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Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis

# Performing carnival: Language learning in a Punjabi Sikh school[1]

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**Abstract**

This paper examines classroom practices and their effects on language learning in the grade one class of a Punjabi Sikh school where students are relatively inexperienced speakers of the medium of instruction, English.  Viewing social interaction as crucial in learning, this study considers the conditions that constrain or enable the appropriation of language.  Bakhtin's notion of carnival is used to analyze particular social relations and their effects on the joint production of language.  Three occasions in the life of this grade one classroom are examined: a common, teacher-directed interaction (IRE sequence); an excerpt of children at play; and a playful interaction between an adult and a group of children.  The study suggests that a certain type of adult participation — the performance of carnival — maximizes opportunities for the appropriation of language.

"Carnival is life turned inside out and upside down" (Lensmire 1994, 374).

## Introduction

Increasingly throughout the 1990s, researchers have investigated the social, cultural, and political practices of second language classrooms, and many of these investigations have drawn on critical, poststructural and sociocultural/historical theory as well as grounded ethnographic research (Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez & Shannon 1994; Gutierrez 1994; Gutierrez, Larson & Kreuter 1995; Willett 1995; Haneda 1997; Toohey 1998; Hall, forthcoming). Interest in the practices of particular classrooms and their specific enactments is based on the conviction that student learning is fundamentally a result of instructional practices created in classroom interaction (Hall, forthcoming). The study presented here contributes to research that examines classroom practices and their effects on language learning.

The pivotal role of social interaction in learning has been formulated by Vygotsky and by other more contemporary advocates of sociocultural/sociohistorical/cultural-historical theory who provide a foundation for this study. Vygotsky's (1978) observation that learners in joint problem-solving with more skilled partners function, in his words, as if they were "a head taller" than themselves, leads us to consider the sociality of learning and the effects of social contexts on learning. Two American researchers, Lave and Wenger (1991), also focus on learning as a process of social interaction, particularly one whereby newcomers participate in "attenuated ways" with "old-timers" in the performance of community practices. The conventionally recognized purpose and outcome of joint participation between more and less experienced participants is for all participants to increase their expertise in the performance of community activities and for newcomers to move toward fuller participation. Lave and Wenger recognize that the particular social arrangements in any community may constrain or facilitate movement toward fuller participation. They consider situations in which newcomers have very little access to the expertise of old-timers, as well as reverse situations and note that learners' trajectories of learning differ as a result.

We examine here the learning of English in an independent Punjabi Sikh school. We have been concerned with examining classroom activities engaged in jointly by more- and less-experienced speakers of English, and with assessing how relationships between them are implicated in the language activities and the learning which occur there. While Julé-Lemke (1998) examines how aspects of the similarity in linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the children (and some of their teachers) might have effects of the development of intersubjectivity between participants, this analysis takes a different approach to examining how language learning might be affected by social relations in the classroom. We have relied here upon Bakhtin's (1981, 1984) formulations of language learning. He expresses the developmental notion of how it is that speakers come to use language as:

> Words are, initially the other's words, and at foremost, the mother's words. Gradually, these 'alien words' change, dialogically, to become 'one's own alien words' until they are transformed into 'one's own words' (Bakhtin 1984, 385).

We learn language, according to Bakhtin, not from dictionaries and grammars, but from the speech of others, from concrete utterances (Bakhtin 1981). He sees learners appropriating language utterances from other speakers; they "take words on." Language use, then, is a joint production as speakers construct their utterances on the basis of their interactions with listeners. Constructing utterances for Bakhtin is a matter of wresting language from "other people's mouths" and "other people's intentions" (1981, 294).

Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986) has also written extensively about a specific social arrangement which he calls carnival. Interested in medieval carnivals, which offered a temporary release from the official social order and a disruption of usual routines, Bakhtin was of the opinion that such a release and suspension of repression could enable free and full participation on the part of those who were customarily lower in social status.

> Carnival is past millennia's way of sensing the world as one great communal performance. This sense of the world, liberating one from fear, bringing the world maximally close to a person and bringing one person maximally close to another (everything is drawn into the zone of free familiar contact), with its joy at change and its joyful relativity, is opposed

to that one-sided and gloomy official seriousness which is dogmatic and hostile to evolution and change, which seeks to make absolute a given condition of existence or a given social order (Bakhtin 1984, 160).

