

UNDERSTANDING REPRESENTATIONS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ROLES IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN THE LIGHT OF TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT: *This paper examines the contributions of transitivity analysis to the comprehension of representations of the roles of EFL teachers and students, in different contexts. Representations are the meanings constructed socio-historically in the linguistic activity of the different practical activities individuals participate in in the social formations they belong to. Data are from four research corpora. Participants were from: a basic education school, an undergraduate EFL teacher education course, the HR department of a factory and an undergraduate hotel management and administration course. Participants of processes, processes and circumstances were examined. Results suggest transitivity analysis is a powerful instrument to understand representations of learning and teaching in relation to their contexts.*

KEY-WORDS: *representations, EFL teachers and students, transitivity analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics*

RESUMO: *Este estudo examina as contribuições da análise da transitividade para a compreensão das representações dos papéis de professores e alunos de ILE, em contextos diferentes. Representações são os significados construídos sócio-historicamente na atividade lingüística das diferentes atividades práticas nas quais os indivíduos participam nas formações sociais às quais pertencem. Os dados são de quatro corpora. Os participantes são de: uma escola de educação básica, um curso de Letras, o Departamento de Recursos Humanos de uma empresa, e um curso de Hotelaria. Os participantes dos processos, os processos, e as circunstâncias foram examinados. Os resultados sugerem que a análise da transitividade é um instrumento poderoso para compreender as representações sobre ensinar e aprender em relação aos diferentes contextos.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *representações, professores e alunos de ILE, análise da transitividade, Lingüística Sistemico Funcional*

1. Introduction

The fact that language not only represents but also actively constructs our view of the world is a central tenet in Functional Systemic Linguistics (see, for example, Eggins 1994, based on Halliday 1985/1994). Also, the fact that the linguistic choices through which authors represent their views help bring context into text in that they reflect individuals' different fields and locus of social activity or the more general experience of their society and its institutions has been widely discussed in the area (Martin and Rose 2003; Eggins 1994).

This study helps bring the discussion into the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher education by discussing the contributions of transitivity analysis to the comprehension of representations of EFL teaching and learning in different contexts. More specifically, it looks at the contributions of such an analysis to the comprehension of how individuals in a municipal basic education school, a university undergraduate language teacher education course, a large company and a university undergraduate hotel management course understand the roles of EFL teachers and students. The study, which is part of a larger project which aims at investigating the different factors involved in teachers' construction of knowledge within a vygotskian perspective (Vygotsky 1930/1978), is based on the assumption that the ways the participants of different social contexts represent EFL teaching and learning in discourse function as indicators of their mental representations and can therefore give us clues to practical educational interventions.

Representations are here understood as the meanings constructed socio-historically by individuals in the linguistic activity of the different practical activities they participate in in the social formations they belong to. These meanings, which are basically related to the properties of these contexts, to the ways such activities are conducted and evaluated, and to the roles individuals perform in them, can be inferred from the linguistic choices participants in these settings make during these activities or when talking about them (Bronckart, Clèmence, Schneuwly and Schürmans 1996).

To achieve the aim of this paper, we will firstly discuss the theoretical constructs within Systemic Functional Linguistics the study is based on. Secondly, we will present the methodological procedures. Thirdly, we will discuss the findings of the study and finally, we will offer some concluding results.

2 Theoretical constructs

As posed by Halliday (1985/1994), language is used to represent patterns of experience, that is, it “enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them” (:106). For the author, experience consists of ‘goings-on’ – happening, doing, sensing, meaning and being and becoming, which are all sorted out in the grammar of the clause. Therefore, as well as having meaning as message and meaning as an exchange, the clause is also “a mode of reflection, of imposing order on the endless variation and flow of events” (:106), that is, it has meaning as a representation. Transitivity, the grammatical system by which this mode of reflection is achieved, construes the world of ‘goings-on’, or experience, into a manageable set of process types.

The experiential (or ideational) meanings realized through the transitivity system, “don’t simply translate a pre-existing ‘reality’ into words”, however; “rather speakers and writers construe their experience of reality as discourse” (Martin and Rose 2003:66). This means that each author of text represents a part of their own experience or the more general experience of their society and its institutions in a certain field of social activity from different perspectives. On the other hand, by representing in discourse different perspectives, authors also carry the contexts in which the texts were produced into their texts. As Eggins (1994:7) said, “in some way context is in text: text carries with it, as a part of it, aspects of the context in which it was produced and, presumably, within which it would be considered appropriate.” Also, as she said further on (:11), “each text we participate in is a record of the meanings that have been made in a particular context.”

