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English-for-Teaching in Higher Education: Discourse Functions and Language Exemplars

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Abstract

Increasingly more colleges and universities in non-English speaking countries are requiring instructors to teach in English. Although existing research addresses various issues related to using English as a medium of instruction in higher education, few studies have specifically addressed how to provide language scaffolding to college instructors who are asked to teach their subjects in English for the first time. The study builds on Freeman et al.'s (2015) discourse functions for English-for-teaching and presents a refined functional framework to suit college-level classes. It provides authentic language samples to help instructors prepare to teach in English based on the analysis of authentic classroom discourse obtained from 16 lectures from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English. This study demonstrates that teaching is a form of routinized social activity and argues that learning about different discourse functions and developing basic competence through authentic sentences examples can be a small but helpful step.

Keywords: English for teaching, English-medium instruction, language scaffolding, classroom English, classroom discourse

Introduction

Increasingly more academic institutions in non-English speaking countries are requiring instructors to teach in English (Brenn-White & Faethe, 2013; Fenton-Smith, Humphries, & Walkinshaw, 2017; Macaro et al., 2018; Rose & McKinley, 2017; Smit 2010). According to Dearden (2015), English medium instruction (EMI) has increased more at the tertiary level than at the secondary level. For example, in Europe, there was a 38 percent increase at the tertiary level between 2011 and 2013, and the biggest increase was seen in programs that taught courses entirely, rather than partially, in English (Brenn-White & Faethe, 2013).

Even though the demand for teaching in English continues to increase, the linguistic needs of instructors who use English as an additional language (EAL) have not received much attention in scholarly literature. In order to meet the new demand to conduct their classes in English—a language they have not yet mastered—some EAL instructors seek quick solutions to meet the challenge. A recent forum posting and subsequent response postings on *hibrain.net*, which is an online scholarly community for those who teach in higher education in South Korea, is a case in point, which illustrates a challenge that instructors face when asked to deliver English-medium instruction, as well as lack of clarity on how one can prepare for teaching in English. An instructor recently shared a concern about delivering her lectures in English in her new teaching position and asked forum participants about resources that can help. In response, she received divergent suggestions from forum participants. Some suggested that she should watch TED Talks. Others suggested that she should write a script for an entire lecture and memorize it. Still others cast a doubt saying that when she was hired to teach at a college, she was probably expected to be able to teach in English on demand; if she was not capable of teaching in English then, she could not possibly be ready in a short amount of time. Albeit honest and well-meaning, these suggestions are neither realistic nor constructive. Unlike most TED Talks and monologue speeches, classroom discourse contains a number of colloquial expressions and frequent pauses, false starts, and discourse markers such as ‘so,’ ‘okay,’ ‘well,’ and ‘now,’ as instructors think and produce language at the same (Biber, 2006). Such linguistic features, primarily associated with informal conversations, have been shown to help students’ comprehension (Flowerdew & Tauroza, 1995).

It is not just instructors who teach in non-English speaking countries, however, who can benefit from language scaffolding. Some U.S. universities offer courses or professional development programs for international faculty to improve their spoken academic English. At one well-known private university in the Midwest of the U.S., for instance, the provost recently implemented a new policy that requires all new nonnative English-speaking faculty to enroll in a course designed to improve their English in exchange for reducing their teaching load (Oglesby, Personal Interview). This shows that the perceived needs for improving language proficiency also extend to accomplished scholars hired to teach in English-speaking countries.

The author agrees with Freeman (2017) that even though developing general English proficiency is important for these teachers, they can greatly benefit from learning English specific for teaching. This study identifies commonly occurring classroom routines and strategies by analyzing 16 university lectures delivered at a U.S. university and presents useful language samples to help new EAL college teachers perform various instructional routines in English.

Review of Literature

There is a plethora of articles addressing the global phenomenon of widely spreading English-medium instruction in higher education in non-English speaking countries, and these studies have investigated various areas concerning teaching and learning in various contexts. In particular, the last two decades have seen substantial growth in scholarly interest in this field. Researchers have examined practices, issues, and attitudes concerning English-medium instruction in higher education in Asia (Ali, 2013; Byun, et al., 2010; Cho, D.W., 2012; Cho, J., 2012; Galloway, et al., 2017; Gao, 2008; Hu & Lei, 2014; Islam, 2013; Kim, 2017; Vu & Burns, 2014). Studies that focus on the Middle East and Europe have also multiplied (for the Middle East, see Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Bozdoğan & Karlıdağ, 2013; Ellili-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015; Ghorbani & Alavi, 2014; Kirkgöz, 2014; McMullen, 2014. For Europe, see Airey, 2011; Björkman, 2008; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Coleman, 2006; Hellekjaer, 2010; Studer, 2014).