In this celebration of change, carnival displaces hierarchies for the moment, and "new and playful relationships" are established (Young 1997, 249). "In carnival, everyone is an active participant. All distance between people is suspended . . . [there is] free and familiar contact among people" (Bakhtin 1984, 122–3). Carnival is an opportunity to break free of constraints and to "make fun of" those who hold power. Bakhtin called this "making fun" profanation, or "playing with the symbols of higher authority," and pointed to the medieval ritual of uncrowning the king as enacting a celebration of annihilation and renewal and as enacting as well the ambivalent "logic of the carnival world" (1984, 125). Carnival, then, is characterized by paradox and parody, and a sense of the "joyful relativity of all structure and order" (1984, 124). Carnival moments are moments of creativity, freedom, joy and spontaneity. In this study, we attempt to explore how the notion of carnival may be applied to an elementary school classroom in which students are relatively inexperienced speakers of the medium of instruction, English.

Lensmire (1994) considers how carnival is apparent in interactions in a writing workshop in an elementary classroom, and finds that it creates possibilities for some children to appropriate new voices for themselves in playful ways. Young (1997) similarly sees carnivalesque relations as offering secondary school students the possibility of free and active participation in the activities of their classrooms. We have been interested in examining how child learners of a second language, in this case English, come to appropriate the utterances of more experienced speakers of the language in the classroom activities in which they are jointly involved. We have considered how classroom practices constrain or enable this appropriation. What conditions seem to maximize opportunities for language appropriation? Do the particular social relations of carnival, for example, facilitate in any sense the appropriation of the words of others? This study considers these questions with reference to the ethnographic research in which we have been engaged.

**Methodology**

We have been conducting longitudinal ethnographic research on second language acquisition in classrooms located both in public schools as well as in an independent Punjabi Sikh school in a large metropolitan setting (Toohey 1996, 1998; Julé-Lemke 1998). The study reported here focuses on the grade one classroom of the Punjabi Sikh school located on the grounds of a Sikh temple. All the students in the class speak both Punjabi and English and are more or less experienced speakers of each language. All classroom instruction (except for Punjabi language classes and Sikh studies) is in English. The students are all of Punjabi Sikh background. The teacher in this classroom is also Punjabi Sikh and is a member of the students' religious community. The classroom was observed once a week from September to June, and activities were videotaped on ten occasions, for a total of fifteen hours of observation. The following three excerpts of classroom interaction were transcribed from videotapes taken in December 1997, January and February, 1998. Our transcription method is described in Appendix 1.

In selecting these particular interactions for study, we were interested in the conditions that facilitated appropriation of language. Because of discussions in Young (1997) and Lensmire (1994), we hypothesize that moments of carnival might enhance full participation and language learning. With this in mind, we present the following excerpts that represent three specific occasions in the life of the grade one class. The first excerpt illustrates "a traditional speech genre of school talk" (Young 1997, 247), a second shows children at play, and a third describes a group of children interacting with the researcher.

**Cases**

The first interaction excerpt we present is an Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) sequence involving the teacher and the grade one children. A traditional classroom genre, the IRE has been described, documented and critiqued for almost twenty years (Mehan 1979; Cazden 1988; Edwards and Westgate 1994; Nystrand 1997). Cazden (1988)

observes the IRE as the "most common pattern of classroom discourse at all grade levels" (p. 29). Many authors have argued that IREs constrain the participation of students to very brief answers to teacher questions, and that children's possibilities for meaning-making in such a discourse structure are very limited. Tootoosis (1983), for example, sees her subjects' and her subjects' classmates' language as "limited in quantity, substance and purpose in the IRE sequence... There was no observed discovery, clarification or reworking of meaning" (p. 155). Wertsch (1998) argues that the major function of IREs is to "create and maintain . . . the relations of power and authority in classrooms" (p. 123) and Gutierrez and Larson (1994) see the practice as preserving teacher power to control who speaks, about what, and under what conditions.

This first excerpt shows an IRE sequence, which appears to contradict some of the criticisms made of IREs in the past. Here, it appears the teacher actively cooperates with her students in a group meaning-making activity. The task is to brainstorm words that describe a snowman. As the students volunteer answers, Mrs. Singh (all names have been changed to protect confidentiality) writes the words that children volunteer on a piece of chart paper, acknowledging each contribution and making the written form of the words available to all. We interpreted her tone of voice throughout as supportive and kind.

1. Students are at their desks. The teacher is standing at the front asking children to name 'snowman' words. She records student responses on chart paper.

Kunwal:      Scarf.