These constructs support this study in relation to the connection between the meanings made in discourse by the research participants from each particular institutional context and their work and/or study contexts.

However, although the grammatical system of Transitivity, which construes the world of experience into a set of process types, explains how phenomena of the real world are represented as linguistic structures,

the three semantic categories this set consists of: the process itself, the participants in the process and the circumstance(s) associated with the process are too general concepts to explain very much. According to Halliday, “when we come to interpret the grammar of the clause, we need to recognize **functions** which are more specific and which may differ according to the type of process being represented and the particular kinds of **participant role** that are systematically associated with each” (:107, emphasis mine).

Material, mental and relational are the three main types of processes (Halliday 1985/1994). Material processes encode experience which goes on in the world around us; they are processes of ‘doing’ (as in ‘the lion caught the tourist’), expressing the notion that some entity ‘does’ something ‘to’ some other entity, but they are also processes of ‘happening’ (as in ‘the tourist was caught by the lion’); and they can be not only concrete processes but also abstract processes, like ‘dissolving’ and ‘resigning’ (:110-1). Key participant roles in material processes are those of actor and goal (:143); and others may be the ones of range and beneficiary (:144-9). Mental processes encode experience which goes on in our inner world of consciousness and imagination. They are processes of ‘sensing’: feeling, thinking and perceiving/seeing, and their three categories are: 1 perception (*see, hear, feel*), 2 affection (*like, fear, worry, hurt, be scared*), 3 cognition (*think, know, understand, believe, puzzle*) (:118). For Halliday, “the ‘inner’ experience of mental processes is harder to sort out; but it is partly a kind of replay of the ‘outer’, recording it, reacting to it, reflecting on it, and partly a separate awareness of our states of being” (:106). Key participant roles in mental processes are those of senser and phenomenon (:143). Relational processes encode the relation of one fragment of experience to another (classifying and identifying) (:107). They are processes of being (:119). Key participant roles in relational processes are those of carrier and attribute, of identified and identifier, and of token and value (:143).

Besides these three main types, Halliday mentions three others: behavioural processes, verbal processes and existential processes. Behavioural processes represent our manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness and physiological states: they are processes of physiological and psychological behaviour (*breathing, coughing, smiling, dreaming, staring*). According to Halliday, the following types are typical behavioural processes: 1 *look, watch, stare, listen, think, worry, dream*: [near mental] processes of consciousness represented as forms of behaviour; 2 *chatter, grumble, talk*: [near verbal] processes; 3 *cry, laugh, smile, frown, sigh, snarl*,

whine: physiological processes manifesting states of consciousness; 4 *breathe, cough, faint, yawn, sleep*: other physiological processes; 5 *sing, dance, lie (down), sit (up, down)*: [near material] bodily postures and pastimes (:139). They key participant role in behavioural processes is that of behaver (:143). Verbal processes represent the symbolic relationships constructed in human consciousness and enacted in the form of language, like saying and meaning. Key participant roles in verbal processes are those of sayer and target (:143), and another one may that of receiver (:144-9). Existential processes are the ones by which phenomena of all kinds are simply recognized to 'be', that is to exist, or to happen (:107). Examples of existential processes are: *there to be, exist, remain, arise, occur* (:142). The participant role in existential processes is that of existent (:143).

Egins (1994:77) explains that the grammatical patterns processes (verbs) and participants in processes (nouns) express the kind of action being realized (doing, feeling, saying, thinking, defining) or, in other words, "who is doing what to whom". She also explains that the circumstances (prepositional phrases and adverbs) tell us "where, when, how, why and with what" the action took place (:83).

Martin and Rose (2003), in turn, group the basic categories of experience represented by clauses in the grammar of English described by Halliday (1985/1994) as the 'clause as representation' (:71) into four general kinds of processes: doing, saying, sensing, and being. For them, processes of doing represent material actions: what people do, or what happens (:72); processes of saying and sensing are types which can project another 'figure' (:70), the term the authors give to the arrangement of process, participants and circumstances, after Halliday and Matthiessen (1999), or a thing (:74-75); and processes of being are those used "to ascribe qualities to people and things, to classify them as one thing or another, to name their parts, or to identify them (:76). For the authors, one possible approach to analysis of the experience represented in texts is to look at the roles of participants of processes as a text unfolds. For them, analysis of participation can bring out how dependent, active and interesting people can be construed in discourse, for example. Also, focus on agency can highlight how participants are construed more or less agentive (:86-7).

