PEDAGOGY AND AUTONOMY: CAN THEY MEET?

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ABSTRACT

A lot of discussion on the feasibility of learner autonomy within the school context has focussed on psychological, social and institutional constraints which seem to be in conflict with the autonomy concept and its operationalization. Basically, one can argue that the idea of "pedagogy" is in contradiction with the notion of "autonomy". The purpose of my paper is to challenge this argument by proposing a flexible, context-sensitive approach to learner autonomy against a more radical view, without trivializing the basic concept or the assumptions behind it. I will suggest some principles of a "pedagogy for autonomy" deriving from an interpretative view of school education, and I will discuss their implications on pedagogical roles, learning activities and classroom discourse. Some attention will inevitably be devoted to teacher development as a basic requirement to learner development, within a framework where pedagogy and autonomy can meet.

> "...the gradual establishment of a pedagogy for
> autonomy is a complex challenge and not unlike
> trying to shoot arrows at the sun". (Breen & Mann, 1997: 133)

Breen & Mann (1997), in analysing the potential of the autonomy concept for classroom practice, refer to a pre-Columbian Mexican story according to which (133) "there existed people who believed that they could make the sun die by firing arrows at it. As this ritual tended to be performed towards evening, their success rate tended to maintain their faith". The authors suggest that, in trying to develop genuine autonomous learning in the classroom, we may be sharing a similar degree of self-delusion. They point out, however, that there is a positive side to the Mexican story:

by shooting arrows at the sun, arrow-shooting abilities were improved with a positive impact on other activities, such as hunting. Their argument goes on to suggest that if we are aware of the complexity of a pedagogy for autonomy in striving to develop it, not only will we be better prepared to face constraints but also more likely to discover and explore new possibilities in language pedagogy (ibidem).

The title of this paper raises a question to which my answer is clearly affirmative, although I am aware that discourses and practices on autonomous learning have tended to emphasise out-of-classroom settings, such as learning or self-access centres where some kind of self-directed learning scheme is followed, with or without the support of specialized counselling staff. My argument is that *only when autonomy becomes a central notion in all educational contexts can we expect some change to occur in the quality of learning*, so that a deconstruction of the autonomy concept is required in order to find out what can be done in the classroom context.

What I propose is *a context-sensitive approach* to autonomy where the trivialization of the autonomy concept is avoided and the risk of self-delusion is reduced. It derives from personal research on a pedagogy for autonomy in the school setting (Vieira, 1998), where any pedagogical approach is always *other-directed* to some extent, since the learner is not responsible for making the decisions regarding the learning pro-gramme (objectives, resources, methods, techniques, evaluation and management), even if he can can be directly involved in working out those decisions with the teacher (Holec, 1996). The basis for the proposal is that we take *an interpretative view of education* as opposed to a transmissive one (Barnes, 1976), and that we make an effort to find out what can be done in this particular setting at the levels of *facilitating conditions, pedagogical principles, teacher and learner roles, learning activities and pedagogical discourse*, so that our professional energy towards the progressive de-velopment of learner autonomy in both conscious and productive.

1. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE AUTONOMY APPROACH

Being aware of the complexity of a pedagogy for autonomy is a necessary condi-tion to understand what we are really heading to. Not only are there ambiguities at the conceptual and operational definitions of the autonomy approach, but also risks and tensions within its practical implementation.

An analysis of studies on learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom reveals that "autonomy" is *a complex and transitional concept* . According to Benson (1997), there appear to be at least three basic versions of autonomy, corresponding broadly to its *technical, psychological and political dimensions* (25):

> 1. autonomy as the act of learning on one's own and the technical ability to do so;
> 2. autonomy as the internal psychological capacity to self-direct one's own learning;
> 3. autonomy as control over the content and processes of one's own learning.

According to the author, most studies have tended to focus on the first two, thus reflecting a "*depolitization*" *of the autonomy concept* (see Benson, 1996, 1997;

Benson & Voller, 1997), which apparently reduces the emancipatory potential of a pedagogy for autonomy. However, when we have a look at descriptions of what indicates autonomy in learners (see Knowles, 1975: 61; Deardren, 1975, cit. in Boud, 1988: 19; Guglielmino, 1989: 65-6), at published pedagogical experiments on autonomous learning (eg. Holec, 1988; The British Council's *DTE Development Package on Learner Training*, File 3, 1989; Dam, 1995; Karlsson, Kjisik & Nordlund, 1997; Vieira, 1998), or at published guides for the development of autonomy (eg. Ellis & Sinclair, 1989; Willing, 1989; Wenden, 1991; Rubin & Thomson, 1994), not to speak of more theoretical material written by inumerous authors in the field, we find out that the technical, psychological and political dimensions are often interwined in various ways. From a rather different pespective, Holec (1988) analyses several experiments on the basis of whether autonomy is regarded as a *methodology* (exercising responsibility through decision-making) or as a *learning goal* (getting prepared to exercise responsibility, i.e., learning how to learn), although, again, many studies integrate both views as complementary rather than exclusive. As the author points out, "whereas in practices of the first type each individual is 'brought to organise his own experience', in those of the second type, each individual is 'brought to (know how to) organise his own experience'" (1988:9). As both approaches involve the learner in acquiring some degree of *control over the learning content and processes*, it is difficult to assume their "apolitical" nature. Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that *the politics of autonomy is not only about learner-centredness, but also about anti-authoritarianism*. Ambiguities arise from two basic tensions then: "on the one hand, between responsibility and freedom from constraint; and on the other, between the individual and the social" (Benson & Voller 5). How to reconcile these elements is a basic issue of debate if we do not want to lose sight of the sociocultural implications of a pedagogy for autonomy. The basic question, then, is *whether autonomy is primarily conceived as an instrumental capacity for independent learning, or rather as an emancipatory capacity for interdependent learning, or both*.

A useful distinction is pointed out by Candy (1988) between the *situational* and the *epistemological* (knowledge-based) components of learner autonomy, which stresses the role of content knowledge and reinforces the concept of interdependent learning. The author argues that although there may be a trans-situational sort of autonomy, *subject-matter autonomy is highly content-specific, developmental and cumulative*, which sets limits on the transferability of learning abilities. The author also points out that learning is a social process, therefore "autonomy in the sense of totally independent thought and action is fundamentally irreconcilable with the notion of mastering a recognized body of knowledge" (74). This emphasis on knowledge and on collaborative knowledge construction is crucial in the classroom context, where learning is a highly knowledge-based, interactive endeavour.