Studies of classroom discourse have been mainly conducted by applied linguists seeking to identify characteristics of academic language. The initial focus of these studies was on written discourse (Csomay, 2002). However, there has been a growing interest in spoken academic discourse, and university lectures, in particular, in the last four decades. While some studies were pedagogically oriented to help improve second language students' understanding of lectures, others were conducted by discourse analysts without explicit pedagogical purposes. Existing studies have dealt with various aspects of lectures, such as general linguistic and rhetorical features in comparison to written academic texts, organizational structures, functions of different discourse components, and the usage and functions of discourse markers, phrases, and questions. Most of the published studies are based on widely used corpora, such as the BASE (British Academic Spoken English), MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English), and T2K-SWAL Corpus (TOEFL-2000 Spoken and Written Academic Language), but some studies draw from other corpora compiled by individual researchers for their study.

Researchers have compared characteristics of informal non-academic discourse, spoken academic discourse, and written academic materials. Biber's (2006) analysis of sample academic discourses on accounting showed that university classroom language resembles conversation more than academic writing and includes frequent usage of personal pronouns. Csomay's (2006) study of 196 university classroom sessions selected from the MICASE and the T2K-SWAL showed that university classroom discourse had features associated with both academic prose and face-to-face conversation.

Several researchers have examined discourse structuring functions of specific lexical phrases (e.g., Camiciotolli, 2007; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992). Thompson (2003) investigated the role of metadiscourse and a prosodic feature such as intonation in their functions as signposts to help students understand the flow of the talk and identify different parts of lectures. A recent study by Csomay and Wu (2020) compared discourse organizational patterns in the U.S. and South-East Asian lectures of humanities, natural sciences, and engineering and found differences in language use and associated discourse organizational patterns in the two geographical locations.

Some scholars sought to categorize various discourse functions in lectures. Deroey and Tavernier (2011), for instance, identified six major functional categories by using the BASE (British Academic Spoken English) corpus: informing, elaborating, evaluating, organizing discourse, interacting, and managing the class. They also identified various subfunctions under each of these categories. For example, informing includes five subfunctions: describing, recounting, reporting, interpreting, and demonstrating. Subfunctions of elaborating include exemplifying and reformulating. And subfunctions of

interacting include regulating interaction, involving the audience, and establishing a relationship with the audience. As Deroey and Taverniers pointed out, these categories and subcategories are not mutually exclusive as there are overlaps. Alsop and Nesi's (2014) cross-cultural research examined 76 engineering classes from Engineering Lecture Corpus (ELC) compiled from the U.K., New Zealand, and Malaysia university classes and identified five major functional categories of lectures such as explaining, housekeeping, humor, storytelling, and summarizing along with 22 subcategories. Their study revealed different discourse features in the three geographical locations and ascribed the differences to cultural contexts and pedagogical differences.

Studies focusing on linguistic features also multiplied in the last several decades. Csomay's (2002) study of interactivity in 176 academic lectures selected from the T2K-SWAL Corpus showed that low interactivity lectures frequently contained nouns premodified by nouns and multiple *of*-constructions typically found in densely packaged information, whereas these grammatical features were not found in high interactivity lectures. Biber's (2006) study of vocabulary in lectures across disciplines from the T2K-SWAL corpus showed that academic discourse in social science, natural science, and humanities includes much more diverse vocabulary than discourses in engineering and business. His study also showed that nouns and adjectives are more common in written registers, whereas verbs and adjectives are more common in spoken registers. His study of lexical bundles—four-word strings in particular—sought to identify different functions that those words serve, such as organizing discourse (e.g., 'on the other hand'), identifying a focus (e.g., 'for those of you'), and specifying attributes (e.g., 'a little bit of'). Csomay (2013) studied 84 lexical bundles and their discourse functions from the initial phase of 196 university class sessions selected from the T2K-SWAL and MICASE. The study found that the opening phase of the class lectures had the stance-indicating lexical bundles the most, but with the start of the instruction, referential bundles were more frequently used.