3 Methodological procedures

Data were taken from four different research corpora (cf Abud 2006; Batagini 2006; Castro et al 2005; Galvão 2006), of projects developed at the Post-Graduation Programme of Applied Linguistics of University of Taubaté. They were collected through audio-recorded semi-structured interviews, which were transcribed (Abud 2006; Batagini 2006; Galvão 2006), and through questionnaires (Castro et al 2005). Research participants are from four different contexts: a municipal basic education school (teachers and students), the undergraduate EFL teacher education course of a large university (EFL future teachers), a large company in the Paraíba Valley (a supervisor and a junior HR analyst, formerly an English teacher), and an undergraduate hotel management and administration course (EFL students and a teacher of another discipline), all in the interior of the state of São Paulo.

For each of the four groups of research participants, we first examined the participants of the processes selected by the research subjects to identify those of which teachers and students were the first participants of. Secondly, we sorted out the processes identified in categories of doing, sensing and being (Martin and Rose 2003:71-86). Thirdly, we examined the other participants of the processes identified, as well as the circumstances involved, and finally, we grouped these processes by type and topic.

4 Results

Results show that the participants (teachers and students) from both the educational contexts (the basic educational school and the university undergraduate foreign language teacher education course), and the professional (educational) contexts (the large company in the Paraíba Valley and the undergraduate hotel management and administration course) selected processes of doing, of sensing and saying, and of being (relational: intensive and relational: possessive processes) (Halliday 1985/1994; Martin and Rose 2003) and positioned the EFL teacher as the Actor or Behavior, as the Senser or the Sayer, and as the Carrier of attributes of these processes. While making these choices for the EFL teacher, the research participants from both types of contexts also selected the teacher's teaching actions as well as his/her own learning actions; the teacher's knowledge of and about the foreign language as well as his/her verbal skills to teach it; and the qualities they reputed necessary and significant for the management of classroom situations and the building of effective relationship with the students, as Goal or

Range, as Phenomenon or Verbiage, and as Carrier: Attribute and Carrier: Possessor, respectively, that is, as the second participants of the processes they selected. In doing so, and also in choosing some particular circumstances (signalled * in the examples in Table 1 below), they construed the EFL teacher as a professional who must be skilled in the use of the language he/she teaches and also have the theoretical knowledge about it to draw upon for his/her teaching, but also as one who must carry personal attributes such as patience, gentleness, or the ability to build adequate relationships with learners, among others, to create favourable learning conditions. Moreover, they construed the EFL teacher as a professional who must engage in processes of continuous learning and improvement. In ultimate analysis, by construing the EFL teacher through these choices, the research participants revealed their representation of the EFL teaching-learning process as one in which teachers are expected to play a very active central role, in terms of both the knowledge they carry with them, which they are expected to pass on to students, and their personal qualities, with the support of which they are expected to build a good relationship with learners. To illustrate these findings, we provide examples in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – EFL teacher as Actor or Behavior, Senser or Sayer, or Carrier

1 Processes of doing: Focus on actions – Teacher as Actor or Behavior
1a Teaching actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmit the subject, the specific knowledge (BES-T1) • Transmit knowledge (BES-T2) • Pass as much information as possible. (BES-T2) • Prepare the content he/she is going to teach. (BES-T1) • Give examples (BES-S2) • Bring new things <i>to class</i> (BES-S1) • Stimulate students (BES-S1) • Involve the students <i>with his/her knowledge of the language*</i> (TEC-

<p>S4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulate students' learning (BC-T) • Bring different types of texts, <i>from magazines, newspapers, the internet, and materials, tapes, books</i> (BC-T) • Prepare the lesson (BC-S) • Interact with astudents (HoMAC-T) • Bring reality <i>into the classroom</i> (HoMAC-T) • Transmit information <i>with clarity</i>, contents, lesson themes (HoMAC-S3) • Lead the group <i>so as not to have problems with discipline</i> (HoMAC-S3) • Manage difficult situations in class (HoMAC-S1)
<p>1b Learning actions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Always</i> educate and inform him / herself (BES-T2) • Improve his/her teaching techniques (BES-S2) • Learn new teaching techniques (BES-S2) • Learn <i>constantly</i> (BES-2) • Learn <i>constantly</i> (BC-T) • Study and learn constantly (HoMAC-S1)
<p>2 Processes of sensing or saying: focus on knowledge and verbal skills – Teacher as Senser or Sayer</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the contents <i>well</i>. (BES-T1) • Know grammar and vocabulary (BES-T2)

