Applying corpus-based findings to form-focused instruction: The case of reported speech*

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Arguing that the introduction of corpus linguistics in teaching materials and the language classroom should be informed by theories and principles of SLA, this paper presents a case study illustrating how corpus-based findings on reported speech can be integrated into a form-focused model of instruction. After overviewsing previous work which compares ESL grammar textbooks descriptions and real language use, and promotes the use of corpus-based findings to inform L2 textbook descriptions, we outline the results of a survey of the presentation of reported speech in current popular textbooks. The survey findings are contrasted with the patterns of use found in two corpus-based cross-register studies of reported speech, showing how textbooks neglect important information on the use of this structure in real language. The frequency patterns of use that emerged in the corpus studies are then used to identify 10 principles that should inform the design of L2 materials and classroom instruction of reported speech. In the second part of the paper we illustrate how corpus-based findings can be fruitfully implemented in a form-focused model of instruction through the use of structure-based tasks and selected principles of focus-on-form.

I Introduction

Over the past two decades, corpus linguistics (CL) has gained momentum in several areas of applied linguistics, branching out into applications that are directly relevant to language teaching (LT) and second language acquisition (SLA) research. For example, the application of a corpus-based approach to collections of learner language has given rise to research that involves the analysis of written language by advanced learners, using two main types of analysis: contrastive interlanguage analysis (comparisons of learner language with native language, and comparisons of learner language from different L1s), and computer-aided error analysis (Granger, 1998; Granger et al., 2002). More recent research also involves the analysis of spoken learner language at earlier stages of L2 acquisition (Reder et al., 2003). CL can also be used to test issues that are relevant for second language acquisition research, such as the order of

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morpheme acquisition (see Jones and Kurjian’s (2003) meta-analysis of corpus-based studies of the frequency of occurrence of the morphemes that have been studied in SLA). In addition, as is well known, CL has been used in the language classroom since the 1980s via concordancing (Johns, 1986). Classroom concordancing involves the analysis of concordances of particular language features, generated by the teacher or by the learners themselves. Tim Johns (1991) promotes ‘data-driven learning’ (DDL), the type of inductive, discovery-learning that is stimulated by concordancing. Despite the wealth of existing publications on classroom concordancing (cf., e.g., Wichman et al., 1997), the impact of concordancing and DDL in LT has been relatively inconspicuous. This is mainly due to the fact that the focus on linguistic form promoted by DDL clashes with the focus on meaning and interaction fostered by communicative LT (Kennedy, 1992; Aston, 2001). Recent approaches to the use of corpora in the classroom have sought to bridge this gap. Bernardini (2001), for example, advocates ‘discovery learning’ (DL), a new approach to DDL which involves guiding learners to use large corpora as a terrain for explorations and serendipitous discoveries. DL is well suited to advanced learners, but its appropriateness for learners at lower-level proficiencies is doubtful.

Both ‘classic’, standard DDL and concordancing, and serendipitous DL are ways of implementing CL to LT that involve bringing the corpus in the classroom and having learners use it in different ways, attending to various types of instructions, and performing different types of tasks (e.g. generating concordances, analyzing concordancing, following a serendipitous journey of discovery, etc.). In a sense, to use a tautology, these are ‘corpus-driven’ implementations of CL in the classroom, as they are primarily concerned with the use of the corpus, rather than a use of CL that is guided by SLA principles and theories of learning. To date, little or no effort has been made to apply corpus-based findings to LT in a way that reflects current SLA principles and theories (e.g. focus-on-form, consciousness raising, etc.).

In this paper, we attempt to address this gap by illustrating how information on the use of specific linguistic structures based on empirical, corpus-based findings can be used to design principled L2 materials and tasks for classroom instruction that are aligned with and grounded in current theories and principles of SLA. Thus, in contrast to the ‘corpus-driven’ implementation underpinning the use of DDL or DL, here we propose an ‘SLA-driven’ implementation of CL to LT and the language classroom. Specifically, the present paper presents a case study on reported speech (RS) and shows how corpus-based findings on RS can be combined with select principles of focus-on-form (FonF) for the design of a corpus-based form-focused treatment of RS.

II Textbook grammar and real language use

Over the past two decades, a growing number of researchers have compared the textbook and grammar descriptions of a target language with the language
used in real life by real language users (Biber and Reppen, 2002; Carter, 1998; Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Frazier, 2003; Gilmore, 2004; Glisan and Drescher, 1993; Holmes, 1988; Lawson, 2001; O’Connor Di Vito, 1991). Although most of this work has focused on English (e.g. Biber and Reppen, 2002; Carter, 1998; Eckhardt, 2001; Frazier, 2003; Gilmore, 2004; Holmes, 1988), an increasing number of studies have applied this kind of investigation to other L2 languages, such as French (e.g. O’Connor Di Vito, 1991; Lawson, 2001; Walz, 1986) and Spanish (e.g. Glisan and Drescher, 1993). In addition, although most studies have focused on language materials for general purposes, a conspicuous body of research has looked at the language descriptions of textbooks for English for Specific and Academic Purposes (e.g. Hyland, 1994; Williams, 1998; see Harwood, 2005, for a comprehensive overview of this research).