Other major issues make the agenda of current discussion of the autonomy approach: the issue of *ethnocentrism* , i.e., is autonomy a culture-specific concept? (see Riley, 1988, 1998; Pennycook, 1997); the issue of the *canonization of didactic discourse*, i.e., is it possible to have one valid model for implementing autonomy?; the related issue of the *fossilization of practical models* i.e., how can we prevent the autonomy approach from being attached to a set of taken-for-granted didactic proce-

dures?; the issue of *endoctrination*, i.e., is autonomy a teachable curriculum subject?; the issue of *loss of identity*, i.e., how can teachers and learners not lose their identity as changes in the distribution of power within the learning process take place? (see Voller, 1997); and also the issue of *delusion* already referred to above (Breen & Mann, 1997), i.e., do we really know what we are aiming at, and are we really aware of the complexity of our task, or are we just constructing self-reassuring appearances of what in fact are mitigated versions of a pedagogy of dependence?

Moving in the autonomy field is like moving in a labyrinth, so that finding your way through it always involves taking an exploratory idyossincratic path which is basically determined by the interpretation you make of possible alternative routes. Research on the field of learner autonomy has shown that there is no one way to follow. As Holec points out (1988: 17), "the watchword in connection with applications of the autonomy concept (...) is flexibility. (...) The approach may be 'interpreted' (in the sense that a musical score is interpreted by the performer) in so many different ways that it always represents an available and viable pedagogical option". The sociocultural setting, the institutional constraints, and the theoretical standpoint adopted by the "interpreters" seem to be key-elements in determining the particular application they make of this pedagogical option. Choices at the practical level must seem *plausible* to teachers and learners, i.e., they must be context-sensitive. *Context-sensitiveness*, which is a major characteristic of pedagogy in general, leads to *methodological eclecticism*, something that teachers accepted long ago as a positive principle. However, flexibility should not be based on the lack of a theoretical framework for the situated, constrained "interpretative stances" the teacher is entitled to take. The risk that autonomy attains "a buzz-word status" (Little,1991) or is trivialized, should encourage both teachers and researchers *to look for a core of assumptions and guiding principles which inform critical choices among possible alternatives and allow for an appropriate evaluation of pedagogical processes and outcomes*. What follows in the next sections is an attempt to provide such a framework, in the context of foreign language teaching in schools.

2. CONDITIONS AND PRINCIPLES TO DEVELOP A PEDAGOGY FOR AUTONOMY

Back in 1976, Barnes made a crucial distinction between the transmissive and interpretative views of education in trying to establish a relationship between the teacher's view of knowledge, the classroom communication system and the kind of learning encouraged in school. The author characterizes an interpretative view of education as one in which: *(a) the teacher focusses primarily not on knowledge as a public discipline, but on the knower's ability to interpret, (b) classroom communication implies the negotiation and the exploration of knowledge, and (c) learning is not boundaried (school knowledge) but related to everyday life (action knowledge)*. This view implies *a transformative view of pedagogy* which is strongly related with the autonomy approach. Table 1 (Vieira, 1997a, 1998) represents a contrastive focus on dependence or autonomy in what basic *assumptions, aims and process features* are concerned.

Table 1
Pedagogy of Dependence and Pedagogy for Autonomy

	PEDAGOGY OF DEPENDENCE REPRODUCTION transmissive view of education	PEDAGOGY FOR AUTONOMY TRANSFORMATION interpretative view of education
ASSUMPTIONS	Learner as a passive consumer of knowledge; teacher as an authority in social, scientific and pedagogical terms; teacher as a transmitter of knowledge; knowledge as a static discipline	Learner as a critical consumer and a creative producer of knowledge; teacher as a facilitator of learning, a partner in pedagogical negotiation; knowledge as a dynamic construct of the knower (learner)
AIMS	To develop the academic competence of the learner (focus on the cognitive dimension of knowledge acquisition)	To develop the academic and learning competences of the learner, by establishing a close relationship between the learner and the learning content and process; to develop the ability to manage learning; to bring the school closer to life
PROCESS FEATURES	Focus on the transmission of content; learning atmosphere potentially authoritarian and formal; teacher control over pedagogical decisions; tasks aimed at the development of academic competence; task and discourse dependence of the learner; weak motivation to learn; focus on competition and individualism; normative, external evaluation	Focus on the learner (subjective theories, learning orientation, study habits, former experience,...) and on learning processes; learning atmosphere potentially democratic and informal; negotiation of pedagogical rules and decisions; reflective and experiential tasks aimed at the development of academic and learning competences; collaborative construction of knowledge; formative, internal (self-)evaluation

The transition from a focus on dependence to a focus on autonomy must be *intentional and progressive*, usually involving a compromise between principles and situational factors, where the degree of teacher/ learner-direction is being constantly redefined. If the goal of autonomy is not to be lost on the way, a reflective approach to teaching must be adopted, whereby teaching becomes an exploratory attempt to create an equilibrium of contradicting forces.

In my view, *a pedagogy for autonomy in the school context essentially seeks to facilitate an approximation of the learner to the learning process and content, by setting conditions which increase motivation to learn, interdependence relationships, discourse power, ability to learn and to manage learning, and a critical attitude towards teaching and learning.*

Table 2 (Vieira, 1997a, 1998) presents a proposal for a *common core of basic conditions and pedagogical guidelines* to promote autonomy in the language classroom within an interpretative view of education. Six conditions are identified —*integration, transparency, specialised activities, negotiation, collaboration, and progression*— with implications for both teaching and learning.