- **Know** *a lot about the language** (BES-S1)
- **Speak** the language (BES-S1)
- **Explain** *well / calmly / until everything is clear* (BES-S2 – three different instances)
- **Know** the language (TEC-S1)
- **Know** how to transmit his/her knowledge (TEC-S1)
- **Know** how to transmit his/her message (TEC-S2)
- **Know** how to listen to students (BC-T)
- **Speak** the language (HoMAC-T)
- **Know** the language (HoMAC-S3)
- **Know** how to pass information to the students *in the easiest way possible* (HoMAC-S1)
- **Explain** *patiently because no one learns rapidly* (HoMAC-S3)
- **Know** how to explain what he/she knows (HoMAC-S3)

3 Processes of being: Focus on attributes –

Teacher as Carrier or Carrier: Possessor

- **Be** *friendly so as to have a good work environment in class* (BES-T1)
- **Be** open to students' opinions (BES-T1)
- **Have** a good relationship with students (BES-T1)
- **Be** dedicated to the students and to the subject he/she teaches (BES-S2)
- **Be** gentle (BES-S1)
- **Be** active (TEC-S2)
- **Be** interested / a nice, gentle person / patient (BC-T – three different

instances)

- **Be** didactical / hardworking (BC-S – two different instances)
- **Have** a close relationship with the students (BC-S)
- **Be** an extrovert *to create interaction*. (HoMAC-S2)
- **Be** patient *so that everyone will understand everything*. (HoMAC-S3)
- **Be** polite (HoMAC-S2)

Key: BES = Basic Education School; TEC = Teacher Education Course; BC = Business Context; HoMAC = Hotel Management and Administration Course; T = Teacher; S = Student; T1 = Teacher 1; T2 = Teacher 2; S1 = Student 1; S2 = Student 2, etc.

Results also show that the participants from the basic education course, from the hotel management and administration course, and from the business context also positioned the EFL student as actors of material and behavioural processes, with a focus on learning actions; as Sensers and Sayers (which will be exemplified and discussed later on); and as Carriers of attributes of being and having, as can be seen in Table 2 below. As we will argue later on, however, the processes the EFL student is positioned as first participant of, as well as the other participants and some circumstances, selected by the research participants from the basic education school, are indicative that he/she acts mainly in reaction to teachers' actions, by paying attention and doing exercises.

Table 2 – EFL student as Actor or Behavior, or Carrier

1 Processes of doing: Focus on actions –

Student as Actor or Behavior

- **Do** all the exercises (BES-S1)
- **Do** everything teacher asks (BES-S1)
- **Pay attention** to what teacher says *in class* (BES-S1)
- **Pay attention** (BES-S2)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate (BES-S1) • Respect teacher (BES-S1) • Attend classes (HoMAC-T) • Practice <i>in class</i> (HoMAC-S1) • Do exercises <i>in class</i> and <i>at home</i> (HoMAC-S1) • Respect the teacher (HoMAC-B2)
<p>2 Processes of being: Focus on attributes –</p> <p>Student as Carrier or Carrier: Possessor</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be interested (BES-S1) • Have a notebook (BES-S2)

Key: BES = Basic Education School; HoMAC = Hotel Management and Administration Course; T = Teacher; S1 = Student 1; S2 = Student 2.

A closer look at the research participants' choices of processes, however, reveal that the participants from the professional (educational) contexts also position the EFL teacher as Initiator/Agent of processes of which the student is the main participant, and in doing so, they then construe this professional as causing/initiating, or in other words, as being the agents of the other participant's actions. This suggests that for these participants, the role of the EFL teacher involves more than possessing and passing on information which the students will somehow "grasp" or "absorb". In fact these grammatical choices seem to suggest that for these participants, the role of the EFL teacher involves acting upon others so that they will in turn act themselves, be it by using the language, i. e., through 'talk', for example, or by developing conditions that will allow learning to take place, i. e., through 'feeling safe and comfortable in spite of mistakes', 'becoming aware of their progress in learning', or 'doing homework', for example, as can be seen from the examples in Table 3.

