results of two items which focus on students' opinion of speaking activities (Figure 4) and students' desire for more time for group activities (Figure 5) are reported here.

## Discussion

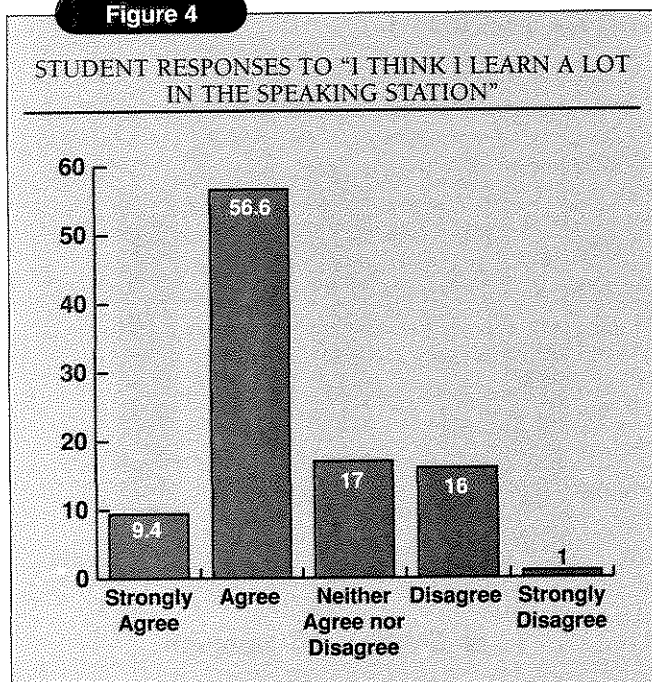
In order to provide specific examples of the method of analysis applied to the sample data, a partial transcription of student discourse follows. [Note: The task assignment was to devise a role-play based on a patient's visit to a doctor's office. There were three students in the group represented by the abbreviation S1, S2, S3.]

1. S1: *Escribo . . . escribro . . .* (laughter)
2. S2: (to teacher) How many remarks do we have to have for each one?
3. S1: (singing) Jingle Bells . . .
4. S2: I'm about to fail . . . (Laughter)
5. S2: When you say "I am," you say "soy"
6. S1: I?
7. S2: I'm.
8. S2: Like I am sick or whatever?
9. S1: Yeah.
10. S2: I think it's the *ser* form of *yo soy*. *Yo soy muy enfermo* or something like that.
11. S1: You got something on your hand.
12. S2: On my hand?
13. S1: Yeah, on the backside. There you go. You got it off.
14. S3: To help is *hacer*.
15. S1: *Hacer?* That's to know.
16. S2: To have?
17. S3: To do or to make is to *um . . .*

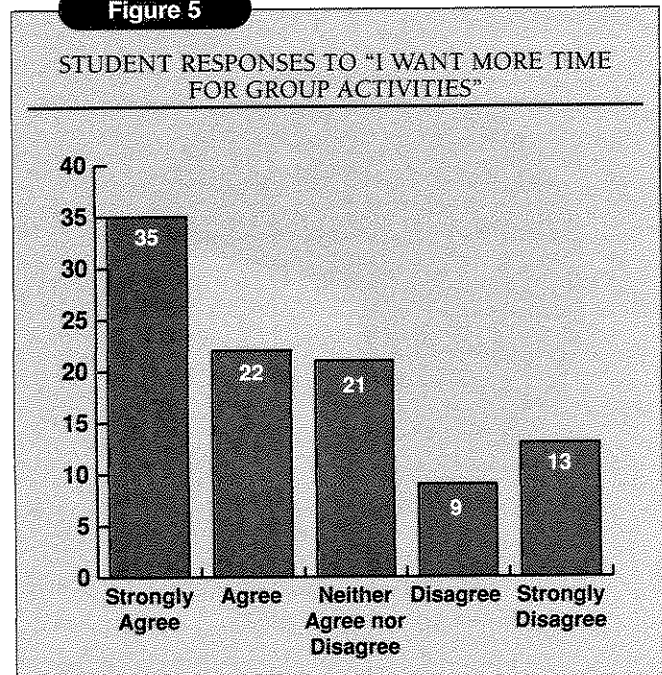
**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**