Mrs. Singh:   Yeah. . . he's wearing a scarf. ((Writes 'scarf' on the chart

              paper and points to another student))

Harman:     (A (jackét.

Mrs. Singh:   . . . (Yeah. . . (jà:ckét=

Jaspreet:     ((Calls out from back row)) =Then how will they put it on snòw?

Mrs. Singh:   Húh? What ís. . . it made (ôf?

Students:     ((Calling out)) Snòw.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mrs. Singh: | ( Snowman is made ó:f |
| Students: | SN_W. |
| Mrs. Singh: | Snòw.  Should I put it down thére?= |
| Students: | ((Chanting)) =Yeah. Yeah. Yes.= |
| Jaspreet: | ((Calling from back of room)) =What are we going to do with this Miss Singh?= |
| Mrs. Singh: | =H/uh?= |
| Jaspreet: | =Journals.<br>⌈(Do our journáls? |
| Student: | ⌊Jour- |
| Mrs. Singh: | ((Laughing)) Yes.  Now you got an idea of why I ám doing thìs.  Yes snowman is màde óf. . . snòw. |
| Students: | Snòw. |
| Mrs. Singh: | And did yóu ever . . . fèel ít? |
| Students: | ((Laughing)) (Còld. |
| Student: | (Yeah. |
| Mrs. Singh: | It ís? |
| Students: | ((In chorus)) C_::LD. |
| Mrs. Singh: | Hmm? |
| Samondeep: | Hárd. |
| Mrs. Singh: | It is hà:rd.  Snowman í:s hà::rd. |
| Students: | ((Calling out with increasing loudness)) Còld. Cò:ld. Có:ld. |
| Mrs. Singh: | Uh-uh quiet.  Hand ú:p.  I need a hand.  (Kamaljeet)? |
| Kamaljeet: | Còld. |

In this sequence, the children are both nominated by Mrs. Singh and nominated by themselves (in "calling out") to answer the questions. "Calling out" makes the linguistic resources of all the students at least audible to all thereby offering the opportunity for the vocabulary to be appropriated by anyone. The children cooperate with both Mrs. Singh and one another in doing this. The teacher orchestrates what appears to be a harmonious group experience, focusing on the meaning-making activity. Mrs. Singh's responses are invariably cooperative (see Hall, forthcoming, for an extended discussion of cooperation in IREs), despite student responses which challenge or object.

When one student offers the word "jacket," the teacher does not write it on the chart (thus not confirming this contribution). Another student, Jaspreet, an experienced English speaker and habitually an active participant, objects to this answer (he says, "Then how will they put it on snow?"), but Mrs. Singh resists verbally evaluating "jacket" as a "wrong answer." She diverts attention back to the meaning-making ("What is it made of?") When Jaspreet asks what the point of the exercise is ("What are we going to do with this, Mrs. Singh?"), he is disrupting the sequence, a disruption that may be seen to contain echoes of a carnivalesque reversal of roles.

Typically in IREs, teachers define the task, students respond. Jaspreet, for a moment, diverts focus from the task to its underlying purpose. Mrs. Singh could have ignored this disruption or suppressed it. Instead, she chooses to include Jaspreet's question in the task, acknowledges his contribution, laughs and addresses her response to the whole class ("Now you know why we are doing this").

In terms of the theory we have been exploring with regard to language learning, it is clear that this particular organization of an IRE makes the linguistic resources of the community available to all. For the children who might not have these vocabulary items in their repertoire, the "calling out" makes those words available to them, and the writing on the chart paper makes their written forms accessible as well. While the interaction is highly structured, and operates to contain carnival, the tone of the interaction is supportive and, potentially at least, includes all the children.

The next two excerpts present, we believe, more carnivalesque examples of social arrangements in the classroom. The first of the two comes from an interaction between students, and the other from an interaction with an adult (one of the researchers, Allyson). These two interactions are structured very differently from the IRE sequence in that the participants make spontaneous contributions, some of which are and some of which are not taken up.

In this excerpt, six boys are at play without an adult present. This example appears carnivalesque in that classroom conventions regarding appropriateness of talk when teachers are present are suspended while the playtime occurs. We would assume all the boys are participants by virtue of their volunteer presence in the group. However, we also see that the power structures operating in this group of students do not allow all to participate. In this carnivalesque interaction, the play appears to solidify power relationships already in place among the children rather than turning life "inside out and upside down" (Lensmire 1994, 374). The boys are playing cars, and Jaspreet seems to take a leadership role in developing the fantasy play, directing one student to become a road, and building a narrative that seems to have possibilities for language development.