Table 3: EFL teacher as Initiator: Agent in professional contexts

BC	HoMAC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let students talk (BC-S) • Require that students do their homework (BC-S) • Make people relax (BC-T) • Make students find out what they are learning, [make them] be aware of their progress in learning (BC-T) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make students feel safe and comfortable <i>in spite of the many language mistakes they may be making</i> (HoMAC-S1) • Make students experience hotel situations (HoMAC-S2)

Key: BC = Business context; HoMAC = Hotel Management and Administration Course; T = Teacher; S = Student; S1 = Student 1; S2 = Student 2.

Also, a closer look at the choices of Other Participants of the processes selected by the research participants from the professional contexts, both for the EFL teacher and EFL student as first participants, as well as at the circumstances that accompany them, suggest that, for them, EFL teaching and learning should meet the needs and circumstances of the contexts where the the language is to be used, and so teacher's and student's actions should be tailored to fit the contextual characteristics and suit the public it is directed to. In this sense, then, unlike the choices of Other Participants of processes and of circumstances made by the research participants from the educational contexts, either too general in nature, as the Goal in 'pass as much information as possible' or the circumstance in 'educate students so that they will have more culture, more knowledge', the choices of Other Participants by the research participants from professional contexts suggest clear-cut teaching actions, aspects of knowledge, and personal attributes, as well as purposes and reasons for the teaching actions, for example, well-tailored to fit the characteristics of such professional contexts, as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: EFL teacher: Comparison of choices of Other Participants of processes by research participants from educational and professional contexts

Educational Contexts	Professional (educacional) Contexts
<p>Goal and Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate students <i>so that they will have more culture, more knowledge</i> (BES-T2) • Transmit the subject, the specific knowledge (BES-T1) • Transmit knowledge (BES-T2) • Pass as much information as possible. (BES-T2) • Do everything <i>so that the student will get a good mark</i> (BES-S1) • Calm students <i>down by showing them that learning a second language is important and easy</i> (TEC-S5) 	<p>Goal and Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a syllabus <i>in accordance with the group's expectations, level of language proficiency</i> (BC-T) • Give students the opportunity to talk (BC-S) • Respect students' capacity to generate knowledge (HoMAC-T) • Teach situations likely to happen in a hotel <i>so that students can learn how to solve them more easily: check-in, check-out, anything that can happen in a bedroom, in the restaurant, so that students can solve them without too much effort.</i> (HoMAC-S1) • Give contents related to the areas of all sectors [in a hotel] <i>because then students will know what to do if a foreign guest shows up.</i> (HoMAC-S2)
<p>Phenomenon and Verbiage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know grammar and vocabulary (BES-T2) • Know <i>a lot about the language</i> (BES-S1) • Speak the language (BES-S1) • Explain <i>well / calmly / until everything is clear</i> (BES-S2 – three different instances) • Know the language (TEC-S1) 	<p>Phenomenon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to identify his/her public and have the strategies for that public (BC-T) • Know everything which happens in a hotel <i>so that he/she can work with specific hotel [management] areas</i> (HoMAC-S2) • Know how to deal with the different people in the company (BC-T)
Carrier: Attribute and Carrier: Possessed	Carrier: Attribute and Carrier: Possessed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be friendly <i>so as to have a good work environment in class</i> (BES-T1) • Have a good relationship with students (BES-T1) • Be active (TEC-S2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be punctual. (BC-S) • Be responsible for students' learning, that is, not only teach but make sure that students learn. (BC-S)
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Key: BES = Basic Education School; TEC = Teacher Education Course; BC = Business Context; HoMAC = Hotel Management and Administration Course; T = Teacher; S + Student; T1 = Teacher 1; T2 = Teacher 2; S1 = Student 1; S2 = Student 2, etc.

In the same way, unlike the choices of Other Participants of processes made by the research participants from the basic education school, which suggest that the role of the EFL student in such a context is to act in response or reaction to what the teacher does or says in classroom, the choices of Other Participants by the research participants from professional contexts suggest clear-cut objectives and purposes for learning actions, tailored to meet the needs and specificities of those contexts, as well as actions and attributes to attain them. It is interesting to notice the emphasis placed upon the necessity of learning EFL in these contexts as expressed by the research participants through the condition 'whether they like to study it or not', or through the choices of the process and Ranges 'do his/her duties and everything that is necessary to learn', among others, which can be seen in Table 5. And it is also particularly interesting to notice the selection of Phenomenons and Verbiages made by these research participants, which again point to the very specific knowledge and skills required of learners to be able to act in such contexts as well as to the necessary involvement and will power to learn them.