18. S1: (spelling aloud) H-a-s-a?
19. S1: (writing and talking to himself) *Yo soy muy enfermo*
20. S3: It's to have
21. S1: What?
22. S3: *Tener*
23. S1, S2, S3: (laughter at the sight of the approaching teacher)
24. S1: (to teacher) If I want to say "two nights," I would say this?
25. T: Now you just need to put in the verb part
26. S1: In the conjugated form?
27. T: It's going to come right in front of "*duele*." *Que me duele* what. You gotta finish it.
28. S1: Hey, how do you say "pain"?
29. S2: *Dolor*.
30. S1: *Dolor*? (Spelling aloud) D-O-L-O-R?
31. S2: The verb is *doler* and the noun is *dolor*. (Spelling aloud) D-O-L-O-R.
32. S1: Now what's *dolé*? Hurt?
33. S2: *Dolé*? *Duele*?
34. S1: Yeah. *Duele*. OK. I done got mine for my first one. Now we got to do it for the next one.
35. S2: You'll be hurting like that big ol' thing over there.
36. S1: Boy, what's wrong with you? Did you hit yourself on the head?
37. S2: Naw. It's OK.
38. S1: Alright, I done got the first one. Now we need the second one here.
39. S2: Hey, what's the word for "ear"?
40. S1: "*Oreja*" (spelling aloud) O-R-E-J-A.
41. S3: How do you say "to come"?
42. S2: "To come?" *Llegar*.
43. S3: (spelling aloud) L-L-E-G-A-R? Naw, that means like "to go."
44. S2: "To go" is "*vas*"
45. S1: *Vas*?
46. S2: You know: *vamos, vas* . . .
47. S1: Oh yeah. That's right.
48. S3: (spelling aloud) L-L-E-G-A-R?
49. S1: Yeah, that's right.
50. S2: Yep.
51. S2: (referring to teacher who is approaching the group) What you looking at me crazy for woman?!
52. S1: OK. Here goes. "*Hola médico. Yo soy muy enfermo. Tengo dolor de oreja (o ray ja) Hace dos noches que me duele.*" OK, now I've got to do the rest.

As Figure 1 shows, the majority of the on-task talk (48%) fell into the metatalk category. There are numerous examples of this type of discourse in the excerpted conversation including lines 10, 28 to 31, and 39 to 46. The amount of metatalk was consistent throughout the five

transcribed conversations that the researcher analyzed. This high level of metatalk was partly due to the fact that the speaking topics did not always deal with the vocabulary and grammar currently being studied in the text. The situation cards used for the speaking assignments provided little in the way of relevant vocabulary so students were forced to pool their linguistic resources in order to complete the task. The examples of metatalk cited in this sample transcription demonstrate negotiation of meaning (Brooks, 1992; Varonis & Gass, 1985), turn taking (Pica & Doughty, 1985) and frequent use of confirmation checks (Rulon & McCreary, 1986).

The next largest category of student discourse (31%) was metacognitive talk. Metacognitive talk about the procedures needed to complete an assigned task appears like checkpoints throughout the five transcribed conversations that the researcher analyzed. Metacognitive talk allows students to define goals (line 2), to decide what they need to do next (line 34), and to take stock of a completed assignment (line 52). These examples are consistent with the findings of Brooks et al. (1997) that group participants must reformulate the task in order to establish priorities and procedures. It is important to note that the data was collected over the latter half of the school year. By the time the data collection had begun, students were quite familiar with Project TALK and the procedures involved in each group's assignments. Had the research study been done at the beginning of the school year, it is possible that students would have displayed more metacognitive talk.

Twenty-one percent of the discourse analyzed fell into the category of off-task talk and 94% of this talk was in English. In none of the five conversations, however, did the percentage of off-task talk exceed the percentages of either metatalk or metacognitive talk.

Off-task talking followed a predictable pattern in the students' conversational exchanges. Significant off-task talk occurred when the students were first starting their daily group assignments. An example of this type of off-task talk can be found in Lines 1, 3, and 4. One student sings while another makes up random Spanish-sounding words. The exchange ends with one student's declaration that he is about to fail the class.

Another function of off-task talk seems to be a sort of restraining mechanism for students who seem too eager to complete an assignment. This appears to be what is happening in lines 5 through 13. Student 2 begins work on the dialogue and Student 1 distracts him by telling him there is something on his hand.

A third type of off-task talk typically occurs when the group's work is interrupted by what the teacher or another student is doing. Lines 23 and 51 are examples of this type of off-task talking. In Line 23, the group members see the teacher approaching and share a conspiratorial laugh. In

line 51, Student 2 recognizes a warning glance from the teacher and makes a negative comment under his breath.

As can be seen in Figure 3, 71% of the sample student discourse was in English. Figure 2 shows that English was used exclusively in the metacognitive talk category and in 94% of the exchanges in the off-task category. Fifty-seven percent of the exchanges in the metatalk category were in English while 43% were in Spanish. No extended or spontaneous use of Spanish was recorded in any of the categories. The use of Spanish on the part of the students was limited to repetition of isolated words and phrases in preparation for their performance of the role-playing topic. Lines 28 to 31 are examples of the most common use of Spanish in the group sessions. In this exchange, one student asks another how to translate a word from English to Spanish and then asks for further clarification as to which part of speech the word represents. After translating and writing down these individual words and phrases, line 52 is an example of a reading of the entire line as a rehearsal for the role-play.