Several studies examined the form and function of questions in lectures. As Thompson (1997) put it, "teachers are one of the few professional groups who routinely spend their lives asking questions to which they know the answer" (p. 101). Questions can help promote critical and inquisitive thinking by inviting students to discover answers through reasoning and reflection (Chuska, 1995). The types and amount of questions are likely to vary based on the instructional style, class size, and dynamics, as well as cultural contexts. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that instructors routinely ask students questions during lectures. Welsh (2013) reported that in an ESL setting, an average 50-minute lecture typically could include as many as two hundred questions (p. 11).

After comparatively analyzing questions in written and spoken academic texts, Camiciottoli (2008) found that the frequency of questions was similar in both types of texts, and that the written texts contained features that are typically associated with face-to-face interaction. She observed that the differences in the question form and function in the two types of texts could be explained by interactional efforts and pedagogic aims of lecturers and materials writers. Thomson (1998) classified questions into two broad categories—audience-oriented and content-oriented. Audience-oriented questions may or may not be followed by audience uptake, whereas content-oriented ones are typically answered by the lecturer. Fortanet-Gómez's (2004) study indicated that questions, along with personal pronouns, calling students by their first names, and asides, promote interaction between the lecturer and students. She categorized questions into rhetorical versus non-rhetorical ones. Other categories by Morell (2004) include referential questions, which elicit unknown information; display questions, which verify students' knowledge; rhetorical questions, which expect no response; and indirect questions, which solicit actions rather than verbal responses. As

Camiciottoli (2007; 2008) noted, there is fuzziness in these categorizations, and class size, as well as lecturer's style, are likely to affect the types and quantities of questions used.

Although research findings from these various studies are likely to have pedagogical implications either directly or indirectly, there is a dearth of studies focusing on the linguistic challenges instructors face. There is no doubt that the ability to teach in English requires general English skills. However, as Freeman (2017) argued, teachers can greatly benefit from learning English specifically for teaching purposes--to instruct, assess, and manage a class. Freeman et al. (2015) categorized classroom discourse into three major functional areas: 1) managing the classroom, 2) understanding and communicating lesson content, and 3) assessing students and providing feedback. They report that the online professional development program they have created with National Geographic Learning, called *ELTeach*, has been successfully helping nonnative English-speaking teachers in various countries acquire the English needed for teaching.

According to its website, *ELTeach* was designed to equip schoolteachers who use English as an additional language with linguistic confidence to teach English curriculum in English (National Geographic Learning). The program consists of two courses: English-for-Teaching and Professional Knowledge for ELT. The former provides practical classroom phrases based on instructional routines, while the latter focuses on English language teaching methodology. Freeman (2017) states that "the classroom language was identified through an iterative process of global review of standards and policy documents, drawing on the specifics of 13 national curricula, referring to research on classroom language use in various countries, and consulting with two international consensus panels" (p. 39).

ELTeach, however, mainly targets K-12 English language teachers. Because interactional patterns and classroom routines are likely to be different in college classes, the language exemplars used in *ELTeach* are of limited use for those who use the English language for teaching in higher education. For example, while teachers may ask students to read aloud texts and provide feedback in a language classroom (Freeman et al., 2015), such a routine is less likely to occur in other classes. Similarly, some of the language samples given under 'managing the classroom,' such as 'please go to your seat' and 'copy the words from the board,' may not be used in college classes that teach other subjects.

It goes without saying that learning a set of English sentences will not prepare someone to teach in English, nor is it possible to come up with an adequate, if not a comprehensive, list of expressions that a college instructor can master to be able to teach in English. However, acquiring formulaic speech is an essential part of language acquisition (Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992, p. xv). Research has shown that classroom teaching uses a relatively small set of common words with very high frequencies (Biber, 2006, p. 41). As increasingly more classes in non-English speaking countries use EMI in the absence of linguistic resources for instructors, identifying common discourse functions and instructional language samples used in a college classroom can benefit EAL instructors as they prepare to teach their subjects in English for the first time. As a step in this direction, this study identifies major categories of discourse functions and presents authentic language samples based on 16 classroom lectures delivered in various disciplines at one U.S. university.