Table 2

Basic Conditions and Pedagogical Guidelines in a Pedagogy for Autonomy

FACILITATING CONDITIONS	PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS: ORGANISING PRINCIPLES
1. INTEGRATION *integrating the development of the learning competence with the development of the communicative competence*	* including the learning competence —intrapersonal, interpersonal and process/ didactic— in the pedagogical intentions and actions * extending the instructional contents to the process dimension of learning * sharing process knowledge with the learner * relating language training (learning the FL) with learner training (learning how to learn the FL) ...
2. TRANSPARENCY *making the assumptions, aims and procedures of language and learner training explicit to the learner*	* sharing process/ didactic knowledge with the learner * involving the learner in discovering about the teaching/ learning process * fostering a critical view of the teaching/ learning process ...
3. SPECIALISED *ACTIVITIES* *creating activities which foster the development of the learner's epistemological and situational autonomy*	* proposing reflective and experiential activities focussing on the linguistic and process dimensions of FL learning (including 'de-conditioning' activities) * fostering conceptual understanding and decision-making through activities which involve skills of reflection, experimentation, monitoring, negotiation and self-direction * constructing/ adapting "autonomizing" materials ...
4. NEGOTIATION *negotiating contents and roles to develop the learner's task management abilities and discourse power*	* constructing knowledge collaboratively · diversifying pedagogical roles · redistributing academic and discursive rights * involving the learner in the process of managing information (content and illocution) and speech rules (turn-taking and formal expression) * involving the learner in the evaluation of learning outcomes processes ...
5. COLLABORATION *fostering collaborative learning, especially among learners*	* promoting positive interdependence among learners * encouraging collaboration and support * using self-access materials for collaborative work ...
6. PROGRESSION *developing autonomy gradually*	* evaluating contexts of application (situational knowledge) * adjusting approaches to contexts * using 'de-conditioning' strategies * focussing on the learner's methodological and psychological preparation in systematic ways ...

The suggested approach emphasises some basic components of autonomy which have been stressed in the specialized literature: *metaprocess and metalinguistic awareness, strategic learning, pro-active attitudes towards language and learning, and collaboration in knowledge construction. Conceptual understanding (of language and learning) and decision-making abilities* are seen as basic requirements to develop autonomy within a context where *learning is a social event*. Contexts will detemine different emphases on the various aspects considered, so that there is no definite answer to the "how-questions" any teacher might ask. What follows in the next sections is an attempt to point out some implications of the proposed approach on teacher and learner roles, learning activities and pedagogical discourse.

3. TEACHER AND LEARNER ROLES

The adoption of an interpretative view of education with a goal to promote learner autonomy has strong implications for the roles of teachers and learners. Fig. 1 attempts to summarize these roles and underlying competences around three basic concepts: *information, negotiation and regulation* (Vieira, 1994, 1997b, 1998).
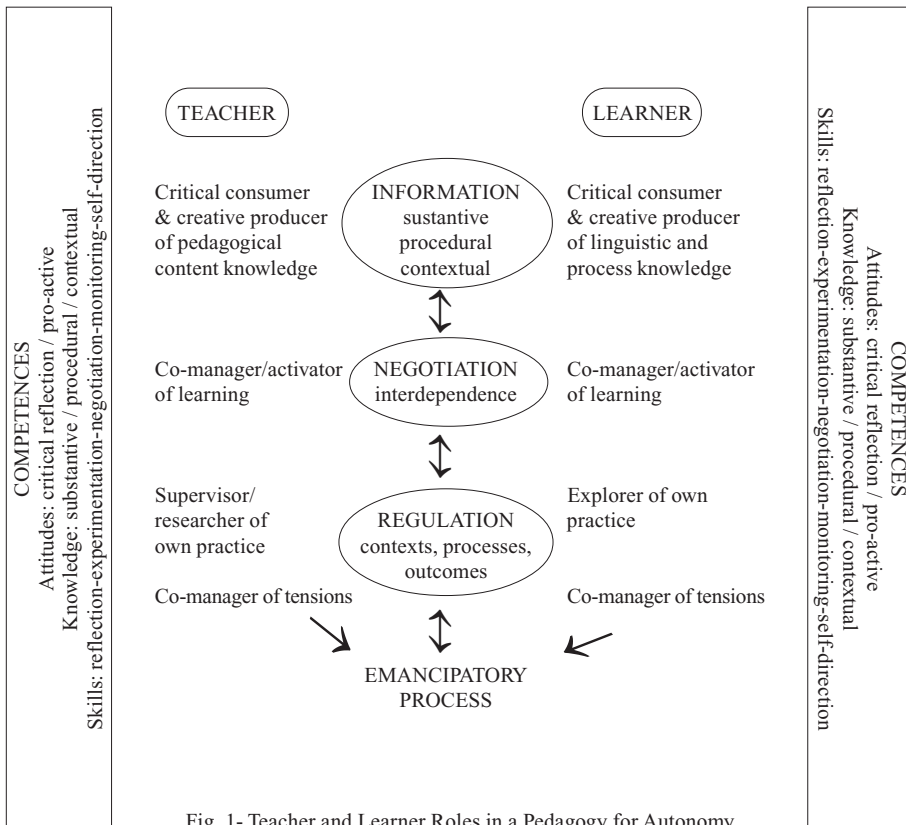

Fig. 1- Teacher and Learner Roles in a Pedagogy for Autonomy

Information includes substantive, procedural and contextual knowledge which is personally and socially constructed and not just passively received from sources of authority. Teachers and learners are seen as *critical consumers and creative producers of knowledge* and teachers should facilitate a dynamic approximation of the learner to the language and the learning situation. Through *negotiation* —of meanings, contents, roles and decisions— both teachers and learners act as *co-managers and co-activators of learning:* active communicators, analysts of language and of learning processes, managers of learning tasks, managers of tensions, problem-solvers, resources, counsellors, etc. *Regulation* is the means whereby teachers and learners become *explorers and researchers of their own action*, in order to monitor, evaluate, change or confirm previous ideas and practices. With a systematic focus on learning contexts and on cultural, institutional or methodological tensions, teachers and learners become aware of the complexities of teaching and learning and can be co-responsible for instructional decision-making. This, I believe, will strengthen the political dimension of a pedagogy for autonomy, in the sense that contexts are scrutinized, questioned and challenged by the classroom community through a critical attitude towards the conditions of teaching and learning.

Within this balanced distribution of roles, the question is not whether the teacher loses authority or becomes redundant, but rather how the teacher's authority can be built up from the learner's authority and vice-versa. *Interdependence* seems to be the key-word here: independence and social responsibility are articulated; personal needs or expectations are constantly reframed and redefined according to what the group finds to be plausible and relevant at any given time.