In terms of their overall evaluation of the use of group work for practicing speaking, over 65% of the students responding either agree or strongly agree with the statement "I think I learn a lot in the speaking station." Fifty-five percent of the students would like to spend more time with the group activities.

### Implications

To a degree, this study confirms some of the fears of foreign language teachers who have been reluctant to incorporate group work into their instructional repertoire. As summarized in Figure 1, over 20% of the total group discourse was classified as off task. Furthermore, almost all the group discourse was in English with a smattering of Spanish or "Spanglish." The frequent off-task behavior and extremely limited use of extended Spanish was in marked contrast to similar studies by Antón and Dicamilla (1998) and Brooks (1992) where the sample populations were adult learners and selected college students. The present sample may be more indicative of how typical high school students perform in group situations.

Despite the amount of off-task discourse and predominant use of English, the 52 exchanges in the sample conversation do represent a level of active engagement in the learning process that would be unattainable in a teacher-directed class. This number of exchanges supports the assertion by Long and Porter (1985) that group work improves the quality of language practice, as peer tutoring is a constant feature of these exchanges. Lines 14 to 20 of the sample transcription show the three group participants trying to determine the meaning of the verb *hacer*. A teacher anxious to move on with his or her lesson would have likely overlooked the obvious confusion about this simple yet critical word. Students often recognize and attend to

other students' problems more readily than the teacher. As a result of this peer tutoring, the confusion was resolved and the students were able to complete the rest of the assignment.

The prevalence of peer tutoring and the general teenage preference for working in groups led students in this study to voice very positive opinions about group work.

### Conclusion

Group work offers a viable alternative to the teacher-centered direct instructional model. Students work harder, get more time interacting with the target language, and receive more individual attention from the teacher and peers. As Szostek (1994) pointed out, however, group work is not a panacea (p. 259). The findings of this study indicate that students will predominantly use their L1 (English) during group work. However, their use of English served both to clarify procedures for completing the assignment and for producing key vocabulary items. Likewise, off-task discourse was present throughout the students' group work in this study, but this off-task discourse promoted an effective group environment that was conducive to peer tutoring. Teacher-centered instruction will continue to serve a valuable function in the teaching of foreign languages. However, group work can be a valuable supplement that enhances the learning process.

### References

- Ames, C. (1984). Competitive, cooperative and individualistic goal structures: A cognitive-motivational analysis. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.), *Research on motivation in education: Vol. 2, The classroom milieu* (pp. 177-206). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Antón, M., & DiCamilla, F. (1998). Socio-cognitive functions of L1 collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 233-247.
- Brooks, F. B. (1992). Can we talk? *Foreign Language Annals*, 25(1), 59-70.
- Brooks, F. B., Donato, R., & McGlone, J. V. (1997). When are they going to say it right? Understanding learner talk during pair-work activity. *Foreign Language Annals*, 30(4), 524-528.
- Bruffee, K. (1984). Collaborative learning and the conversation of mankind. *College English*, 46(7), 635-652.
- Cohen, E. G. (1992). Restructuring the classroom: Conditions for productive small groups. *Review of Educational Research*, 64(1), 1-35.
- Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33(2), 185-209.
- Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(3), 402-423.
- Davis, R. L. (1997). Group work is not busy work: Maximizing success of group work in the L2 classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 30(2), 265-279.

