Cooperative or misaligned? A conceptual model of the relationship between language, action, and context in linguistic education

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Abstract
In educational settings specialized in linguistic instruction, an assumption is made of a direct and clear relationship between the utterances of the teachers, the activities of the learners, and the setting of the instruction, particularly treating instruction as a case of mechanical input-output functioning where there are instructions delivered and there are actions generated without considering the possibility of alternate or multiple outcomes. Nonetheless, the actual scene in the classroom is often much more complicated: language and action seem to work harmoniously, and just as often, they seem completely disconnected, yielding misunderstanding, disaffection, and bizarre results. This paper puts forward a new model for understanding the relationship between language, action, and context in the context of language teaching. It seeks to understand the conditions under which the phenomena come into alignment, or misalignment, as well as the reasons why it happens. The paper applies various understandings from applied linguistics, the study of classroom discourse, sociocultural theory, and psycholinguistics to propose a number of distinct patterns of alignment and cooperation, as well as various degrees of misalignment (semantic, procedural, affective, and contextual). The model does not consider language to be merely an uncritical means of conveying messages; it considers it a social activity that is understood and performed within particular contexts of organization, culture, and discourse. The paper subsequently claims that there is a tangible teaching consequence of making these patterns visible. With language–action–context considerations, reframing tasks, instructions, feedback, and assessments enables educators and curriculum developers to better predict learners' misunderstandings, reluctance to engage, or difficulties in shifting verbal instructions to purposeful action. The article closes by offering practical suggestions concerning task design, classroom interaction, and teacher training, and sets out future directions for empirical research aimed at evaluating and fine-tuning the model put forth. In so doing, the article attempts to encourage researchers and practitioners to go beyond the "if we say it, they will do it" approach to promoting a more sophisticated grasp of the way in which teaching is transformed into learning, achieved through the complex interplay of language, action, and context.

Keywords: *alignment and misalignment, classroom discourse, language–action–context, linguistic education, psycholinguistics, sociocultural theory, task design, teacher education.*

Introduction

The prevailing attitude of many linguists is that teaching is a linear process: instruction is given, actions are taken, and learning ensues. Classroom practice seems to be organized along the mechanical lines of an input-output ratio, where an utterance automatically draws a response. In this perspective, language is used almost instrumentally: utterances are made, tasks are given, and the expectation is that the processes will happen almost seamlessly. Nevertheless, the actual classroom reality challenges this assumption many times over. At times, there is a harmonious integration of language and action. For example, one instruction results in a purposeful group discussion, a rubric brings the learner close to the desired outcome, and praise notes tangible advancement. However, there is a large proportion of the time when there is a disconnect. Most commonly, learners will not understand the instruction provided. They may fail to follow the instruction, comply only superficially, not engage emotionally, or produce work that is meaningless relative to the work the teacher required. A single prompt can also produce a multitude, or one that is paradoxical, of actions across learners and contexts at the same time. Instead of a straightforward cause and effect scenario, the relationship pertaining to what is said and what is done and the rest of the location details is tenuous, negotiated, and highly contingent.

This paper attempts to explore the phenomenon of teaching as learning which entails dispelling the "If we say it, they will do it" myth. It touches on the teaching of language (linguistic education) on the level of language, action, and context. The paper attempts to develop a conceptual model integrating the findings of applied linguistics, discourse in the classroom, sociocultural approaches, and psycholinguistics. It attempts to show that language should not, in any case, be seen as a neutral carrier of information, but as a type of social action situated within specific organizational, cultural, and interaction contexts. The model analyses classroom phenomena in terms of alignment and misalignment phenomena: semantic (what is intended vs. what is understood), procedural (what is planned vs. what is acted upon), affective (what is planned vs. what is felt), and contextual (what is planned vs. what is appropriate in the setting).

To address the models' intention of not being purely theoretical, and rather, generating practical lenses that can be used to reengage and reconceptualize tasks, instructions, feedback and assessment workflow, the patterns need to be made explicit. It has been argued that understanding language as a system of action and context can assist educators and curriculum developers in predicting omission, misunderstanding, disengagement, and failure in the translation of any verbal instruction into action and purposeful engagement. In doing so, it unblocks avenues that would allow for more refined instructional planning and more realistic anticipations regarding learner understanding and engagement with classroom talk. To further investigate this aim, the article attempts to answer the following research questions:

1) How can the relationship between language, action, and context in linguistic education be conceptualized in a way that accounts for both cooperation and misalignment?

2) In what ways can a language–action–context model inform the design of tasks, instructions, feedback, and assessment so as to better support meaningful learner engagement and learning outcomes?

Scope of the study

This conceptual framework revolves around the discipline of linguistic education with special attention to the intersections of language, action and context within the classroom. The hinges of this study focus on advancing and constructing a conceptual model of the language–action–context framework which attempts to explain the patterns of alignment and misalignment of instructional language and learner behavior. The document incorporates concepts and findings from applied linguistics, sociocultural theory, classroom discourse analysis, psycholinguistics, and related fields, and attempts to synthesize more important concepts instead of providing a comprehensive review of the literature. Having sufficient breadth to cover multiple language-learning settings (EFL, ESL, and ESP as well as other strands of language instruction), the model captures various levels and types of instruction and provides practical tools for reframing task design, classroom instruction, feedback, and assessment.

Theoretical background

Language as social action

The use of language in an educational context is often considered a means of transporting information from the teacher to the learner as if "clear input" guarantees the "correct output." Within linguistics and applied linguistics, the so-called "transmission" theory has received a number of challenges, especially with the development of speech act theory and pragmatics. Austin in his seminal book "*How to Do Things with Words"* (1975), has had to defend the position that utterances do not only serve to report something. They perform actions such as promising, ordering, requesting, questioning, apologizing, and others. In this regard, having students respond to, "Open your books," "Work in pairs," and "Can anyone answer number three?" is more than giving instructions; it helps maintain social order and dynamics by assigning and managing roles, turns, and even opening and closing teaching sessions. Hence, an instruction is more than an utterance about the lesson; it impacts the lesson in and through speaking.

Sinclair and Coulthard's 1975 classroom talk analysis, with further contributions from Mehan (1979) and Cazden (2001), outlines how classroom discourse and much instructional interaction engage within the widely

used Initiation–Response–Feedback (IRF) framework. The IRF framework describes a classroom structure where a teacher asks a question and more than just an answer is elicited. The student is also chosen as a speaker and is guided as to what is expected from the answer while also being communicated the position of the teacher in regards to the answer as the one with the ultimate judgment of its correctness. When someone says “Any Questions” or “Is that clear”, there is always an intent behind. These phrases demonstrate an intention behind using moves that might seem ‘neutral’ or ‘neutralism’, such as closing the floor for discussions, or passing the floor back to the learners to gauge their understanding without support. Seedhouse (2004), refers to the role of the classroom as an interactional institution and demonstrates that the classroom serves different purposes (for example, focus on accuracy vs. focus on fluency), which have different activity patterns and interaction rules that govern them. These types of activities are conversationally structured and described as primary in the language used. In this context, directives, inquiries, comments, and evaluations are not merely vehicles for messages to be delivered; they are crucial tools for structuring engagement, authority, and opportunities to learn.