If we look at the teacher's role and underlying competences (cf. Fig. 1), we can recognize some basic traits of what has been called "reflective teaching" in the literature about teacher professional development. In my research in collaboration with other colleagues we have found that reflective teaching and autonomous learning are like "two sides of the same coin", and that there is a close interplay between both educational trends which seems to operate in both directions, i.e., *reflective teaching facilitates and is facilitated* by a pedagogy for autonomy (Vieira & Moreira, 1993-96; Vieira, 1996, 1997b, 1997c; Moreira, Vieira & Marques, 1998). Because it is learner-centred, this pedagogical approach requires that the teacher assume an inquiring role, i.e., it naturally leads teachers into researching their own practice. Teacher empowerment can then be a corollary of learner empowerment, just as learner empowerment can be a corollary of teacher emancipation.

On the whole, this conceptualization of pedagogical roles assumes an interpretative view of schooling. It emphases the *transformative* role of teaching and learning and the *emancipatory* potential of formal educational contexts.

4. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

A pedagogy for autonomy in the language classroom should integrate a communicative approach to teaching but go beyond it in order to integrate *a more explicit and intentional focus on the processes of using/learning a language and on the learning competence of the learner, as well as a greater incidence on the reflective dimen-*

sion of language learning and on the role of the learner in learning and in decision-making.

Table 3 (Vieira, 1998) indicates some basic *autonomization parametres* according to which learning activities can be designed or analysed. They refer to the *type, object, operations and nature of learning tasks*.

Table 3
Global Autonomization Parametres of Learning Tasks

TYPE	OBJECT	OPERATIONS	NATURE
1. Analytical-conceptual (mainly oriented towards the conceptual understanding of language & process) *Eg.: reflecting on the importance of collaborative work*	**1. Area of Competence** *1.1 Communication* *1.2 Learning* **2. Focus** *2.1 Linguistic*	**1. Reflection** **2. Experimentation** **3. Negotiation** **4. Monitoring**	**1. Openness** *1.1 Linguistic* *1.2 Thematic* *1.3 Organizational* **2. Organization** *2.1 Individual* *2.2 Collaborative* 2.2.1 Symmetrical
2. Analytical-programmatic (mainly oriented towards decision-making/ action) *Eg.: setting rules for group work*	2.1.1 Formal 2.1.2 Pragmatic *2.2 Process* 2.2.1 Cognitive 2.2.2 Didactic	**5. Self-direction**	2.2.2 Asymmetrical **3. Code** *3.1 MT* receptive & *3.2 FL* productive use

The assumption is not that every task should integrate all the parametres, but rather that these represent a set of alternative choices, the sum of which would be integrated within a pedagogy for autonomy in order to put in practice a specialized methodology. I will focus briefly on the type of tasks —analytical-conceptual and analytical-programmatic— in order to clarify how conceptual understanding and decision-making skills can be built into classroom activities.

Both types of task share *an analytical dimension*, which means that they involve the learner in exploring some aspect of language or the learning process, which can be related to attitudes, knowledge or abilities. However, whereas analytical-conceptual tasks aim primarily at conceptual understanding (eg., reflecting on the importance of collaborative work in class), analytical-programmatic tasks go beyond this level to imply some kind of future action (eg., setting rules to be followed in group work). They involve a greater degree of learner initiative and control in that they require some kind of decision-making with a practical implication for a future situation. Many activities integrate both types of task within different steps (eg., reflecting on the importance of collaborative work in class in order to set rules to be followed in group work; identifying learning problems in order to define aims and learning strategies to overcome them; reflecting upon reading strategies in order to try to use them in a reading task, etc.). The basic principle is that *conceptual understanding and decision-making are both integrated in the learning process*, although the focus may be more on one or the other, depending mainly on the *learner's readiness* —willing-

ness and ability— to assume responsibility in a given area of competence. The degree of teacher/ learner-direction may then be decided according to learner readiness, so that learning how to learn can be a necessary step towards the active exercise of decision-making skills. Progression in self-direction does not follow a linear pattern but rather a cyclical one, with different degrees of control being taken at one given time, depending on the specific object of control and the learner's readiness to control it.

Table 3 can guide the design and appreciation of learning activities, allowing the teacher to monitor pedagogical options within an approach directed towards the development of learner autonomy. Appendix 1 presents an activity which illustrates the application of its parametres. It was part of a program developed in a class of 7th grade students in a regular school (level 3 English), in 1991/92 (Vieira, 1998). A categorization of the three different tasks of the activity is proposed, showing that the activity as a whole focusses both on conceptual understanding (of communication/ learning processes) and on programming (strategic use of language); it integrates the communicative (formal and pragmatic) and learning (cognitive and didactic) competences of the learner, enacted through the operations of reflection, experimentation, negotiation, monitoring and self-direction; the tasks allow for some variation at the linguistic, thematic and organizational levels; the foreign language is the main communication code, and the mother tongue is used for metaprocess awareness (communication problems and strategies). Activities like the one presented are clearly learner-centred and assume an interpretative view of education, whereby the learner is encouraged to explore language and learning.

The following section takes a look at how pedagogical discourse reflects the pedagogical principles adopted.

5. PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE

Because it assumes that the learner should become a critical consumer and a creative producer of linguistic and process knowledge, a pedagogy for autonomy is expected to involve a kind of pedagogical discourse where learners perform a proactive role in the process of knowledge construction. In other words, it is assumed that *pedagogical discourse is not dissociated from pedagogy* and that a qualitative change in pedagogical assumptions, intentions and principles will become visible in classroom interaction (Vieira, 1995; 1997a; 1998). What I propose then, is to take an interpretative perspective on discourse (Hammersley, 1990) and find out how the collaborative construction of knowledge involves learner initiative/ control on two dimensions of interaction as represented in Fig. 2: *managing information* —content and illocution—, and *managing speech rules* —formal expression and turn-taking. For each dimension and correspondent levels of coherence in discourse (Riley, 1985), a set of discursive functions was identified from an analysis of transcripts of lessons where activities of the type presented in the last section were implemented (Vieira, 1998).