2. Six boys are in the frame. They are kneeling on the floor, each playing with a toy car. A nearby chair also serves as a prop as does the chart stand.

| Mark: | NOW G_Y:S .. WE'RE _LL AB_A:RD. |
|---|---|
| Ranjeet: | ⌈(Can wé- |
| Mark: | ⌊((In a sing-song voice)) All aboard everybody áll abôard. |
| | ((Each boy uses their toy car to join in the play surrounding the chair)) |
| Ranjeet: | Can we get óff? ((referring to taking his car off the chair, which he does and then uses the nearby chart stand as a racing track)) |
| Mark: | Yéah that's what // that's what all aboard means. |
| Jaspreet: | Yeah. Whoo. A:h. |
| Ranjeet: | I'm off already. |

Mark:           Hey dude.

Jaspreet:       Hello (there).

Students:       ((Making noise ... laughing)) A:h.  ((laughing as toy cars are

                crashing into other toy cars — the boys look only at their own cars))

Jaspreet:       Hey_(/h?/) this is a slì:de okáy.  Mark is a slì:de ((He slides his car down

                     Mark's back, buttocks and legs)).

                Y-_(/j?/) NO MARK YOU'RE THE SLI:DE, remember?  Ge- but .. keep

                your head up.  Whóa: yèah ... that's fun.

                 ((The boys keep playing noisily.  Mark moved but after

                Jaspreet's instruction, he remained in position))

Ranjeet:        Why do you wánt (Jaspreet) to go up on (yòu)?

                                          (hère)

                ((Two other boys join in using Mark as a roadway.))

Jaspreet:       NO BODY _:LSE.

Mark:            (Why?

Jaspreet:       Cause I'm the bòss.

((Two boys stand up and begin to use the nearby chart stand as a roadway for
their cars.  One boy stands and remains an observer for a time
before joining the two near the chart stand. ))

   In this example, no adult is in charge and power is negotiated within the group of
boys.  Jaspreet actively tries to dominate the group.  He instructs the others as to the
meaning of "All aboard" — perhaps "ventriloquating" an adult's voice (Bakhtin 1986).
The others do appropriate his vocabulary, echoing "All aboard."   After this, Jaspreet
proceeds to exclude all those except his friend, Mark, whom he has deemed the roadway.
Bakhtin sees profanation as "bringing the high low," as blasphemy, sacrilege, obscenity,
"debasings and bringing down to earth . . . linked with the reproductive power of the
earth and the body" (1984, 123).

Using Mark's body as a road suggests an aspect of profanation, of carnival abuse, particularly in Jaspreet's possessive attitude and the movement of his car across Mark's back, around his buttocks, and down his leg.  He doesn't let the others use the roadway (saying "Nobody else. . . cause this [Jaspreet's car] is the boss").  However, rather than encouraging full participation and suspending distance between people, in this peer interaction Jaspreet's social and linguistic capital (apparent in other classroom interactions) seems reinforced.  The other boys stop participating in the narrative, and begin to play nearby but apart.  When one tries to join in, Jaspreet says, "No, no, no! It was only me and Mark."  The dialogue between Mark and Jaspreet continues with Jaspreet dominating.  In this case, unlike in Bakhtin's concept of carnival, the "high" remain "high" — they are not brought "down to earth."

The third example we wish to present also appears to embody elements of carnival.  In this case, six children are sitting on the floor by Allyson (the students call her Ally). Each member of the group is playing with coloured beads and each is constructing narratives about their families, representing each family member by a bead.  Just prior to this excerpt, one of the children has announced that everybody must have only six family members and Allyson, who has seven beads, has protested saying she can't get rid of the baby or the mommy or the grandma.  Then she makes the suggestion that the seventh bead, grandma, could go to India.

3.  Ally:        How 'bòut we how 'bout the grandma?  The grandma's gonna go back to
                 Indìa to see her sistèr=

Harman:         =Could I take the little //red-

Ally:           Can you take her to the airpórt?

Jaspreet:       (Yèah.
                ((Jaspreet is playing with his lego car and so Ally has used this to
                contribute to the developing narrative))

Ally:           _::h.