The integration of sociolinguistics into pedagogy has emphasized the social and actional components of classroom language discourse. For van Lier (1996), the classroom is described as an ecology of interaction in which various affordances of learning emerge. For instance, teacher talk and learner talk are theorized as co-constructed deeds which determine learner attention, attempts, and appropriation. Hall and Walsh (2002) also describe classroom discourse as a form of “local social practice”. They argue that it is much more than a ‘neutral’ form, and they elaborate on how various types of questions, scaffolding, and feedback open learners’ windows to participation and their obstructions as well. The way a teacher rephrases a learner’s answer, offers feedback, or ignores a contribution is not merely about managing information; rather, it is a set of identifiable social actions, such as endorsing, reformulating, marginalizing, or terminating a line of conversation. Misalignment in the classroom—students doing something that was not meant to be done—is not a lack of information; rather, it is a discord between what the teacher assumes to be the social action taking place (which could be inviting negotiation or checking for understanding) and what the learners actually interpret (which could be that the teacher is testing, or closure is being signaled).

Analyzing the use of language as social action is central to the framework constructed in this article. If one considers the verbal exchanges in a linguistic educational setting as acts situated in particular social-political and cultural paradigms, then the connection between language and student engagement is far more complex than a linear input-output model. Instead, each instruction, question, or feedback must be analyzed as a case in a larger unfolding series of social activities, where uptake depends on how participants understand previous turns, their own part, and the classroom environment in general. This action-based view of the interaction provides the rationale for simultaneously attending to language, action, and context as closely related aspects of educational practice, and to studying not only when they work in tandem, but when and why they diverge.

Action and learning in educational contexts

Within the framework of a classroom, ‘action’ is not confined solely to the observable behaviors such as speaking or writing. It entails a wide range of participatory, visible and invisible activities associated with the working and learning processes. At the surface level, action captures the performance of tasks, answering questions, group work, note taking, and even material handling. Students may be engaged in other activities that are less apparent such as language rehearsal, thinking about translation, preparing what to say, watching other speakers, and making tactical decisions to remain silent. From a discourse analytic perspective on a lesson, participation consists of speech as well as a range of non-speech activities including eye contact, hand and body movements, head and body position in relation to the activity, and other activities that may be considered attention focused (Cazden, 2001; Seedhouse, 2004). Within this context, a ‘silent student,’ one who does not actively participate in a conversation, may nonetheless ‘perform’ in a manner that is pedagogically relevant by understanding the structure of the dialogue and actively working on a potential reply, even if these actions are not actively visible.

Psycholinguistic perspectives consider the notion of action more complicated due to internal, cognitive

processes simultaneously achieved with mechanical classroom behavior. Language understanding and articulating involve processes like focusing, remembering, managing, and correcting (Levelt, 1989; Ellis, 2005). During the learner's understanding of step-by-step instructions, silent sentence and word rehearsal, and the outlining of talk scripts, they are performing actions which, though crucial for learning, are seldom formally recognized and are certainly not observable in classroom configurations. As noted in Swain (2000), the term "languaging" clarifies the act of using language to think through and explain which is a critical moment for the learner in knowledge construction and knowledge restructuring. Actions such as thinking aloud, negotiating meaning with peers, or self-explaining a rule are not peripheral, but central, to this stage of language development, even when they do not lead to a sculpted, tangible outcome.

Sociocultural theory breaks down the connection between action and learning even further by describing learning as a form of mediated action. In volume and part of the Book of the Mind, Vygotsky (1978) conceives of the higher mental functions of an individual as starting from the engagement in social activities. These activities are organized and socially structured, and the participant's action is mediated through the tools and the sign systems, and foremost, the language. From this perspective, classroom learning is not the integration of information received from other people, but the slow evolution of engagement: what learners can attain initially with the assistance of more skilled individuals within their zone of proximal development, the learner eventually comes to do autonomously. Asking for assistance, receiving scaffolding responses, imitating a model, or co-constructing an utterance with the teacher, are all important mechanisms for development, not peripheral results of instruction (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Within this sociocultural framework, scaffolding becomes a crucial form of pedagogic action. When teachers reformulate a learner's utterance, provide a sentence starter, slow down their speech, or segment a complex task into manageable steps, they are guiding that learner's participation in productive ways that enable new forms of action (Wood et al., 1976; Donato, 1994). Concurrently, the learner's actions, which include signaling confusion, attempting a solution, and assuming more control over the task, constitute feedback that enables the teacher to adjust the degree and kind of assistance offered. Learning, therefore, results from a constantly changing interaction of collaborative actions, and not from a one-directional pass. Misalignment is defined as a situation when there is a gap between scaffolding provided and the actual needs of a learner as a result of contextual and institutional factors which impose restrictions on what learners can reasonably do.

Reconciling these perspectives, action within educational contexts can be viewed as a construct with multiple components, including overt task performance, modes of engagement, and various internal cognitive and affective processes—all of which are mediated by internal and external tools, symbols, and diverse interpersonal relations. This means that the conceptual model developed in this article goes beyond simply checking to see if students "do the task." Evaluating the association between language and learning involves looking deeper to the quality and characteristics of their performances—who engages, in what manner, using what resources, what types of support are given, and what level of autonomy is afforded. Acknowledging action in this broader sense offers the opportunity to understand when language, action, and context cooperate productively and when they diverge, resulting in procedural failure, withdrawal, and lost learning opportunities.

Context as organizational, cultural, and interactional space

In the field of linguistics, context is considered more than a neutral backdrop. It is a defined set of restraints and resources around which certain meanings and actions are more probable than others. On an organizational level, context is made up of institutional culture and set practices, curricula and its ordering, timetable structuring, the ratio of students per instructor, and grading systems which prescribe what is considered valuable and permissible in the process of teaching and learning. In Bernstein's (1990) analysis of pedagogic discourse, including the functions of distribution, pacing, and timing of knowledge in schools and universities, it outlines the form of talk and activity that is approved at the institution. An example is exam systems that favor quantifiable outcomes and systematically correlate learning activities to testing templates,

aiming at teacher talk that is predominantly instruction, display question intensive, and learner engagement that is answer-focused at the expense of discussion. Within the framework developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), these aspects of the institution constitute elements of the "exosystem" and "macrosystem" which covertly shape classroom practice at the local level.