Psycho-social & institucional
constraints

Theoretical
assumptions

pedagogical
principles

PEDAGOGY FOR AUTONOMY

COLLABORATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

NEGOTIATION
CONTROL-INITIATIVE

MANAGING
INFORMATION

MANAGING
SPEECH RULES

CONTENT

explore formal linguistic knowledge
explore pragmatic linguistic knowledge
explore (meta) cognitive process knowledge
explore didactic / instructional process knowledge

ILLOCUTION

express personal meanings
negotiate intentions and interpretations
negotiate decisions

EXPRESSION

develop metalanguages
constrast language systems
use communication strategies
participate in error repair

TURN-TAKING

self-select as next speaker
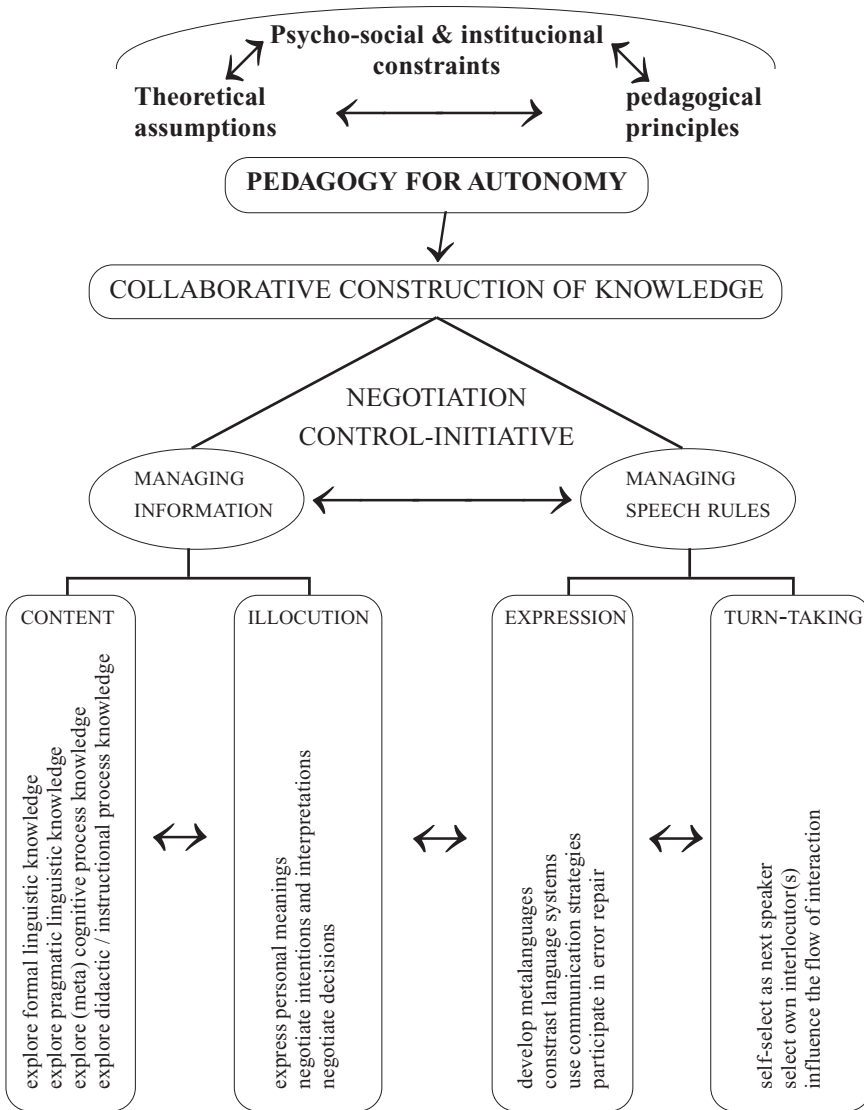select own interlocutor(s)
influence the flow of interaction

Fig. 2 - Learner Discourse in a Pedagogy for Autonomy: Dimensions of Control and Discursive Functions

As far as the management of information is concerned, a pedagogy for autonomy implies *an expansion of the instructional contents* in order to integrate the process dimension of learning, whereby not only language but also the ways in which it is learned and taught become explicit topics of interaction. As a consequence, the learner finds opportunities *to explore linguistic knowledge —formal and pragmatic— as well as process knowledge —(meta)cognitive and didactic—*, two basic components of epistemological autonomy. This implies that *individual perspectives are overtly*

taken into account as contributions to a collaborative process of knowledge (re)construction, whereby the teacher makes his/her own practical theories explicit and acts as a co-manager/ activator of learning. As the learner performs an active role in the management of information, the *legitimation of personal meanings, intentions and interpretations* becomes a basic constitutive rule of classroom interaction, naturally deriving from and leading to processes of *negotiation* (with peers and the teacher) where the learner can perform a variety of illocutionary acts such as: making value judgements, presenting arguments, giving reasons, providing examples, agreeing and disagreeing, formulating hypotheses, making metalinguistic descriptions, explaining concepts, giving and interpreting instructions, etc.. In other words, the learner takes some degree of responsibility for classroom discourse, which then becomes *more self-determined, exploratory and contingent* (Lier, 1996) than it is in a transmissive mode of teaching.

The second dimension of interactive discourse refers to the management of speech rules and integrates the levels of formal expression and turn-taking, which the learner can also learn to control. At the level of formal expression, this means, for example, the *acquisition of metalanguages* to talk about the language and the language learning process, deriving basically from the exploration of knowledge referred to above, often involving the use of the mother-tongue as a supporting resource for metalinguistic and metaprocess awareness, especially with low-level learners. The mother-tongue can also be used for contrastive purposes in order *to facilitate either a productive transference or a useful confrontation of linguistic and sociocultural aspects of language*. Other aspects concerning the level of formal expression include *encouraging the use of communication strategies* in solving communication breakdowns and *involving the learner in error repair*. At the level of turn-taking, it is very difficult for learners to assume control over the interaction except through symmetrical collaborative work (in pairs or groups), which is therefore considered a crucial element within a pedagogy for autonomy. Communication among peers allows the learners *to take and allocate turns*, thus creating conditions for each learner *to influence the flow of interaction*. Within public discourse with the teacher these conditions are constrained by the asymmetrical nature of communication, although learner-centred activities sometimes allow for some discourse control at this level, for instance at the checking stages, if negotiation is promoted before a conclusion is reached by the class.

The discursive functions identified in Fig. 2 could be built into a teacher development instrument for the analysis of learner discourse in order to uncover the pedagogical assumptions underlying classroom interaction in terms of conceptions of *knowledge* (normative vs. dynamic), *learning* (passive vs. exploratory) and *teaching* (directive vs. responsive). A massive absence of those functions would probably indicate a transmissive view of education, whereas their presence would be a signal of an interpretative stance, more likely to have learner autonomy as a pedagogical goal.