- Fotos, S. (1994). Integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use through grammar-consciousness raising tasks. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(2), 323–351.
- Ghaith, G. M., & Bouzeineddine, A. R. (2003). Relationship between reading attitudes, achievement, and learners' perceptions of their jigsaw II cooperative learning experience. *Reading Psychology*, 24, 105–121.
- Goodlad, J. I. (1984). *A place called school: Prospects for the future*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Green, J., & Wallat C. (1981). Mapping instructional conversations—A sociolinguistic ethnography. In J. Green & C. Wallat (Eds.), *Ethnography and language in educational settings*. (pp. 161–205). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Kelly Hall, J. (1995). "Aw, man where we goin'?" Classroom interaction and the development of L2 interactional competence. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 37–62.
- Kelly Hall, J. (2001). *Methods for teaching foreign languages: Creating a community in the classroom*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). *Teaching and principles in language teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Lee, J. F., & Van Patten, B. (1995). *Making communicative language teaching happen*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Long, M. H., & Porter, P. A. (1985). Group work, interlanguage talk and second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(2), 207–228.
- Mantero, M. (2002). Bridging the gap: Discourse in text-based foreign language classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(4), 437–456.
- Pica, T., & Doughty, C. (1985). Input and interaction in the communicative language classroom: A comparison of teacher-fronted and group activities. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 115–132). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Rulon, K., & McCreary, J. (1986). Negotiation of content: Teacher-fronted and small-group interaction. In R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to conversation in second language acquisition* (pp. 182–199). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Shrum, J. L., & Glisan, E. W. (2000). *Teacher's handbook: Contextualized language instruction*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Smith, R. A. (1987). A teacher's view on cooperative learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 68(9), 663–666.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output. In S. M. Gass & C. G. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235–253). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Szostek, C. (1994). Assessing the effects of cooperative learning in an honors foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 27(2), 252–261.
- Varonis E., & Gass, S. (1985). Non-native/non-native conversations: A model for negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 71–90.
- Videro, D. (2001). Changing times. *Education Week*, 21(5), 38–40.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). Thinking and speech. In R. W. Reiber & A. S. Carton (Eds), (N. Minick, Trans.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Vol. 1: Problems of general psychology*. New York: Plenum.
- Wallerger, L. M. (2000). The effect of block scheduling on foreign language learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(1), 36–50.
- Walz, J. (1996). The classroom dynamics of information gap activities. *Foreign Language Annals*, 29(3), 481–494.

---

## Appendix

### *Student Questionnaire*

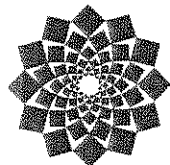
Please read the following statements about your Project TALK class and choose one of the following alternatives:

- 5 - Strongly agree
- 4 - Agree
- 3 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

I want more time for rotation activities.	5 4 3 2 1
The computer station is difficult for me.	5 4 3 2 1
I think we get a lot done in class.	5 4 3 2 1
I think I learn a lot in the speaking station.	5 4 3 2 1
I think our group assignments are like real life situations.	5 4 3 2 1
I feel I learn a lot in the reading station.	5 4 3 2 1
I think the groups are formed by academic ability.	5 4 3 2 1
I feel I learn a lot in the listening center.	5 4 3 2 1
I wish the teacher would speak more Spanish.	5 4 3 2 1
I feel I learn a lot in the computer center.	5 4 3 2 1
I feel like the work in stations prepares me for tests and quizzes.	5 4 3 2 1
I feel I learn a lot in the TV/VCR center.	5 4 3 2 1
The speaking station is difficult for me.	5 4 3 2 1
I would recommend Project TALK to a friend.	5 4 3 2 1
The reading station is difficult for me.	5 4 3 2 1
The listening station is difficult for me	5 4 3 2 1
I feel I learn a lot in the writing station.	5 4 3 2 1
The writing station is difficult for me.	5 4 3 2 1
The TV/VCR station is difficult for me.	5 4 3 2 1

# CONTENTS

Volume 38, No. 2 • Summer 2005



## FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANNALS

### Postsecondary Requirements and Curricular Issues

- Anxiety and the True Beginner–False Beginner Dynamic  
in Beginning French and Spanish Classes 171  
*Diana Frantzen and Sally Sieloff Magnan*
- African-American Students' Opinions About Foreign Language Study:  
An Exploratory Study of Low Enrollments at the College Level 191  
*Zena Moore*
- Should the Modern Language Aptitude Test Be Used to Determine Course  
Substitutions for and Waivers of the Foreign Language Requirement? 201  
*Richard L. Sparks, James Javorsky, and Leonore Ganschow*
- Recasting the Foreign Language Requirement Through Study Abroad:  
A Cultural Immersion Program in Avignon 211  
*Mark Ingram*
- Spanish for Working Medical Professionals: Linguistic Needs 223  
*Darcy W. Lear*

### Foreign Languages at the Secondary Level

- Two Sides of the Communicative Coin: Honors and Nonhonors  
French and Spanish Classes in a Midwestern High School 236  
*Michael Morris*
- A Study of Spanish II High School Students' Discourse During Group Work 250  
*David C. Alley*

### Instructional Techniques and Strategies

- Behaviors and Attitudes of Effective Foreign Language Teachers:  
Results of a Questionnaire Study 259  
*Teresa R. Bell*
- Communication, Culture, and Curiosity: Using Target-Culture and  
Student-Generated Art in the Second Language Classroom 271  
*Deborah L. Berhó and Victoria Defferding*
- Acquisition of Japanese as a Foreign Language Through a Baseball Video Game 278  
*Jonathan William deHaan*

continued...