At the cultural level, context includes mutual understandings regarding roles, power, respect, and proper engagement. As Kramsch (1993) contends, teaching a language is always done in the context of language and culture; what a culture and society considers a "good student," "respectful question," and "active participation" differs from one culture and system of education to another. While some contexts may frame engaging with a teacher's statement critically more positively than others, some may view it as a form of disrespect or a challenge. These culturally driven perceptions shape how students comprehend the illocutionary force of utterances by the teacher—for example, whether a question constitutes an invitation to guess, a recall question, or a formality to demonstrate comprehension—and thus, influence the possible or safe choices students consider taking (Duff, 2002). According to Bourdieu (1991), some forms of communication are tied to relations of symbolic power; their use in social practice depends on the social fields in which the behavior occurs.

On the interactional level, context is constructed gradually through classroom activities, participation frameworks, and contextually developed meanings. Seedhouse (2004) describes a language classroom as an 'interactional institution' with unique types of activities (e.g. form-focused drills, meaning-focused discussions, assessment sequences) where particular turn-taking, repair, and contribution norms govern each type of interaction constituents. These micro-contexts shape how individual utterances are interpreted; the same student response may be treated as correct, incomplete, or off-task depending on the ongoing activity type. Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'communities of practice' stresses even further that learners are not only recipients of input; they are, step by step, learning to function as members of specialized discourse communities, mastering expectations that go with the linguistic and extralinguistic forms about timing, relevance, and positioning in the interaction.

Context has these dimensions as well—material and technological. A classroom configured as rows of desks facing a board and a classroom set as clusters of desks around tables afford different patterns of gaze, gesture, and interaction. A teacher who stands behind a lectern and one who moves about the students' desks perform different actions. Digital technologies such as smartboards and learning platforms provide new semiotic resources such as written instructions on a platform, automated feedback, and even the mute/unmute functions of online teaching resources that control how learners receive and respond to language. Goodwin (2000)'s concept of "professional vision" makes us aware that tools and artifacts (slides, rubrics, worksheets) do not only assist communication; they also assist in crafting what is seen, what is heard, what is considered relevant, and as a consequence, what actions are made normatively available.

In combination, these context dimensions – organizational, cultural, interactional, and material – are powerful influences on meaning in any contexts of language use and on which actions are feasible in language education. A wide range of interpretations and subsequent actions can be taken when hearing and implementing the instruction, "Work in groups and discuss the questions" in an examination-oriented institution, in a cultural context which does not encourage peer-to-peer critique, in a classroom where group work is considered a rare occurrence, and in a crowded space with immobile desks. Accordingly, the balance or imbalance between speech and action cannot be ascertained by considering the text of a set of instructions only; it emerges from the alignment—or its absence—between those utterances and the situational matrices wherein they are embedded. To the conceptual framework of the construct under consideration in this article, context is therefore not an exogenous variable but rather a constitutive dimension of the language–action nexus, determining both what utterances can meaningfully be construed as and what actions they realistically make available for the teachers and learners.

Existing work on language–action links in linguistic education

The body of research concerning pedagogic discourse has focused greatly on the frameworks,

assignments, and communicative strategies employed during lessons on practical language use and lessons on discourse at the level of the classroom. The exponents of the IRF cycle, like Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Mehan (1979), formed the foundation of classroom discourse by showing that, as information-gathering moves, teacher questioning and subsequent moves do far more than just retrieve information. They, in fact, facilitate participation and scaffold the actions which learners are capable of carrying out. Subsequent scholars of language pedagogy (e.g. Long, 1985; Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004) framed pedagogical tasks in terms of plans for action designed to achieve specific language use and interactional goals. Within this approach, instructions are seen as part of the critical "pre-task" discourse which sets the frame for learner action, while interactional elements such as meaning negotiation, clarification, and confirmation are treated as action systems through which learners together resolve understanding difficulties and advance the tasks (Gass & Varonis, 1991; Pica, 1994). Seedhouse (2004) and Markee (2008) describe research that uses conversation analysis to study interaction within classrooms and expanding on it has shown that different pedagogical goals (for example, form-focused practice vs. meaning-focused discussion) correspond to different interactional structures and action sequences, underscoring the close interconnection between institutional goals, teacher discourse, and learner behavior.

In parallel, earlier investigations analyzed how instructional language interacts with learner response to produce miscommunication, uptake, and engagement. Studies on corrective feedback and uptake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2010) suggest that during some teaching episodes, the form and timing of teacher responses result in different learner moves, from self-repair to no observable reaction, which implies that the same linguistic signal may or may not "land" as intended. Research on student engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020) identifies and analyses behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of action, which show that learners may follow instructions at the behavioral level, but at the same time, disengage affectively and adopt a passive cognitive stance. Recent studies focused on conversation analysis in the classroom (Waring, 2011; Sert, 2015) capture instances in which students do not complete the assigned tasks, reframe the given instructions, or bootstrap side-sequences. Such instances highlight that learner action cannot simply be considered an output, but rather, a complex response to the immediate contextual interaction and institutional framework. Collectively, these studies unambiguously portray language and action in the classroom as relationally coupled, shaped by expectations, roles and types of activities rather than determined by the utterances alone.

Regardless of this rich body of work, there still exists a visible gap: a lack of studies providing an integrated conceptual model methodically outlining the triad of language, action and context, while also formulating different models of alignment and misalignment. Existing research tends to focus on specific segments of this triad, such as the design of the task and the interaction it governs, the architecture of repair sequences, or engagement frameworks and dynamics, often in a context-light or context-deficient way, treating background factors (institutional norms, assessment regimes, cultural conditions, material conditions) as primary rather than as secondary to the language–action relationship. Equally, although the terms 'miscommunication' and 'non-uptake' are often defined, they are seldom described within distinct underlying forms (e.g. semantic, procedural, affective, contextual) in a unified approach. Thus, a model is needed that integrates the above understandings to account for the circumstances and reasons underlying the alignment and disengagement of classroom language and learner actions, and how various contextual elements shape these outcomes. The present paper attempts to fill this gap and model the insights to be able to use them in reconsidering existing findings in linguistic education within a unified language-action-context model.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative conceptual framework as the primary research method, relative to descriptive and analytical processes. Instead of collecting primary empirical data, this research centers on a systematic and interpretive review of the extant works on teaching and learning languages, particularly within the nexus of action, language, and context in educational practice. Within the corpus, the texts comprise theoretical and empirical works spanning applied linguistics, studies of classroom discourse, sociocultural

psycholinguistics, and educational research, alongside portions of sociolinguistics and studies of multimodal interaction. There is no intention here of providing a comprehensive account of all these works. Instead, the focus is on distilling and integrating fundamental ideas and repeating motifs and explanatory models that illuminate the ways in which the discourse of teaching is understood, performed, and pushed back in actual teaching contexts.