Appendix 2 presents a transcript of extracts from the interaction generated by the activity in Appendix 1 at the checking stages of Tasks A and C (Vieira, 1998). As we read this, it becomes clear how at least some of the discursive functions from Fig. 2 apply to learner discourse in this case: the interaction involves the learners in exploring linguistic and process knowledge, expressing personal meanings and interpretations, developing a metalanguage to talk about communication problems and strate-

gies, and participating in error repair (own error and text error). The transcript shows that even in teacher-directed interaction, which to a large extent follows the typical pattern of classroom discourse —Initiation(T)->Response(L)->Feedback(T)—, it is possible for learners to perform a pro-active role as they make relevant contributions to the way the interaction unfolds. It illustrates the process of collaborative construction of knowledge on the basis of negotiation, whereby learners assume some degree of control over the information and speech rules dimensions of pedagogical discourse.

6. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Let us imagine a community of teachers who decide collaboratively upon their actions, whose decisions are contingent on the learners' needs, expectations and interests, who negotiate the curriculum with the learners, who teach in a research-like mode, who confer with one another in trying to make sense of the problematic nature of professional situations, who tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty as part of their development process, who have the time and the willingness for regular professional up-dating, who dare to question the social and institutional contexts and confront established discourses and practices in struggling to improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences and the rationality and justice of school.

This would give us a vision of an ideal context for developing a pedagogy for autonomy as a school philosophy. In fact, and although no such conditions exist, teacher education research has emphasized a view of the teacher and of the school culture that corresponds closely to the one given above. I am referring particularly to the "reflective movement", whose aim is *to empower teachers through an inquiry-oriented approach*. When teachers inquire about teaching and learning, and about the contexts where teaching and learning take place, it is expected that they develop a personal and a collective sense of direction that allows them to take self/ socially-determined actions which are both responsive to contexts and likely to bring about significant change. The personal and social reconstruction of pedagogical knowledge is thus seen as the basis and the outcome of the innovation of school practice, which helps to explain why, for example, action research is seen as a powerful instrument for teacher development and school reform.

The point I would like to make here is that unless reflective teaching integrates the goal of learner autonomy, I cannot see how education can become an emancipatory process for both teachers and learners. In other words, I believe that *the power of reflective teacher education/practice can be strongly enhanced through its articulation with an explicit and intentional focus on learner autonomy*, so that teachers and learners can become interdependent partners in the social reconstruction of academic and social knowledge and in bridging the gap between school and life.

Table 4 presents a framework for in-service teacher development programs (Vieira, 1997b, 1997c) which derives from a teacher development project where the aims of reflective teaching and autonomous learning through action research in the school context were combined (Vieira & Moreira, 1993-96). The project involved 13 secondary school teachers in developing action research projects, each in one of their classes, where some dimensions of learner autonomy were pedagogically explored.

The results were positive for both teacher and learner development, showing how universities and schools can collaborate in the reconstruction of pedagogical knowledge and the renovation of school practices (cf. Vieira, 1996).

Table 4
Teacher Development for Learner Autonomy
—Guidelines for in-service EFL teacher development programs—

GUIDING QUESTIONS / PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTED TASKS
1. How does teacher development relate to pedagogy? *Only a teacher-centred approach to teacher training can foster a learner-centred approach to teaching!* Present the rationale for a reflective approach to teacher training: assumptions, guiding principles, constraints. Contrast it with other teacher training models (craft model; applied science model). Relate training models to pedagogical implications.	- exploring relevant questions on teacher training (theoretical, technical, ethical) - discussing the emancipatory power of a reflective approach - identifying practical constraints - clarifying concepts: teacher/ learner-centredness - creating a metalanguage - providing a select bibliography (...)
2. What sort of language teacher are you? *To head somewhere, you have to know where you stand!* Make teachers aware of their own theories and pratices, of their professional beliefs and dilemmas. Where do they come from? How can they be interpreted? What social values do they embody? What power relationships do they assume?...	- exploring relevant questions on personal teaching approaches (theoretical, technical, ethical) - uncovering personal theories - describing teaching practices - scrutinizing procedures, tasks & materials (observation, content analysis,...) - identifying professional needs - clarifying concepts: teaching & learning - creating a metalanguage - providing a select bibliography (...)
3. What do you know about a pedagogy for autonomy (PA)? *Autonomy is not a utopian pedagogical goal!* Provide information about a PA: what it is and how it differs from other current approaches (for eg., CLT); how it can be facilitated; what it means for the teacher; what experiments have been conducted all over the world; what are the contextual constraints to be considered; how you can adjust it to your own situation.	- exploring relevant questions on a PA (theoretical, technical, ethical) - confronting a PA with personal theories & practices - scrutinizing procedures, tasks & materials (observation, content analysis,...) - clarifying concepts: PA - creating a metalanguage - providing a select bibliography (...)
4. How can you move towards a pedagogy for autonomy? *To learn it, do it!* Prepare teachers for action research: what it it and how it relates to teaching. Give teachers support in designing and implementing small-scale action research projects in their own classes. Help them evaluate processes and outcomes.	- exploring relevant questions on action research (theoretical, technical, ethical) - designing pedagogical projects within a PA - monitoring teaching & learning within a PA - evaluating processes & outcomes of a PA - clarifying concepts: teacher as researcher/ PA - creating a metalanguage - providing a select bibliography (...)
5. How can you get other teachers involved? *Let others hear your own voice!* Encourage publishing and participation in professional meetings. Encourage collaborative action among teachers.	- writing reports of action-research projects - presenting / comparing results - sharing ideas and materials in schools - involving peers in collaborative inquiry - joining professional groups and associations (...)

7. FINAL REMARKS

In proposing a framework where pedagogy and autonomy can meet, I have outlined some basic conditions and principles of a pedagogy for autonomy and pointed out implications for teacher and learner roles, learning activities, learner discourse and teacher development. I guess this is too much to cover in just one paper, but I hope to have achieved some coherence in making my point that the classroom setting is a potential context for the application of the autonomy concept, and that a *pedagogy for autonomy in the school context essentially seeks to facilitate an approximation of the learner to the learning process and content, by setting conditions which increase motivation to learn, interdependence relationships, discourse power, ability to learn and to manage learning, and a critical attitude towards teaching and learning.* I believe that the proposed approach does not represent a trivialization of the autonomy concept and that it shows teachers a way to work within the limits set up by the institutional context without running the risk of self-delusion.