Dahlijit:       Whát's yóu doíng? ((says this to the girl next to her who is
                arranging her beads))

Jaspreet:       Here's a dòor.

| | |
|---|---|
| Kunwal: | I just need one more because //mine's six. |
| Harman: | Hoo:: |
| | Ooh. |
| Dahlijit: | No more //you nèed. |
| Ally: | I'll take I'll take little. . . little Aman. . . jit with mè. . . |
| | together //we'll go on Air India. |
| Dahlijit: | Can I go with yóu? Could I go with you Ally?? |
| Ally: | Yeàh. This is the big limo //to the Airport. |
| Dahlijit: | Hellò. Hellò. I goíng wíth yóu. Put your. . . We're going with |
| | Ally to India. Put one of //your gùys- ((she says this to the other |
| | children in the circle)) |
| Harman: | I don't wanna leave. I wanna stay at hòme. |
| Ally: | You don't wanna go to Indiá? Why nót? |
| Harman: | I like it hère. |
| Ally: | (You don't like Indía? |
| Kunwal: | (I like Indìa. |
| Dahlijit: | (We're going to (/m??ikæ/). Let's go to (/m?'?i:kæ::/). |
| Ally: | Moríkà_(/mo?ik?/). |
| Harman: | Okay fine. |
| Jaspreet: | I'll take twó: and òne-  ((he is saying he will take two and one family |
| | members — beads — in his car)) |
| Dahlijit: | Let's go to California. |
| Ally: | Where's Morikà_(/ mo?ik?/)? |
| Dahlijit: | One persòn //one person a tìme. |
| Jaspreet: | I'll take à- |
| Amanpreet: | And I'm the bàby  ((She wiggles in delight)) |

We are persuaded while watching this videotaped excerpt and reviewing the transcript that joyful communal performance describes it aptly. The  participation of all seems to embody a sense of  "the joyful relativity of all things" (Bakhtin 1984, 132).   In this section of the play, not everyone participates verbally, but all seem to have the possibility of capturing the floor, if briefly.  Unlike the previous examples, no one here

appears to direct others in the interaction. All can make contributions, some of which are taken up while others are not, but no one is ostensibly in charge. Allyson intentionally creates the carnival mood, hence "performing" it. When writing this paper, she commented:

> The notion of carnival has given me a way to understand what I've observed when being with children, both my students and my own children. I want moments of carnival because I can see that these moments create opportunities to speak. I do this kind of thing whenever I can and I make a point of not squelching the natural childlike disposition in us all.

The conversations are, as a result, not instructional ones, but these conversations illustrate, we think, how conversations which engage learners in the practice of carnival present possibilities for their appropriation of language. The linguistic resources of all the children, as well as those of the native speaker, Allyson, are available for all to appropriate should they wish to. It is also significant that the person who has less linguistic expertise at one point is Allyson, who doesn't know what / moʔikʔ/ is and why its invocation might be so persuasive to Harman. It is also significant that the adult's question is not taken up: the children interpret Allyson's initiation (her question) as not requiring a response. These peers, who may share background knowledge of / moʔikʔ/ are able to ignore the question of the adult. Traditional classroom interactions are disrupted in such moments of carnival. Such intense play seems to be a sign of the teacher/student or, in this case, adult/student, hierarchy being temporarily reversed. Playful new relationships, free and familiar participation (Young 1997; Lensmire 1994) — characteristics of carnival — seem actively present in this case.

**Discussion**

We have here considered how carnivalesque social relations in an elementary classroom in which children are learning English as a second language might affect their appropriation of English. We are just beginning to analyze this data and our conclusions are thus tentative and suggestive. However, as shown in the three excerpts

presented here, we are persuaded that social relationships between participants in discourse seem to affect profoundly the possibilities for language appropriation.

In interaction with a teacher who engages with a common instructional practice— the IRE — so as to include all children and to make the resources of all available to all, children seem to have the opportunity to appropriate language. The teacher leads an inclusive, cooperative IRE sequence and the focus is on the task, rather than on evaluating individual responses. However, we understand the use of carnival in the classroom to be more than a harmonious focus on a predetermined task. With this excerpt, we can see how the teacher remains in charge, maintaining attention on the teacher-defined task and restricting carnivalesque moments. In the second example with the peers at play, elements In the second example with the peers at play, elements of carnival are present in free, familiar contact, yet existing social hierarchies seem reinforced rather than disrupted. Relations of domination seem to constrain possibilities for appropriation. Our final case illustrates a carnivalesque interaction made possible by the participation of an adult who acts as a "performer." Her performance of carnival enables the interaction. She seems to bring to this interaction a carnival sense of the world, "with its joy at change and its joyful relativity," a vision of "the world as one great communal performance" (Bakhtin 1984a, 160).