The analysis was divided into three phases. In the first phase, the researcher located and chose documents that concerned some classroom interaction, the use of language in teaching, learner activity, and the impact of context on teaching and learning. In the second phase, the relevant literature was thematically and conceptually analyzed, where repeated accounts of instruction and learner action were divided and coded as cooperative and breakdown in multiple dimensions semantic, procedural, affective and contextual. Third, these finally formulated ideas were synthesized and represented in a new model termed the language–action–context framework, which is aimed at unifying the phenomena of alignment and misalignment in linguistic education. In all these steps, the focus was on model construction and clarifying concepts. As a result, the framework constructed represents a methodological outcome that serves as a guide for future empirical investigations, task and curriculum construction, and practitioners' reflective practice on the realized and non-realized translations of their pedagogical intentions into classroom actions.

A conceptual model of language–action–context

Core components

Within this model, the relationship between language, action and context is described as a dynamic triad rather than as a linear sequential input–output chain. Each component is analytically separate yet empirically entangled: language does not merely "carry" information, action is more than just a response, and context does not function as a blank space. Rather, language, action, and context constructively engage with one another in ways that can promote either alignment or misalignment in the field of linguistic education (Seedhouse, 2004; van Lier, 2004).

In this model, language comprises various oral and written communication processes involved in teaching and learning: classroom instructions, questions, explanations, feedback, rubrics, and digital prompts on learning platforms. Based on speech act and classroom discourse research, these utterances are regarded as social actions that distribute turns, set boundaries, assess input, and shape self and other images, rather than as neutral information transfer (Cazden, 2001; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). A rubric, an online message, and a spoken directive can all be considered as designed invitations to particular types of engagement and output.

Within the context of language, both teachers and students undertake a plethora of activities referred to as action, which include complying with and opposing set tasks, clarifying, remaining mute, collaborating, improvising different procedures, and even changing topics. All action involves visible behaviors; talking, gesturing, moving, performing a task, and some activities, which are less visible, such as planning, monitoring, and even rehearsal of language (Levelt, 1989; Swain, 2000). These actions can be understood from a sociocultural standpoint as activities of a mediated form through which learning is achieved in collaboration or interactions with others and with tools (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006).

The term context refers to the multifaceted organizational, cultural, spatial, and interrelational settings incorporating language and action use. It comprises institutional policies and evaluation systems, classroom activities and engagement patterns, culturally defined patterns of authority and politeness, as well as the physical and technological resources of the environment (Bernstein, 1990; Kramsch, 1993; van Lier, 2004). Such contextual parameters influence the framing of an utterance—consider when a question is posed and the difference between it being regarded as a test versus an invitation to dialogue—and constrain the set of actions to which participants can reasonably, appropriately, and safely resort to carry out (Seedhouse, 2004; Duff, 2002).

In fact, these fundamental components construct the foundation of the language–action–context model: language as patterned social action, action as participation of some sort, and context as the environment that organizes and conditions the structuring meanings and possibilities. The rest of the paper uses this framework

to describe alignment and misalignment patterns in linguistic education.

The language–action–context triad

In the proposed model, the relationship between language, action, and context can be visualized as a triad—for example, a triangle with the vertices labelled Language, Action, and Context, with arrows showing bidirectional connections. This visual representation suggests that each of the three elements is not thoroughly comprehended in isolation. Language represents the realm of *designed intentions*: the instructions, explanations, questions, rubrics, and feedback through which teachers project particular pedagogical goals and anticipated learner behaviors (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Cazden, 2001). The language used here does not just communicate topical information; there are also built-in predictions as to what might occur next in this session: who will talk, what actions they might undertake, and what their actions will be assessed against. Thus, language is the main instrument through which anticipated conduct is suggested and made visible in the classroom.

In contrast, action pertains to behavior within its undertaken scope which includes what instructors and learners do with, though, and at times in opposition to those linguistic projections. This includes overt behaviors such as following a given instruction, initiating a repair, working in a group, and even 'sitting in' as well as covert behaviors such as inner speech, planning, and monitoring (Levelt, 1989; Swain 2000). From a sociocultural standpoint, these are not simple acts, but rather actions of participation that learners take while advancing from the margins to the center of involvement in a classroom practice. Of fundamental importance, fulfilled actions may conform to the intent of the teacher's design very closely, may approximate them, or may differ greatly, thereby reflecting varying levels of alignment or, conversely, misalignment within the triad.

Context is the third vertex of the triangle, and is understood as the mediating boundary that defines interpretation of language, and determines what actions are possible, permissible, or meaningful. It includes organizational normative and evaluation practices, meso-level structure and function of the class, social culture of the classroom about power and participation, and the concrete/technological resources of the educational environment (Bernstein, 1990; Kramsch, 1993; van Lier, 2004). Such contextual layers influence which directives are considered negotiable and non-negotiable, which questions are open to speculation and which ones are meant to elicit a recollection or answer, and to what extent learners feel empowered to act or are restricted to very little to do.

The central assertion of the language-action-context triad is that the interrelations among the three components are multidimensional and reciprocal, rather than one-dimensional and unidirectional. Language influences action by anticipating subsequent moves and narrowing down feasible courses of action; action influences context by creating new sets of routines, norms and participation over time; and context influences language by governing the types of discourse that are culturally and institutionally permissible, such as examination talk or instructor-student discussion (van Lier, 2004; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The gap between a learner's actions and a teacher's intentions – or 'misalignment' – does not derive only from language not being understood. In this case, there appears to be some form of tension within this triad (for example, in a command contrary to a local custom, or actions that a given set of conditions allows). This article's conceptual model adopts this triadic, mutually constitutive perspective to analyze cooperation and breakdown patterns in linguistic instruction.

Patterns of alignment and misalignment

Cooperative patterns

The cooperative patterns which concern the alignment of goals of the instruction with the instructional language and the learner action(s) in the language–action–context model is referred to as the moments in which the learner and teacher have consonance of purpose in the advancing and the achieving of certain goals in the instruction. These patterns do not refer to one item. They are relatively simple cases or customized forms of cooperation. These customized forms of cooperation are complex cases in which learners do exactly what is asked of them. Recognizing the differences between direct, supportive, and transformative alignment

enables one to go beyond the simple “success” and “failure” to elaborate the ways in which language and action can synergize in linguistic education.