At present, school pedagogy is still far from the autonomy ideal, and teacher education programs can have a significant role in changing this situation. In my and some of my colleages' experience within pre-service FL teacher training at the Universidade do Minho, we have been trying to integrate learner autonomy as a basic component in Methodology courses and supervisory practices in the teacher training year, along with the use of action research as a strategy for reflective teacher development. As pointed out before, we have found that there is a close interplay between reflective practice and a pedagogy for autonomy. For the past four years, our pre-service supervision project has achieved positive outcomes with about 150 student teachers and we hope that their experience during their training year has a positive impact on subsequent professional practice. I strongly believe that teacher education programs —both pre-service and in-service— can have a positive influence on (re)constructing teachers' pedagogy, in so much as those programs aim at *developing teachers who can and are willing to go beyond the technician role and become the authors of their own thought and action, within an interpretative view of education.*

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APPENDIX 1: A learner-centred activity (Vieira, 1988)

Think about....how you say what you want to say (making plans)
(PDCA-UM-1991/92)

A. A dialogue about "Making Plans"

1. Read the dialogue and answer the questions

A: Where are you going to spend your summer holidays?
B: Hmmm...
A: Here in Braga?
B: No. I going to Sevilha.
A: There is a mistake . Come on. Say it again.
B: I 'm going to Sevilha.

A: Oh! You are going to visit the "Expo 92"!
B: Yes. My parents go with me.
A: My parents are going with me. Repeat.
B: My parents are going with me.
A: Good. Have you ever been to Spain before?
B: Yes.

Questions:
a. Who are A and B?   __ A is a teacher and B is a student
                             __ A and B are two friends
                             __A is B's mother
b.Where are they? _____
c.What are they doing? _____
d.Is there any problem with B? _____

2 . At home...try to complete the rest of the dialogue:

A:How long are you going to stay in Sevilha?
B:Well...
A: _____
B:No. I'm going stay for one week.
A:There is a mistake . Come on. Say it again.
B: _____
A:Where are you going to stay? At a hotel?
B:No. Hotels are very expensive.We...how do you say "parque de campismo"?
A: _____
B:We are going to stay in a camping site.
A:Good! Are you going to Madrid?
B:No.I been there two years ago.
A: _____
B:I've been there two years ago.
A:Good. You're lucky!

B. Conversation about summer holidays

1. Can you talk to your partner about holiday plans?
Think and...get ready! CAN YOU...   _ x ?

Ask where he is going to spend his holidays   _ x ?
Ask when he is going   _ x ?
Ask how he is going   _ x ?
Ask how long he is going to stay there   _ x ?
Ask where he is going to stay   _ x ?
Ask what he is going to do   _ x ?
Say where you are going to spend your holidays   _ x ?
Say when you are going   _ x ?
Say how you are going   _ x ?
Say how long you are going to stay there   _ x ?
Say where you are going to stay   _ x ?
Say what you are going to do   _ x ?

Ask your partner about what you cannot say (At home, check your doubts in your book/notebook)

PAIR WORK: Conversation in English (5 minutes)
Talk with you partner for 5 minutes about your plans for your summer holidays. Ask and answer questions. Try to do it in English all the time.

Did you talk for 5 minutes?   YES __ NO __

Did you talk in English all the time?   YES __ NO __
Did you work all the time?   YES __ NO __

C. Communication problems and communication strategies

Quando estás a falar com alguém, em Português ou em Inglês, podem surgir vários **problemas de comunicação**. Durante a conversa de há pouco com o teu colega, sentiste algum dos seguintes problemas?

__ dificuldade em iniciar, continuar ou terminar a conversa
__ dificuldade em exprimir ideias de forma clara
__ dificuldade em falar com razoável correcção gramatical
__ não saber o nome de uma coisa de que se está a falar
__ esquecer de repente como se diz alguma coisa
__ sentir que o interlocutor não ouviu bem ou não percebeu o que se disse
__ não perceber bem o que o interlocutor quer dizer
__ não ouvir o que o interlocutor disse

Para resolver problemas de comunicação, podes usar várias estratégias de comunicação*. Na conversa que tiveste com o teu colega há pouco, usaste alguma das seguintes estratégias?*

__ hesitar (Hmmm...well...) para se ter tempo de pensar no que se vai dizer
__ usar gestos para exprimir o que se quer
__ usar o português em vez da língua estrangeira
__ tentar exprimir uma ideia de várias maneiras, com palavras conhecidas
__ tentar dizer o que se quer da forma mais correcta possível
__ pedir ajuda ao interlocutor (ex., perguntar como se diz alguma coisa)
__ pedir ao interlocutor para repetir ou explicar melhor
__ repetir o que se disse para o interlocutor ouvir ou perceber melhor
__ perguntar ao interlocutor se está perceber o que se diz

Analysis of "Think about... how you say what you want to say (making plans)"

PARAMETRES (cf. Table 3)	TASK A	TASK B	TASK C
Type			
1. Analytical-conceptual	A-C	A-C	A-C
2. Analytical-programmatic		A-P	(A-P)
Object			
1. Area of competence			
1.1 Communication	C	C	C
1.2 Learning	(L)	(L)	L
2. Focus			
2.1 Linguistic: Formal/Pragmatic	L:F/P	L:F/P	
2.2 Process: Cognitive/Didactic	P:C/D	P:C	P:C
Operations			
1. Reflection	R	R	R
2. Experimentation	(E)	E	
3. Negotiation	N(*)	N	N(*)
4. Monitoring	(M)	M	M
5. Self-direction	(S-D)	S-D	(S-D)

Nature			
1. Openness			
1.1 Linguistic	(L)	L	L
1.2 Thematic	(T)	(T)	T
1.3 Organizational	O$^{(*)}$	O$^{(*)}$	O$^{(*)}$
2. Organization			
2.1 Individual	I	I	I
2.2 Collaborative: Sym./Asym.	C$^{(*)}$: S/A	C:S	C$^{(*)}$: S/A
3. Code			
3.1 Mother-tongue: Rec./Prod.			MT:R/P
3.2 Foreign language: Rec./Prod.	FL:R/P	FL:R/P	

(*) The task involved collaborative work in pairs and later with the teacher (checking stage)

APPENDIX 2: Lesson extracts (Vieira, 1998)

Activity : Think about...how you say what you want to say (making plans)

Prof: (...) T. what are they doing? (refere-se às personagens A e B não identificadas de um diálogo: professor e aluno)
T: they are talking
Prof: they are talking. just talking?
Als:// in//
Al?: making plans
Prof: I want you to be... more specific
S: / A is teaching B
Prof: okay. S said A is teaching B. you can say it in other words. JC
JC: they are talking about summer holidays
Prof: they are talking about summer holidays
I: they have a dialogue about the hmm about the the holidays
Prof: about summer holidays. okay. but hmm most of all, they are in the classroom talking about summer holidays and S what did you say?
S: A is teaching B
Prof: A is teaching B so B is learning a language at school. which language?
Als: // english//
Prof: is there any problem with B? R
R: yes
Prof: which problems?
S?: he don't speak
R: / he don't speak hmm
Prof(int): no. he speaks. he speaks.yes or no?
S: / he doesn't speak very well
Als: // yes//
Prof: but (sus)
S: he doesn't speak very well
Als: // (in) //

Prof: only one okay?