The presence of adults in child conversations may enable rather than obstruct full participation, contradicting much research concerning classroom interaction (e.g. Edwards and Westgate 1994). For enabling carnival, as we understand it, a particular kind of adult engagement that is needed: a willingness to play and an ability to sense "the joyful relativity of all structure and order" (Bakhtin 1984, 124). Such moments of carnival can contribute to the freedom and generation of language we seek to create in language classrooms. The role of the adult who can "perform" carnival may be pivotal in that carnival provides a way of being with the students in the classroom.

What happens in the creation of the group narrative in our third example above might be compared to improvisational theatre. Building on previous utterances and accepting their premises facilitates the creation of a story, while resisting what is offered, or ignoring and discounting previous utterances, blocks improvisation. In a successful

theatre improvisation, the task of the skilled actors is to accept what is given and to add content in their response — following a "yes, and. . . " model.  Allyson accepts  the beads as family members, offers a trip to India, and later a limousine to the airport, as content.  Like Mrs. Singh, she accepts the children's contributions, but in addition, she lets their contributions direct the play as well.

Teachers may be cautious about the potential of carnival to allow domination of students by other students (see Lensmire 1997).  We have noted, as has Lensmire, that power relations in some child interactions without adults, may be such that children are dominated, and they, rather than the perpetrators of oppressive social conditions, are profaned.  Interactions between peers will not necessarily disrupt normal power relations.  Lensmire feels that peer culture needs to be examined more closely, rather than assuming that carnival moments among peers necessarily generate full participation and maximize learning opportunities for all.  Such moments may, in fact, reinforce existing social hierarchies among peers, who may lack the wisdom of a sensitive adult.  We agree.  What we are seeing in our research is the significance of a  "performer" who understands moments of carnival in the classroom and how important such moments are to the production of language.

While highlighting carnival in the classroom as a "new mode of interrelationship between individuals" (Bakhtin 1984, 123) that encourages the appropriation of language, it is important to notice which relationships are actually being altered.  "In the open, engaging, laughing, playing [carnival moment], students have something to say about who speaks and who is heard" (Lensmire 1994, 390).  Peer relations, then, may not be the ones teachers encourage as much as the carnival interventions they participate in — the moments of  "performing carnival."

**Conclusion**

Because carnival creates a space for "playful, familiar relation to the world" (Lensmire 1994, 374) and "free and active participation" (Young 1997, 251), we are convinced that these moments can maximize opportunities for the appropriation of language.

Recognition of the possibilities of carnival moments may alter the way teachers organize classroom time or the way they react to moments of "life turned inside out and upside down" in their classrooms (Lensmire 1994, 374).   It appears to us that creative play with language is encouraged when authoritative relationships are displaced by new and more balanced relationships in the moment of activity; and, such free play can be seen and understood as a release from the traditional speech genre of the classroom.

In our findings, the interaction with a playful adult seems to facilitate a more productive speech community over one which overtly privileges or disables certain individuals. The focus of energy on the play generates an incredible amount of language, and the meaning making of such narratives propel the use of language. Carnival permits genuine joy in the moment and authentic speech production. It is our belief that Bakhtin's notion of carnival may  offer language teachers ways to develop language opportunities for students.

## Appendix 1

The dialogues were transcribed according to Goodwin's (1990) system as follows:

1. A degree sign (°) indicates low volume in the talk that it precedes.
2. A dash mark (-) indicates a sudden cut-off of a sound or a word.
3. Bold italics indicate emphasis signaled by a change in pitch.
4. Overlap brackets ([) mark the point at which two speakers start speaking simultaneously.
5. Colons (:) indicate lengthening of the preceeding vowel / syllable.
6. The equal sign (=) indicates latching.
7. Double parentheses (()) enclose the transcriber's comments on speaker style and actions.
8. Capital letters mark increased volume.
9. Single paretheses () indicate problematic hearings or speaker identifications that the transcriber was uncertain about.
10. A double slash (//) indicates the point at which the current dialogue line is overlapped by the following line of dialogue.


The transcription deviates from Goodwin's system in the following ways:
1. Short pauses are indicated with (..) and long pauses are indicated with (...) as per Gumperz and Berenz (p. 101). This was done since the transcriber did not have access to an accurate timing device for measuring tenths of seconds.
2. IPA transcriptions of certain words are contained within single parentheses and slashes.

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