Direct alignment concerns situations in the learning process whereby the instructional language is understood as intended and the learners execute the related actions in a way that closely follows the teacher’s thought-out sequence. As an instance, a command with the phrase “In pairs, please compare your answers for exercise three,” may result in immediate pairing, focused comparison with timely reporting back, without the need for clarification. Regarding classroom discourse structure, these instances coincide with relatively smooth micro-Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) sequences wherein the teacher's move achieves the desired response type. Several studies on Conversation Analysis have captured instances where speakers seem to understand what the next action is and are able to perform it without trouble. This indicates that there is a striking disconnect between the intentions built into the communicative utterances and the actions carried out by the learners (Seedhouse, 2004).

Supportive alignment refers to instances in which words and actions come together but only with the support of additional semiotic and social means outside the original verbal command. In this case, the alignment is not only with the task wording; it is also with the gestures, the demonstrations, the other written materials, peer help, and other physical objects that assist learners in understanding and performing the required actions. Previous investigations regarding classroom interactions involving multiple modes of communication have demonstrated how a teacher's gestures displaying focus, such as pointing, modelling, and the use of boards/slides clarify vague directions and lead students to beneficial ways to participate in class (Goodwin, 2000; Mortensen, 2008). Likewise, sociocultural research on scaffolding emphasizes how peers and teachers construct understanding together through contingent support, reformulation, and collaborative problem solving (Wood et al., 1976; Donato 1994; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In these cases, the alignment of language and action is the result of multiple agents and multiple modes working together; the instruction “works,” but only because it is situated within a denser ecology of supportive practices and resources (van Lier, 2004).

Transformative alignment occurs when there is stronger cooperation and the learner’s actions go beyond the teacher’s original intentions and add to or reinterpret them productively. The learner goes beyond the surface of the task and views it as an opportunity for wider critical and creative engagement. A task which includes ‘tell me your thoughts on the pros and cons of distance learning’ may have students reflect on their own lives, challenge the fundamentals that may be lacking, broaden the scope (equity, surveillance, and even monitoring, and labor), or come up with other solutions that were never even contemplated by the instructor. This sort of alignment corresponds with the dialogic and inquiry approaches to teaching, where discussion in the classroom is viewed as an opportunity to build a shared understanding of the topic, rather than simply answering ‘stock’ questions that have predetermined answers (Alexander, 2008; Wells, 1999). The definition of transformative alignment in Swain (2000) and Mercer & Littleton (2007) refers to instances when learners engage in language-in-action collaborations to reconfigure their knowledge systems which in turn transform an assignment into a genuine opportunity for conceptual growth. The cases where the interface of language and action goes beyond the interface of the ‘cooperative’ design suggest that alignment does not have to be reproduction but rather a creative and agentive response to the underlying pedagogical purposes.

Misalignment patterns

Unlike cooperative patterns, misalignment patterns focus on instances of instructional language and learner behavior which do not “fit,” although all of the actors may be honestly trying to do the right thing. Within the language–action–context model, four analytically distinct, though often overlapping, types can be identified: semantic, procedural, affective, and contextual misalignment. Each type focuses on a different locus of the chain where intention (language) designed and lived behavior (action) may break or bend.

Semantic misalignment takes place when learners do not understand the meaning of certain words, grammatical structures, or discourse markers as the instructor does. The teacher’s instruction, “summarize the author’s stance and provide a critical reflection” is a case in point where some students understand the

instruction as simply, “repeat the main ideas.” The problem lies in the fact that the students do not relate the words stance and critical to their extremely broad, non-academic meanings. Likewise, different ESP or CLIL contexts may provide students with some key terms (“compare qualitative and quantitative data”) which may result in their misunderstanding or only partially grasping what is being asked. The relationship between vocabulary load and comprehension has been studied (Nation, 2001; Webb & Nation, 2017) and it has been established that the presence of unfamiliar or partially known lexicon dramatically hinders learners’ ability to respond appropriately to given directive speech acts, both written and spoken. In such cases, lack of alignment is not a case of unwillingness or lack of effort, but a difference in the underlying semantic constructs contained in the teacher's discourse and the learner's available vocabularies. For example, in my session, many students, when I ask them to 'justify their choice with evidence,' take justify to mean 'explain what you did,' so I end up with opinions without evidence. Also, in a specific medical ESP task where I instructed participants to ‘administer the drug’, some students interpreted the phrase as ‘recommend’ or ‘give advice’ as opposed to a more accurate professional meaning of ‘deliver/dispense according to specific medical procedures’, thus altering the professional meaning completely. In business ESP courses, students misunderstood 'stakeholder' as 'shareholder', neglecting clients, regulators, and employees. As a result, their analyses presented a lack of breadth in conceptualization.

Procedural misalignment occurs when the meaning of instruction is understood, yet the learner is unable to determine what actions are needed to actualize this instruction. The concern is not about the intrinsic meaning of the instruction. The question that remains unanswered is, what do we do next? Research in task-based activities has shown that learners might understand a task goal but struggle with the order of actions, the participants, or the outcome (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004). In this scenario, a teacher might give the instruction, “In your groups, plan a short role-play of a misunderstanding that happens at work.” They may notice that students sit in silence, waiting for further instruction. This might be the case because students do not know who should begin the role-play, the expected duration of the role-play, if it should be scripted beforehand, or what a satisfactory “misunderstanding” truly is. According to Samuda and Bygate (2008), the completion of tasks is associated with the learners having sufficient knowledge of the procedural details of the tasks, ‘how to go on’, in Wittgenstein’s sense, and also having to tackle poorly described instructions which almost always leads to a state of confusion and off-task engagements. Off-task engagements of this type represent a misalignment of gaps between a teacher’s internal monologue regarding the activity, and the learners’ understanding of how to perform the learners’ internal dialogue. For example, when I first ask and tell them to provide me with a “short incident report” they understand the topic and the focus, but they do not understand the required structure line, such as time, place, who, what happened, what particular action is taken, and then the recommendations, and so they come up with a report in the form of a story rather than an actual report.’ When I ask students to compare the two graphs and summarize the trends, students lack the process and go straight to the conclusion instead of describing the key figures first, i.e. describing. Additionally, when composing emails, the content is often present, but the authors frequently do not observe the principle of structuring emails as follows: subject line, greeting, statement of purpose, requests, suggested deadlines, and closing—they therefore come across as informal and vague.

Affective misalignment occurs when instructions are clear and unambiguous, yet learners' emotional or motivational behaviors lead to counterproductive actions, in this regard, fully participating. An example would be when a student is fully aware of “Raise your hand and share your opinion with the class,” but chooses to remain quiet due to a serious case of anxiety, fear of judgement, or a disregard for their own ability to perform. An example could be asking a group of learners to “debate the pros and cons of online surveillance’’ and they almost all remain static with very little usable output. This is a sign of boredom, exhaustion, or doubt about the relevance and importance of the task. Motivation, in conjunction with anxiety, and language learning research highlight the importance of affective variables that mediate whether learners transform understanding into doing. Within this perspective, misalignment is not a breakdown in understanding, nor a breakdown in a sequence of actions, but rather a gap in the emotional requirements of the intended behavior (e.g. the projected behavior of speaking in front of a class) and the emotional investments a learner is

prepared to make (Dörnyei, 2005; Horwitz, 2001; Fredricks et al., 2004). Based on my experience, I can say that many students will not make corrections for peer reviews because they are afraid of 'hurting' someone. It is not just because of the language of the task. It is because the social structure of group work is more valuable than receiving and responding to criticism in the task. Further, even with the guidance provided, learners still do not utilize the polite refusal strategies ('I'm afraid I can't…') as they fear that it may appear impolite within their culture, which subsequently molds their language choices.