The Study

Data Collection

The study analyzed 16 lectures from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). MICASE is a corpus compiled by the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Michigan between 1997 and 2002 to provide authentic material to study

academic discourse. It includes recordings of more than 190 hours and completed transcriptions of 152 speech events, such as advising sessions, colloquium, dissertation defense, lectures, seminars, student presentations, and discussion sections (Simpson-Vlach & Leicher, 2006). The corpus, including transcripts, is accessible free of charge on the University of Michigan's website.

Because the focus of this study is teachers' classroom discourse, only lectures were considered a potential data pool. Among the lectures, this study focused on those designated as being given by near-native and nonnative speakers. This was to extract authentic language samples of proficient multilingual speakers. The primary purpose of this study is to identify commonly observed discourse functions and language examples to help instructors who use English as an additional language; therefore, obtaining samples from expert users of English as an additional language, rather than native speakers, was deemed appropriate. Focusing on expert users, rather than native speakers, also frames the study around functions and use, rather than native speaker ideology. A total of 16 lectures satisfied the criteria, and the lectures represent a wide range of disciplines, including humanities, social sciences, education, physical sciences, and engineering.

Data Analysis

The transcripts of these lectures were uploaded to NVivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software for analysis. In order to identify common classroom discourse features, the researcher first read the transcripts of 16 lectures highlighting discourse that pertains to three major discourse functions identified in Freeman et al. (2015): 1) discourse to instruct, 2) assess, and 3) manage. This study chose Freeman's functional categories for its initial framework, rather than Deroey and Taverniers's (2011) or Alsop and Nesi's (2014) because Freeman et al. directly focus on instructional routines and language use, whereas the others focus more on purpose or argument types. For instance, some of the subcategories from Deroey and Taverniers (2011), such as 'recounting,' 'demonstrating,' 'orientating,' 'structuring,' and 'relating' are broad and abstract, as they center more on argument types rather than use. Similarly, functions such as humor and storytelling in Alsop and Nesi (2014) are likely to be highly personalized discursive features rather than essential routines. Even though these features do deserve attention, the current study seeks to focus on commonly used lecture strategies.

Because the purpose of this study is to identify commonly used discourses across disciplines, speeches that solely delivered content knowledge were excluded from analysis, whereas those used to frame the content were included in the analysis. In the process, several subcategories were identified. The coding categories, based on these subcategories were created in NVivo, and highlighted discourse was copied onto each of the coding categories. As is typical in qualitative data analyses, the coding process was not linear, as it was necessary to merge or recategorize some codes in the reiterative process of analysis. Based on the analysis, several commonly occurring features were identified, which are presented in the Table along with language examples. Some of the discourse functions presented below overlap with those listed in Simpson-Vlach and Leicher (2006, p. 68-69), who present 25 different kinds of pragmatic features. In addition to direction, group/pair work, introductory road map, logistics/announcements, and referring to handouts, which are also included in this study, their list includes rhetorical strategies, such as dramatization, humor, sarcasm, and visuals, which did not receive focus in this study but would be of further interest in subsequent studies.

The following section presents fifteen discourse functions and corresponding language examples for the three broad functional areas identified by Freeman et al. (2015).

Results

Category 1: Managing the Classroom

Freeman suggests two broad discourse functions under ‘managing the classroom’: 1) ‘greeting’ and 2) ‘organizing students to start the activity.’ This study, however, has identified six: 1) introductory remarks; 2) concluding remarks; 3) attention gathering; 4) referring to handouts; 5) time management; and 6) initiating group work. Notably, except for one lecture, greetings were not present. Instead, most instructors began by providing introductory remarks, such as “let’s start off with . . .” “I want to start with . . .” or by mentioning house-keeping items with a statement such as, “Let’s begin with a couple of announcements.” To conclude a class session, some instructors asked, “any questions before we wrap up?” or simply announced that the class period has come to an end by stating “let’s stop here” or “this concludes the section on . . .” Unlike Freeman’s exemplars in this category, which are imperatives sentences (e.g., ‘go to your seat,’ ‘copy the words from the board,’ and ‘use the words to write a summary of the story’), almost all of the language samples in this study are either a much softer form of imperative sentences beginning with ‘let’s’, and include declarative or interrogative sentences.