Surprisingly, these studies unanimously show that there is a great divide, a lack of fit, between grammar and textbook descriptions of the target language and real language use. All of these studies indeed demonstrate that, despite over two decades of LT aiming at fostering speaking skills and natural spoken interaction, textbooks neglect important and frequent features of the language spoken by real language users, present a patchy, confusing, and often inadequate treatment of common features of the grammar of the spoken language, and, in sum, do not reflect actual use (Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Lawson, 2001; see Harwood, 2005; Hyland, 1994; and others, for similar conclusions on written language).

The lack of fit between textbook descriptions and real language use may be attributed to several factors: 1) textbook descriptions often rely on the writers’ intuitions, rather than on empirical data; 2) textbooks are not informed by empirical evidence about the relative frequency of occurrence of linguistic features; 3) textbooks usually present grammatical and lexical patterns as equally generalizable and equally important communicatively, thus neglecting information about register-specific or discourse-context-specific use; 4) textbooks are usually based on written norms only, thus ignoring the spoken language; 5) textbooks simplify real language use for pedagogical purposes (Biber and Reppen, 2002; Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Lawson, 2001).

CL is an approach to the study of language that involves the use of principled computerized collections of texts to investigate patterns of language use. In the definition of Biber et al., (1998: 4), corpus-based analysis has four essential characteristics:

- it is empirical, analyzing the actual patterns of use in natural texts;
- it utilizes a large and principled collection of natural texts, known as a ‘corpus’, as the basis for analysis;
- it makes extensive use of computers for analysis, using both automatic and interactive techniques;
- it depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques.
In the past two decades, several researchers have advocated the use of corpus-based findings to inform L2 teaching materials (see, for example, Biber and Reppen, 2002; Conrad, 1999; 2000; Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Frazier, 2003; Holmes, 1988; Harwood, 2005; Lawson, 2001). Lawson (2001) suggests that there are four areas of language in which CL can provide important insights that can help address the lack of fit between grammar and textbook descriptions of the target language and real language use highlighted by comparisons of textbooks descriptions and corpus findings. First, corpora can provide information about the frequency of occurrence of linguistic features in naturally occurring language. Second, corpora can provide information about register variation, that is, about how the use of particular linguistic features varies across different contexts and situations of use. Third, corpus-based analyses can provide information about the salience of particular features, or as Hulstijn (1995) calls it, the scope of certain features. Finally, CL can provide information about the discourse properties of particular linguistic features (e.g. collocations, lexico-grammatical associations, etc.). In short, by providing accurate descriptions of naturally occurring language and important information about the frequency of occurrence of particular linguistic features, corpus-based analysis is an ideal tool to reevaluate the order of presentation of linguistic features in textbooks, and to make principled decisions about what to prioritize in textbook presentations.

RS is an important function of human communication, and consequently a function of language that learners need to master. McCarthy (1998) notes that ‘it is hard to conceive of achieving any intermediate level of competence in a foreign language without needing to know how the speakers of that language make speech reports’ (p. 150). LT materials should present accounts of RS that reflect the way speakers make speech reports in everyday life, providing learners with opportunities to become aware of the various structures available to native speakers to make speech reports. Unfortunately, however, ESL textbooks often present an impoverished and inadequate coverage of RS (Carter, 1998; Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Yule et al., 1992). Textbooks typically focus on mechanical transformations (i.e. ‘backshift’) for the conversion from direct RS (DRS) to indirect RS (IRS), neglecting many structures that are used in real life to make speech reports (e.g. ‘new’ quotative verbs, past continuous for reporting verbs, etc.). Based on this background, RS appears to be a problematic structure, and one that would be suited for an investigation comparing the way it is presented in ESL/EFL textbooks with the way it is used in real life.

In the first part of this paper we do just that: we report the findings from a survey of the description of RS in several popular ESL/EFL textbooks, and from two corpus-based analyses of RS in real, naturally occurring language. Drawing from the findings from these corpus-based analyses, we then outline 10 principles that should inform the design of L2 materials and classroom instruction of RS. In the second part of the paper, we discuss the theoretical framework and the theoretical principles that underlie our proposed
implementation of corpus-based findings of RS. We conclude by illustrating the corpus-based form-focused treatment of RS.