Contextual misalignment highlights circumstances of a mismatch between the organizational, cultural, physical, or technological context, and the intended actions. These factors could be perceived as conceptually aligned, as well as synthetic and emotive, but contextually, they are difficult, risky, or outright impractical to carry out all the same. While a professor may invite the class to 'Challenge the author's argument and propose alternatives', due to the heavily examination-oriented system, students might feel that their divergent thinking will not be rewarded, and might limit their efforts to 'safe' analyses expected during testing. In the other scenario, a class where students are expected to mobilize and work in groups might be greatly undermined because the class does not have movable desks, the desks are in rows, or while the desks are in pairs, students are expected to work in virtual rooms which their unstable internet connections and poorly functioning microphones greatly hinder. Research on sociolinguistics and sociological aspects of education (Bernstein, 1990; Bourdieu, 1991), and on ecological perspectives of language learning (van Lier, 2004) underscore how institutional grammar, evaluation systems, and resource availability impose boundaries on what is considered practical or approved behavior. Contextual misalignment thus captures the tensions between what the instruction envisions learners performing, and what the context constrains them to performing, without incurring punishment or significant challenge. As an example, courses right after long exams yield low levels of attention, and group discussions become fragmented. Context also shifts margin success, as the same task is accomplished seamlessly on another day. Also, when I do 'pair negotiations' in large classes, I have to deal with significant noise and students switching to Arabic during the task. I tackle this issue by trying to uncover the classroom ecology that has been constraining the English interaction I aimed for.

These four patterns of misalignment highlight how unresolved instructional language and learner action problems are deep and multi-faceted. Some single episodes, such as students not participating in discussion, can involve semantic ambiguities, procedural gaps, affective blocks, and contextual barriers at the same time. In this context, the model proposed in this article illustrates that distinguishing patterns is useful not when they are treated as exclusive categories, but when they provide greater precision for identifying the failure of language, action, and context to integrate. In doing so, we can highlight where pedagogical action is likely to be most needed.

Interplay and movement between states

The relationship between action, context, and language, in a real classroom, is not a state of "working" or "not working." It is a dynamic process where constant movement between alignment and misalignment is observed. Studies in conversation analysis focus on classroom discourse demonstrating that there is a sequence of turns in which participants are managed locally. Participants focus on trouble and repair endlessly, going from a state of smooth progressivity to one of breakdown and returning to it (Walsh, 2011). A task may begin in direct alignment and in a synchronistic manner—students follow instructions and begin working as intended—but as the activity unfolds, possible ambiguities, procedural gaps, or emotional barriers may arise and cause a temporary misalignment. On the other hand, episodes that seem to be problematic at the beginning (silence after a question, off-topic conversation, or different understandings of a rubric) can, after a series of particular actions by the teacher and learners, be converted into constructive episodes of clarification, negotiation, and productive engagement (Waring, 2011). From this perspective, alignment and misalignment are better conceived as states through which interaction progresses, rather than as stable properties of tasks and participants.

These movements are interpreted as communication feedback loops where language, scaffolding, or task

structure changes are aligned and improved upon to restore and augment cooperation between action and language. Usually, teachers observe and address signs of trouble, or signs of degradation, such as hesitations, incorrect workings, and sidelong glances, by reformulating the instructions, providing extra illustrations, demonstrating the initial stage of a task, or partitioning sophisticated actions into smaller, sequenced components (Cazden, 2001; Samuda and Bygate, 2008). This type of scaffolding is especially crucial to the sociocultural view of learning wherein growth is perceived as deriving from help on a task within the zone of proximal development. At a macro level, ongoing confusion with an activity, a type of task with which someone does not fully engage, or a chronic discrepancy between assessment criteria and classroom activity, recurrent misalignments can lead to task redesign and rubric rewording or participation structure reconfiguration, showing how action and context 'feedback' to influence later language use (Black and Wiliam, 2009).

Recognizing alignment and misalignment as shifts that occur continuously in the classroom is significant in itself. It shows that misalignment is not simply a matter of failure; it offers insight: it shows where the present alignment of language, action, and context is most tenuous, and thus, where pedagogical change is likely to be most productive. In the language–action–context framework of the present proposal, these feedback processes are primary: language directs action, but the action that is taken, particularly when it is misalignment with expectations, reshapes the interactional context within the body of the lesson (through scaffolding) and the pedagogy of the lesson (through subsequent modifications to the lesson and curriculum as a whole). This cyclical view highlights the adaptive characteristics of a language education program and justifies the treatment of patterns of misalignment as opportunities for reflective practice rather than problems that need to be solved.

Pedagogical implications

Rethinking task and instruction design

Based on the language–action–context model, tasks and instructions should not be designed as creating an ideal pathway for input–output, but as creating flexible invitations for multiple potential actions. Most traditions on the views of tasks suppose that behaviors of learners will be uniform and predictable as long as instructions are "clear enough." Nonetheless, studies in task-based language teaching and classroom interaction have continuously demonstrated that learners' understanding of a given task can differ greatly, based on their pre-existing knowledge, objectives, self-conception, and surrounding situation (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004). Instead of attempting to remove all variability, instructional design can allow for a range of reasonable outcomes by indicating permissible options ("You can select either X or Y"), defining goal(s) of the task while maintaining learner choice, and explicitly stating that different people may approach the task in different ways. For example, Samuda and Bygate (2008) contend that "task-as-workplan" and "task-in-process" are both apparent in effective pedagogic tasks, wherein the latter is learner-driven and variation is intrinsic. Developing directions that enhance this duality—specifying certain boundaries (duration, outcome, evaluative standards) and also multidimensional feedback—can help mitigate unproductive misalignment and foster productive divergence.