R?: he didn't speak well

Prof: he doesn't (sus)

Als e Prof: // speak well//

Prof: he makes mistakes. N

N: he doesn't make the correct sentences

Prof: he doesn't make correct sentences. okay, that's good... let's see which mistakes B hmm has in the dialogue. so S you may begin

S: na na quarta linha I going to Sevilha

Prof: I going to Sevilha. what's missing there?

S: o verbo hmm

Prof(int): no no. you say the word

S: xx I amxx

Prof: I'm or I am (sus)

S: going to Sevilha

Prof: good. do you agree?

Als. // yes//

Prof: yes . I'm going to Sevilha. another mistake.hmmm T

(.....................)

Prof: no. okay. so, what kind of problem does B have? is is a vocabulary problem?

Als: // no//

N?: it's a grammar problem

Prof: it's a (sus)

Als: // grammar problem//

Prof: yes. he has some problems with grammar. okay

Als: //grammar//

(.....................)

Prof: (...) ora bem. portanto. quando falamos com alguém hmm em português, mais quando falamos usando uma língua estrangeira, no nosso caso o inglês, temos por vezes, temos algumas vezes, temos bastantes vezes, enfim, depende da nossa capacidade de falar, da nossa capacidade de comunicação nós muitas vezes encontramos problemas de comunicação ... já todos experimentaram isso?

H: no

Prof: não. H. nunca experimentaste?

H: o quê?

Prof: quereres dizer uma coisa e não saberes muito bem como dizer? (risos e comentários) já deves ter experimentado. okay. we are going to think about communication problems and... how you can solve your communication problems. N. do you want to say something?

N: yes

Prof: so. let's listen. what is it?you can say it in Portuguese if it is difficult to say it in english

N: when I talk English I was... tremer

Prof: nervous?

N: yes

Prof: why?

N: hm (in) when I talk strange persons

Prof: yes . if when you talking to an English person?

N: yes

Prof: yes. you are nervous because you are afraid of what?what are you afraid of?

N: I'm afraid I cannot say hmm the sentences correctly

L: / mistakes

Prof: yes. but don't worry about the correction of the sentences so much N, be-
cause they can understand us even when we make mistakes. eles são capazes
de perceber mesmo quando a gente dá erros. okay?... so. let's go on. another
paper for you

(.....................)

Prof: (...) so let's talk about communication problems.the problems you felt some
minutes ago. so N. which problems did you feel?... now you can speak in
Portuguese

N: anyone

Prof: no problems?

N: no problems

Prof: good.hmmm L. which problems did you feel?

L: *dificuldade em exprimir ideias de forma clara, dificuldade em falar com
razoável correcção gramatical, sentir que o interlocutor não ouviu bem ou
não percebeu o que se disse, não perceber bem o que o interlocutor quer
dizer*

Prof: okay... S

S: todos

Prof: todos?...(comentários dos colegas) T

T: *sentir que o interlocutor não ouviu bem ou não percebeu o que se disse*

Prof: mais...C

(.....................)

Prof: exacto. eu perguntei-vos como alunos de uma escola, como alunos, alguma
vez sentiram isto sem ser a falar com os vossos colegas? (refere-se ao problema
de não se compreender o interlocutor na actividade realizada em pares)

J: more or less

Prof: what do you mean? o que é que queres dizer com isso. diz lá J

J: às vezes não se entende bem o que o colega quer dizer

Prof: só o colega?

C: os professores às vezes também

Prof: a C disse os professores às vezes também... exacto. acho que há um problema
às vezes de comunicação entre professores e alunos, não é? ...okay. any other
problems?

Als: //no//

(.....................)

Prof: JC. so. what communication strategies did you use when you were talking
to C?

JC: *hesitar para se ter tempo de pensar no que se vai dizer*

Prof(int): vocês fizeram isso?

Als: // fizemos//

Prof: ou quando hesitaram ficaram só...

JC: posso? *tentar dizer o que se quer da forma mais correcta possível., repetir o que se disse para o interlocutor ouvir ou perceber melhor*

Prof: okay

C?: eu pus outra s'tora

Prof: ah?

Al? eu pus outra

Prof: qual?

Al?: *usar gestos para exprimir o que se quer dizer*

Prof: exactamente. aliás, uma de vocês perguntou-me . ó s'tora como é que se diz apanhar banhos de sol?

M: sunbath

Prof: eu sei. eu também sabia dizer-lhe, só que eu acho que enquanto ela estava a ter uma conversa com o colega não fazia sentido eu estar a dar-lhe significados, não é? então acho que devias dizer isso de outra maneira, não é?... mesmo à tua colega. se estivesses lá fora de certeza que tinhas que te desenrascar e que se fizesses determinados gestos as pessoas te iam perceber. também podias fazer o quê por exemplo, em vez de um gesto? um desenho ... mais

---

( )	: extra-textual information
xxlínguaxx	: unclear segment
(in)	: inaudible segment
(int)	: interruption
(sus)	: suspension, usually through rising intonation
well. okay. etc.	: the full stop indicates a brief pause, usually at the end of the sentence
is she here?	: the question mark indicates rising intonation with interrogative function
well, she is etc.	: the comma indicates a brief pause within the same sentence
...but...she etc.	: three dots indicate a longer pause
hm, hmm	: hesitation
// yes //	: simultaneous speech (two or more locutors) she is fine
/yes yes	: place where second utterance starts in simultaneous with the first
(.....................)	: interactive sequence ommited