Under Freeman et al’s (2015) category of ‘organizing the students to start an activity,’ this study has identified three different speech acts (See Table 1). Most lectures included utterances to gather students’ attention, distribute or refer to handouts, or to instruct group work. To draw students’ attention, instructors often asked questions, such as “can I get your attention please?” whereas others issued short directives to “settle down.” Remarks about handouts were also identified in about half of the lectures. Various discourse types were used, including simple questions such as, “does everybody have copies of handouts from last time?” or a declarative sentence introducing a new handout as in “I’m sending this around to show you”

In case of giving instructions for group work, several useful discourse samples were found in this corpus. For example, instructors directed students to form groups by saying “we’re gonna break into groups.” To explain how to create groups, an instructor said, “Let’s start counting off with Daniel. I’ll just point because some of the rows are out of line.” Other common instructions included statements such as, “Come up with some creative ideas” and “We’ll reconvene in a few minutes.” Some instructions included usage of deictic words as in “Let’s start with you folks in the, the back over there, yeah you guys. right there.”

Simple directives, such as ‘work with a partner’ (Freeman et al.) were not present. Rather, instructors announced that the class will break into groups and explained the procedure. Another subcategory identified under ‘managing the classroom’ was remarks about time. Instructors announced breaks and made other time-related comments. Notably, most instructors used informal, contracted forms such as ‘wanna’ and ‘gonna.’

Table 1. *Routines and language exemplars: Classroom management*

Functional Area	Classroom Routine	Language Exemplars
Managing the classroom	Introductory road map	Let’s start off with. . ./I want to start with/The first thing I wanna do is. . . Today what I’d like to do is. . . Let’s begin with a couple of announcements.
	Concluding remarks	Any questions before we wrap up...? okay, that concludes it then thanks. Okay this concludes the section on. . .

		Let's stop here.
	Attention gathering	Alright, can I get your attention please? Can we have a little bit of quiet? Alright, settle down.
	Referring to handout	Does everybody have copies of handouts from last time? I'm sending this around to show you . . . I wanna work through with you or talk through with you in the handout, this, the page that looks like this.
	Time management	Why don't we take a twenty-minute break? We're doing pretty well on time so let's take about five minutes and we'll come back. Okay we have a few minutes until we break.
	Initiating group work	We're gonna break up into groups. . . Let's start counting off with uh Daniel we'll go across the room. We will reconvene in a few minutes. Let's start with uh you folks in the, the back over there, yeah you guys. right there.

Category 2: Understanding and Communicating Lesson Content

The second category of discourse functions, ‘understanding and communicating lesson content,’ occurs during content delivery. Freeman et al. (2015) has identified two general functions: 1) ‘giving instructions and explanations’ and 2) ‘introducing new vocabulary.’ The current study has identified five different subcategory for ‘giving instructions and explanations’ and include 1) explaining; 2) probing; 3) holding off topics; 4) making emphasis; and 5) transitioning (See Table 2). Freeman’s second routine, ‘Introducing new vocabulary,’ has been excluded because it seemed more appropriate to include it under ‘explaining’ in this particular data set.

When explaining concepts, one of the most notable features observed across lectures was using questions. Teachers frequently framed their content delivery with questions, not always expecting students to respond to them. Examples include, “Would you be able to tell me what happens...” “How would we know ...?” “What’s the other possibility?” “Under what circumstances would you expect the countries to converge?” “What happened to total output?” and “What am I trying to accomplish here?” *Wh*-questions were the most frequently used forms of questions, and they were often used as placeholders to demarcate different subtopics within a lesson.

Questions were also used for probing. For example, instructors tried to engage students into deeper thinking by asking questions such as, “Taking what X said one step further, what information does that give us?” Other examples include those that prime students to pay special attention to the ensuing topic, such as with “Now I’m gonna ask a question that I want you to think about.” Another form of probing involved an invitation to make personal connection to a topic, as in “Anyone want to relate their experiences on this?”

Other types of features included postponing certain topics or making emphasis. Statements such as “Let’s hold off on that,” “We’ll come back to it a bit later,” or “I’m gonna leave it for now and come back to it” were often used. And a similar remark was made in response to a student’s question in order to “defer the question to the third week” which is when they class would discuss a certain topic.