The second implication is the need to go beyond descriptions of different types of tasks and to systematically integrate modelling, exemplars, and visual aids. Research on multimodal interaction has demonstrated that the teacher, in the course of a lesson, systematically employs gesture, gaze, posture, and the use of various tools (boards, handouts, slides, etc.) to help learners understand the procedural and semantic dimensions of some tasks (Goodwin, 2000; Mortensen, 2008). From a sociocultural viewpoint, such resources act as guides and assist learners in understanding the assignment not only in terms of what is required, but also the steps to follow. Reducing procedural misalignment can be accomplished by learners being given models of what actions are expected, such as providing a brief demonstration of the first stages of a group discussion, presenting a model answer, or providing a sketch of the steps of a project (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Samuda & Bygate, 2008). When learners work with visual prompts like flow charts and timelines, and checklists, and are prompted with specific text on slides and platforms, they are able to

adequately utilize their working memory to concentrate on basic criteria and vital instructions during tasks, instead of hearing lengthy instructions which tend to be forgotten easily. (Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998).

In this case, designing flexible, multimodal instruction fosters opportunities to address the semantic and affective dimensions of alignment. Key technical vocabulary can be visually glossed or exemplified; potential misconceptions can be pre-empted by contrasting “appropriate” and “less appropriate” responses; and anxiety can be alleviated by modelling partial, work-in-progress contributions, rather than only polished performances (Horwitz, 2001; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). It is noteworthy that the design choices here are not arbitrary. Rather, they are attempts to make adjustments to the language–action–context triad ‘better’ so as to make it easier to convert instructions into something that is performable and reasonable. Rethinking tasks and instructions therefore requires seeing them as design spaces, not just clauses: there is provision to map out various pathways, frame instructions and actions through several shifts, and painstakingly mesh the desired activities with the situational context of the class.

All in all, as a teacher, I always observe the modelling provided to students in the previous parts to check for understanding and then I switch to a template and example strategy where I show students a complete example for each section to then fill in the example in a way that is meaningful to them. Also, I use 'ICQ' (instruction checking questions): 'What is the first step?' 'How many points is it worth?' 'What is the deadline?' and that reduces procedural drift immediately.

Classroom interaction and feedback

Within a language–action–context perspective, the classroom interaction is the central place for monitoring what instructional language has been transformed into the intended learner actions, and where instructional misalignments can be addressed. A critical set of practices revolves around student monitoring and questioning strategies that reach beyond the mechanical, “Is that clear?” that often elicits a polite nod. Studies and reports on classroom discourse and formative assessment have shown that more effective strategies include asking learners to perform tasks that demonstrate understanding—paraphrasing instructions, providing an example, identifying the first step of the task, and modelling a short segment of the required performance (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Cazden, 2001). For example, a teacher asking, “Do you understand the task?” might prefer saying, “What is the first thing you and your friend are going to do?” or “Who can demonstrate how we begin the role-play?” These actions treat understanding as a behavioral phenomenon, allowing them to identify definitional and operational inconsistencies as early as possible as opposed to allowing them to become deeply set. As noted in case studies of conversation analysis (Walsh, 2011), such checks often occur at pivotal transition points such as after task instructions, prior to group work, or immediately after an explanation. These moments of interaction are critical because they can greatly influence learner behavior in the entire lesson that will follow.

In this regard, feedback is not simply an evaluation of accuracy but rather a central element to tie what was uttered to what was executed, and to close and/or open gaps between intended design and behavioral outcome. The different types of feedback (recasts, prompts, metalinguistic comments) that capture various learner responses have been the focus of the corrective feedback and uptake studies (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2010). In building upon this work, a language–action–context model proposes that effective feedback must connect: (1) the focus of the instruction or the goal (“We said the purpose of this summary was to show the author’s stance”), (2) the learner’s action or observable product (“In your summary, you repeated the examples but did not state the stance”), and (3) the instruction’s building block, a feasible next action (“Try adding one sentence that explains whether the author supports or criticizes the policy”). Such feedback enables learners to understand how their actions are aligned to, or how divergent they are from, the task, making the patterns of alignment and misalignment visible and actionable. Research on formative assessment and “feedforward” (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 2009) emphasizes that feedback is the strongest when it responds to all three questions—Where am I going? Where am I now? What next? which all assume a bounded, though contextualized, mapping of the discourse (criteria, goals), performance (current

action), and surrounding conditions (time, tools, support).

Interactionally, feedback is also a dialogic process: learners' replies to feedback (acceptance, resistance, partial uptake, self-repair) inform the teachers about the state of alignment in the class. In the case of a teacher clarifying a task to try to resolve the students' concerns, if the students still show hesitance or go off target with the actions, it is likely that deeper semantic, procedural, affective, or contextual issues are at play, and so further scaffolding or even a redesign of the task is warranted. Hence, classroom interaction aspects such as checking-for-understanding strategies and 'systems of feedback' serve as ongoing diagnostics loops because they monitor and readjust instructional discourse, learner action, and contextual boundaries and affordances. In the model proposed in this article, these are the primary places where the triad of language–action–context can be actively designed, as opposed to neglected, for the purpose of creating richer and more equitable learning opportunities.

Assessment and curriculum design

In the lens of context and language in use perspective, assessment is more than matching a product with the 'criteria'. It needs to be aligned with the actions that the tasks trigger in a real classroom setting. Work in constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996, 2003) argues that intended learning outcomes, activities, and assessment tasks should be tied together in a system. Viewing from this lens, a writing activity that is assessed on grammatical accuracy only, or an "oral interaction" activity that is primarily a monologue, creates systematic misalignment between what the learners have to do and what is finally assessed. A more action-sensitive approach starts by understanding the manner in which learners are likely to perform a task. What forms of participation and what forms of collaboration and strategic behavior exist? Then, these in turn develop assessment criteria described in terms of observable behavior (for instance, "builds on contributions of peers," "used examples to justify a claim," "revised text after receiving feedback"). These criteria establish a direct connection between the task's language, the action needed, and the reasoning for the assessment, thus minimizing discrepancies between the provided instructions, the action taken, and the assessment provided (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

In terms of curriculum design, incorporating a language–Action–Context framework means understanding curricula not simply as bounded lists of content and skills, but as intended pathways for participation for particular types of classroom action. Ecological and sociocultural perspectives (van Lier, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) advocate for syllabi to be designed with careful consideration of the contexts of learning: institutional constraints, the tools at hand, the dominant interaction patterns, and the local cultural norms. Such a curriculum would delineate different tasks intended for increasing learners' repertoires of linguistic and interactional activities (e.g., from tightly scaffolded IRF exchanges to increasingly open dialogic tasks), while also adding recurring opportunities for teachers to monitor (mis)alignment and modify subsequent designs. To put it practically, this means writing learning outcomes that address ways of doing and ways of interacting (not just knowledge of forms), incorporating reflection on instruction and task uptake into teacher education, and revisiting task types, rubrics, and routines for how they occur in actual contexts on a periodic basis.