Table 5 – EFL student: Comparison of choices of Other Participants of processes by research participants from educational and professional contexts

Basic Education School	Professional (educational) contexts
<p>Goal and Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do all the exercises (BES-S1) • Do everything teacher asks 	<p>Goal and Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate themselves <i>whether they like it</i> [studying English] or not. (BC-S)

<p>(BES-S1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay attention to what teacher says <i>in class</i> (BES-S1) 	<p>(BC-S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to host guests (HoMAC-S3) • Do his/her duties, do everything that is necessary to learn (HoMAC-S2) • Learn pronunciation <i>so that he/she can attend to a foreigner</i> (HoMAC-S3)
	<p>Phenomenon and Verbiage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to learn it [English] <i>so as to survive, to stay in the job market</i> (for those who are employed), <i>to become a young professional with a perspective</i> (for those who are beginning). (BC-S) • Speak the language. (HoMAC-T) • Know how to host guests.(HoMAC-S2) • <i>When the guest arrives at the hotel</i>, know how to answer what he/she will ask, how to attend to his/her necessities (HoMAC-S2)
<p>Carrier: Attribute and Carrier: Possessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be interested (BES-S1) • Have a notebook (BES-S2) 	<p>Carrier: Attribute and Carrier: Possessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be hardworking (BC-S) • Be punctual (HoMAC-T) • Be engaged in his/her own learning. (HoMAC-T)

Key: BES = Basic Education School; TEC = Teacher Education Course; BC = Business Context; HoMAC = Hotel Management and Administration Course; T = Teacher; S = Student; T1 = Teacher 1; T2 = Teacher 2; S1 = Student 1; S2 = Student 2, etc.

5 Concluding remarks:

Results suggest that the ways the research participants from both the educational and the professional contexts construe the roles of the EFL teacher and the EFL student in discourse reveal the ways teachers' teaching and learning actions, knowledge and skills, and the qualities they need to have to carry on classroom actions and to build effective relationship with students, as well as students' learning actions, knowledge and skills to be attained, and attributes to allow them to do so, are viewed in each of these particular contexts.

In the educational contexts, particularly in the basic education school, from which the research participants were both teachers and students, results suggest that the EFL teacher is seen as a professional who must pass on all the knowledge he holds of and about the language he/she teaches to his/her students by making use of personal attributes such as patience and gentleness to build adequate relationships with learners, and so achieve his/her aim.

The EFL student in turn is seen as an agent of actions of reaction or response to the teacher's actions, by paying attention to what he/she says and by using the information received in exercises, for example. Learning and teaching a foreign language is then seen in contexts as this one as a process of giving information (usually about the language) to the students, who, in turn apply the information they receive. This pattern falls into the model of educational discourse which has been traditionally practiced and legitimized through use in contexts such as this across years.

In the professional contexts, on the other hand, results suggest that although the EFL teacher is also seen as a professional who must have control of the language he teaches both in terms of how to use it and in terms of the theoretical knowledge about it, as well as personal abilities with and through which to achieve his/her teaching aims, he/she is also construed as an agent who will bring about students' actions, that is, as someone who will act on students and in so doing will make them act towards their own learning. Besides, results reveal that the language teaching and learning process in these contexts must be directed to the uses people will make of the language being studied, and must be based

on the students' current level of achievement. Teacher's and student's actions should therefore be tailored to fit these contextual characteristics both in terms of the contents to be worked on, which must be related as much as possible to their contexts of use, and in terms of the necessary attributes to attain learning, as being punctual to classes and hardworking, for example.

Again, this pattern is in line with the ways of the contexts in which it was generated. In such professional contexts, results are valued and expected, and attainment of professional competence in any specialized activity viewed as the result of clear-cut and well-defined objectives.

The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of how people in different contexts view the roles of teacher and students in the process of EFL learning and teaching and may be useful to foster reflection in teacher education programmes. However, the study also shows that transitivity analysis can be a powerful instrument to help us uncover meanings and understand representations of language learning and teaching in their relationship to the contexts in which they were generated.

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