Instructors used various types of sentences for emphasis. Some tried to make certain points prominent by saying “What I wanna call your attention to is. . .” “Now let me stress. One. more. Time,” or “I’m gonna repeat this again.” Others used figurative language as in “this is getting to be the point where we roll up the sleeves here.” Even though the expressions vary, all instructors tried to facilitate students learning through emphasis.

Also commonly observed were discourse types that signal a transition to a different topic. Instructors seldom made abrupt switches between topics but tried to make a seamless transition by connecting a thread to a new topic. For example, an instructor introduced students to the next topic by saying, “This is a good place to talk about some definitions,” or “So this brings us to the second question I wanted to examine with you.” Instructors also signaled going off on a tangent by saying, “I wanna take a slight detour.” When continuing with the same topic briefly discussed in a previous class, an instructor reminded students that “We only touched upon this during the last, two minutes or three minutes in class yesterday.”

As can be seen, various classes showcase similar discourse functions, even though instructors used different sentences to perform those functions. One common feature across examples in this category is that instructors sought to engage students by asking questions.

Table 2: *Routines and language exemplars: Content delivery*

Functional Area	Classroom Routine	Language Exemplars
Understanding and communicating lesson content	Explaining	In other words... The idea here is. . . What we’re saying is that . . . What’s happening is . . .
	Probing	Taking what X said one step further, What information does that give us? Now I’m gonna ask a question that I want you to think about. Anyone want to relate their experiences on this?
	Holding off topics	Well let’s hold off on that. We’ll come back to it a bit later. I’m gonna come back to these in a second, but for now. . . . If you’ll permit us to defer that question to the third week which is when we will . . .
	Making emphasis	What I wanna call your attention to is. . . I’d like you to remember those three terms. Now let me stress, one, more, time. Now this is getting to be the point where we roll up the sleeves here. I’m gonna repeat this again. Basically, it comes down to this.
	Transitioning	This is a good place to talk about some definitions. So this brings us to the second question I wanted to examine with you. So from here on, we’re leaving [Topic A], and now we’re gonna talk about [Topic B]. I wanna take a slight detour.
	Eliciting student response	So what are your reactions? Can you guys think of any...? What do you notice about X? That was a great start. How about you folks right here?

Category 3: Assessing Students and Providing Feedback

Assessing students’ learning in the technical sense of formal assessment was not present in the data. However, most instructors tried to gauge students’ learning by inviting students to respond to certain questions while explaining concepts and asking probing questions. In other words, in most lectures, assessing students’ understanding of lesson content was an ongoing process, interwoven with the routines identified in the previous section, such as explaining and probing (See Table 3). While questions were used to explain as in “What do you notice about X”, other questions such as “What is X suggesting/arguing here?” or “What information does that give us?” questions that solely intended to assess students’ learning were scarce. This is probably due to the particular characteristics of the data set rather than general classroom patterns.

When responding to students’ comments, instructors’ responses frequently included affirmative ones such as “Yes, you’re right,” “I agree a hundred percent,” or “That’s a great example.” But they also included ones that are bit more personal such as, “This is a real good one. I love it.” When an instructor wanted to make sure that everybody heard a student’s question, they requested the student to share by asking, “Can you share that with everyone please?” Instructors also responded by asking clarification questions, such as “Why don’t you explain a little bit?” Some responses were given in the form of rephrasing students’ thoughts as in, "His question I think, if I understood it correctly was ..." or "Okay you're saying that" Occasionally, instructors had to manage the situation where multiple questions were raised at the same time, by saying "One question at a time alright?" Others also declined to answer it at that moment by saying, “I’d be happy to talk to you privately about X.”

This shows that there are a great variety of ways in which instructors respond to students’ comments or questions. Although the examples given above are a mere sample of many different ways to respond to students’ comments or questions, various excerpts presented in this section can serve as a useful arsenal for instructors to draw from when they confront various situations in responding to students.