Implications for teacher education

Including a language-action-context perspective on teacher education involves helping teachers understand the concept of the classroom in a radically new way: not as a venue for clear explanations followed by appropriate, robotic behaviors, but as dynamic spaces where language, learner actions, and context in the classroom mildly and severely encroach upon alignment and misalignment. This type of professional vision will necessitate 'Goodwin (1994)' systematic training on how the various types of instructions given are taken up, where the learners hesitate or derail, and how various institution, culture, or material factors define what is achievable. The work on the cognition of the teacher and reflective practice (Borg (2006), Schön (1983), Farrell (2015)) indicates that such noticing does not result from experience; it is manufactured by the carefully controlled reflective appraisal of actual teaching and learning encounters. For

example, with the help of Walsh (2011), teachers can be guided to mark their video-recorded lessons, focusing on the coding of instances of semantic, procedural, affective, and contextual misalignments, and possible misaligned alternative interactional moves, including how they could have acted otherwise. In this way, the categories of the language–action–context model serve as frameworks for analyzing the possible explanations behind a learner's inaction or intended actions.

The model also serves as an additional lens in teacher education and professional learning communities for holistic understanding and collaborative lesson reflection. Discussions anchored to micro-analyses of transcripts or videos in response to What was the teacher trying to achieve with this instruction? What did the students actually do? and What aspects of the context did, and did not, support 'alignment', can facilitate movement away from global statements about children (e.g. 'They weren't motivated') to detailed descriptions on the interplay of language, action, and context in a particular moment (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Freeman, 1998). Over time, such practices may help teachers in closing the feedback loop between analysis and pedagogy. This is accomplished in the feedback loop through the redesigning of tasks, rephrasing of instructions, and modifying attendance patterns relative to recurring alignment gaps. The language–action–context model in this case is not merely a theoretical construct, but a practical mediational tool (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) for structuring reflective practice and structuring teachers' decisions and context-responsive pedagogical innovation in language education.

Directions for future research

Building on the conceptual groundwork laid in this paper, several avenues for future research emerge from the proposed language–action–context model.

- Undertake systematic instructional investigations that categorize occurrences of semantic, procedural, affective, and contextual (mis)alignment in enacted lessons.
- Consider how each type is distributed across various task types and levels, along with the responses of teachers and learners during interaction.
- Connect types of alignment or misalignment to various engagement metrics and learning outcome indicators (e.g. task fulfilment, output standards, involvement).
- Employ video analysis and multi-modal analysis to examine alignment as influenced by speech, gesture, gaze, space, and movement.
- Examine the use by teachers of multiple forms of scaffolding (pointing, modelling, using artefacts) to rectify or prevent misalignment, gaps, or disruptions in the completion of the task during instruction.
- Examine the impact of varying technological environments on the language, action, and context triad in the context of physical, online, and hybrid classrooms.
- Implement the model in the relevant fields of ESP (for example, medical, engineering and technologies, and business) to determine the impact of professional practices and technical language on realignments and misalignments.
- Explore CLIL classes to observe the interplay between the content and language objectives, and how this influences learner engagement and task uptake.
- Invest further in multilingual immersion classes to pinpoint how learners' entire linguistic resources are utilized to cope with or solve varieties of misalignment.

Limitations, empirical validation and future research agenda

Even though this study constructs a theoretically based model, the model will only prove its worth when its predictive capabilities are validated in real-life classrooms. Therefore, future work must ensure the theoretical framework is tested using qualitative methodologies that document the real-time unfolding of classroom interactions, including participant observation, classroom-based action research, and teacher autoethnography. Under specific institutional and interactional conditions, participant observation can track how learners interpret, negotiate, and resist teachers' instructional language. By employing action research, teachers can transform the model into iterative cycles of interventions (plan, act, observe, reflect). This

permits educators to implement specific changes (e.g., task instruction modifications, feedback adjustments, sequencing redesign) and assess the extent to which the changes reduce persistent patterns of misalignment. Using autoethnography, along with reflective journaling and artefact collection, can elucidate the complexities of teachers' decision-making and lived interactions that help form the pressures influencing their pedagogical choices. Depending on the approach, data can be classroom audio/video recordings, field notes, lesson plans, student artefacts, teachers' journals, and post-lesson interviews or stimulated recall sessions, and analyzed thematically and interactively to trace patterns of alignment and misalignment over time. Such empirical work would not only provide opportunities to confirm or refine the categories of the model, but also provide opportunities to narrow down which contextual variables (assessment regimes, classroom ecology, institutional policy, cultural expectations) play the strongest mediating roles in alignment outcomes.

Conclusion

This paper has proposed a conceptual model of the language-action-context relationship in pedagogical linguistics. It argues that classroom processes are not linear input-output chains, but are better understood as the interaction of intended designs, performed actions, and surrounding contexts. Based on applied linguistics, classroom discourse, sociocultural theory, and psycholinguistics, the model reconceptualizes instructions, questions, and feedback as social action; learner behavior as multilayered (visible and invisible) participation; and context as space that is complexly organizational, cultural, physical, and interactional. With this in mind, the record has defined types of cooperation (direct, supportive, transformative alignment) and types of misalignments (semantic, procedural, affective, contextual) and investigated the consequences of all these in task design, interaction in the classroom, assessment, curriculum and teacher training.

The first question concerns the relationship between language, action, and context in relation to educational linguistics, and how this relationship may be framed in a way that captures both cooperation and alignment. A proposed triadic model addresses this by providing a synthesis in which language is described as a form of social action, action as mediated participation, and context as a structuring ecological environment that shapes both interpretation and feasibility. Within this framework, alignment and misalignment are not treated as simple success/failure labels, but as analytically distinct states through which classroom interaction continuously flows. In this case, the second research question focused on how a language–action–context model can shape task design, teaching, feedback, and assessment so that the support provided to learners is better aligned with the needed engagement and desired learning objectives. The discussion of pedagogical implications addressed this by illustrating how the model delineates the construction of more adaptable, multimodal instructions; the engagement of interactional checks for understanding; the crafting of feedback that explicitly connects what is uttered with what is performed; and the formulation of assessment and curricular goals that reflect more accurately the behavior of learners in specific situations.

When combined, these contributions reinforce the main argument that linguistic education cannot remain within the simplistic framework of "if we say it, they will do it." Such an analysis shows the extent to which and the manner in which learners engage with instructional language is the result of an intricate set of configurations related to semantic clarity, procedural transparency, affective factors, and contextual opportunities and limitations. Understanding teaching as an arbitrary or unmanageable activity does not make sense, and complexities do not help the cause. Rather, the complexities help the reality of how teaching becomes learning through an understandable or improvable synergy of words, actions, and contexts. The language–action–context model is proposed not as a fully formed theory, but rather as a resource for constructs and reflections which can be tested, modified and augmented across a range of educational concepts, serving, in the end, more flexible, context-aware, and fair educational practices in the teaching of language.

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