Table 3: *Routines and language exemplars: Assessment and feedback*

Functional Area	Classroom Routine	Language Exemplars
Assessing students and providing feedback	Eliciting student response	So what are your reactions? Can you guys think of any...? What do you notice about X? That was a great start. How about you folks right here?
	Asking for clarification	Why don’t you explain a little bit? His question I think, if I understood it correctly, was . . . Okay, you’re saying that . . . ? I think that’s what you’re kind of asking.
	Responding to students’ comments	This is a real good one. I love it. That’s a (another) great example. Well one question at a time alright? Speak up so everybody can hear it. I’d be happy to talk to you private about X.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that there is a great variety of ways instructors conduct their classes and frame their classroom discourses. It also shows a discernible pattern in the classroom routines and language examples. It is probably no surprise that the classroom discourse represented in this sample was mostly informal and included many colloquial forms as previous research showed. In addition, the classroom routines and language examples identified in this study were very different from those identified and suggested by et al. (2015) and Freeman (2017). This is probably because Freeman's study focused on a language classroom with a target audience of children, the data for the current study was obtained from college classrooms. The discourse function, "Understanding and Communicating Lesson Content," included several classroom routines that are not part of Freeman's model, including "probing," "holding off topics," "making emphasis," "transitioning, and "eliciting student responses." Whereas the routine identified by Freeman-- "greeting students"--was not present in the data under "Managing the Classroom," "introductory road map" and "attention gathering" were used across the sample. Moreover, classroom routines under "Assessing Students and Providing Feedback" were interwoven with other functions as assessment occurred in the form of questions, not as separate activities, as instructors elicited students' responses throughout the class periods.

Another point of departure from Freeman et al. (2015) is that whereas the language exemplars they suggested mainly consist of imperative sentences, such sentence types were scarce in the data. This is probably because in a language classroom, especially at an elementary or secondary level, the English language is not only a means to convey knowledge but also the object of the instruction; therefore, simple and direct sentences could make content delivery easier.

In the current study, a number of *wh*-questions were used by instructors. These questions were used to engage students into deeper thinking about a topic and deliver content. They were also used as placeholders to demarcate different subtopics within a lesson and as a form of assessment. Thompson (1997, p. 111) suggested that instructors use yes/no questions to check basic understanding of a text or situation before moving on to *wh*-questions or to elicit more detailed information. But the data included very few such questions used for the purpose of checking basic understanding. Instead, as indicated above, questions served multiple purposes.

Considering that the questions were some of the most frequently used sentence patterns to deliver content, we can probably assume that those preparing to teach in English could benefit from focused instruction on question formation, using disciplinary content. Morell's (2004) taxonomy can be a helpful starting point. Teachers can practice creating various types of questions based on the purpose. For example, *wh*-questions can be useful constructions for creating referential questions designed to elicit unknown information. *Yes-No* questions can be used for creating display questions as teachers try to verify students' knowledge. Teachers can also anticipate various rhetorical questions they may ask their students and discuss their form and function. Finally, teachers can be guided in preparing various questions which solicit actions rather than verbal response in their own teaching contexts.

Conclusion

This study sought to identify some of the recurring discourse functions in college classrooms and provide authentic language samples to help instructors prepare to teach in English for the first time. The study draws from a small number of lectures across disciplines

at one university in the U.S., so the information presented in this study may not include other essential routines and functions that are discipline-specific. In the same vein, there may be other routines that may be specific to certain countries or cultures that this study has not addressed. Despite a limited scope, the findings of this study can serve as a reference point for other researchers or program administrators as they develop professional development materials to provide language scaffolding to those who are new to teaching in English. Experienced, proficient teachers may find the language examples presented in this study too easy to be helpful. However, for those who are new to teaching in English, these examples and functions can serve as basic tools that instructors can build on to suit their unique teaching situations. Assuming that most instructors already have content expertise in their subject area, becoming familiar with common instructional routines and learning sentence exemplars can be helpful for instructors as they conduct their class in English.

This study built on Freeman's typology of discourse functions for English for teaching purposes and presented a refined framework to suit college-level classes that teach other subject areas. The findings of this study indicate that although instructors use widely different sentences and forms to perform certain functions, there are similar speech acts across the sample. Teaching is a form of routinized social activity, and learning about different discourse functions and developing basic competence through authentic sentences examples can be a small, but helpful step as instructors prepare for teaching in English. This study does not suggest that the best way to prepare for teaching in English is mastering a few sample sentences. Instead, it highlights the need for developing practical resources to equip college instructors in EMI contexts with essential English-for-teaching.

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