III Reported speech in ESL/EFL textbooks

Following the research trend comparing textbook presentations and real language use, Eckhardt (2001) examined the treatment of RS in seven popular ESL/EFL grammar textbooks (Bland, 1996; Eastwood, 1999; Elbaum, 2001; Fuchs and Bonner, 1995; Murphy et al., 1989; Raimes, 1998; Thewlis, 2001; see Appendix A). The survey revealed that there is a general consensus in textbooks about the use of RS. For one thing, ESL/EFL textbooks largely focus on indirect RS, while direct RS (i.e. direct quotation) is generally underrepresented or taken for granted. Secondly, the survey showed that the information that textbooks present on IRS focuses on three main aspects: 1) verbs used to introduce RS (i.e. reporting verbs); 2) verb tense combinations between the reporting verb and the embedded clause verb; 3) rules on how to use IRS (e.g. backshifting).

As one might expect, all ESL/EFL textbooks included in the survey focus on say and tell as reporting verbs. Most textbooks also present a number of additional reporting verbs, but there is no consensus as to which other verbs are generally used as reporting verbs. For example, Bland (1996) includes a comprehensive list of other reporting verbs, defined as ‘communication verbs,’ divided into verbs that behave like say (i.e. verbs that do not require an indirect object; e.g. admit, announce, comment, complain, confess, explain, indicate, mention, point out, remark, reply, report, shout, state, swear, whisper), verbs that behave like tell (i.e. verbs that do require an indirect object; e.g. assure, convince, inform, notify, persuade, remind), and other reporting verbs for which no ‘say vs. tell’ behavior distinction is offered (e.g. advise, answer, asked, demand, insist, promise, propose, recommend, require, suggest, want to know). Eastwood (1999) and Elbaum (2001) also present at least ten additional reporting verbs. In contrast, the remaining textbooks surveyed offer only a handful of additional reporting verbs. Fuchs and Bonner (1995), for instance, present only advised, asked, invited and report, and Thewlis (2001) presents only the ‘tell-type’ verbs order, ask, invite. Finally, Murphy et al., (1989) does not offer any additional reporting verbs other than say and tell.

Another general point of consensus in the ESL/EFL textbooks surveyed is the tense backshifting rule. All of the textbooks indeed state that verbs within the embedded clause should be shifted to the past tense, except in some specific cases. Again, however, there is no complete agreement as to which factors determine when there should be no shift to the past tense. All of the textbooks surveyed, except for Murphy et al. (1989), state that the tense backshifting rule is often not applied when something is still present or true (e.g. He said the pizza is not here), but only three textbooks (Bland, 1996; Elbaum, 2001; Fuchs and Bonner, 1995) mention that backshifting does not apply
when the main (reporting) verb is in the present tense (e.g. Bob says he is sick). Three textbooks (Bland, 1996; Elbaum, 2001; Thewlis, 2001) specify that the verb is often not backshifted when a future meaning is involved, that is, a future action has not happened yet, or a ‘future-in-the-past’ action has already happened or happened long ago, as in She said she is going to start working on a PhD, or It was 1931 and he said he’s never going to trust the stock market again. Finally, Thewlis (2001) is the only textbook that points out that the backshifting rule is not applied with hypothetical statements, as in She asked me what is going to happen if I move to China.

While they devote considerable space to the tense backshifting rule and various exceptions of it, ESL/EFL textbooks provide little information about what tense should be used for the main/reporting verb. Overall, however, by presenting examples almost exclusively in past tense, most textbooks seem to advocate the use of the past for the reporting verb, even if they do not state this explicitly.

The textbooks in this survey generally point out that in RS pronouns and adverbials are shifted. This is consistent with the overall presentation of RS as a transformation from a hypothetical original sentence in DRS, into an IRS sentence. As others (e.g. Yule et al., 1992) have pointed out, however, this kind of presentation is an oversimplification and is highly misleading. For one thing, in many cases there is actually no original sentence at all, and RS is simply an invention or creation of the speaker, a phenomenon that Deborah Tannen has labeled ‘constructed dialogue’ (Tannen, 1986). Furthermore, as Yule et al. (1992) have pointed out, there are indirect speech forms that do not have a grammatically correct direct speech form, just as there are direct speech forms that do not have a straightforward indirect speech equivalent. Consider, for example, the following corpus samples of DRS:

(1a)... and I haven’t seen her for years you know and she kept looking at me and as I got closer to the thing I thought ‘Oh gosh, that’s got to be somebody I know’, so I finally tried to... (Conversation, LSWE3)

(2a) He was like ‘well maybe it’s for the better’ (Conversation, LSWE)

Neither of these examples could be transformed into IRS by simply applying the rules of transformational backshift presented by textbooks:

(1b) * and she hadn’t seen her for years and she kept looking at her as she got closer to the thing and she thought that oh gosh that had got to be somebody she knew, so she finally tried...

(2b) *He was like that well maybe it was for the better.

Finally, there is a general neglect, in the ESL/EFL grammar textbooks surveyed here, of information regarding register- and context-dependent variation. By not referring, even minimally, to possible variation across different situational varieties of language (e.g. casual conversation, academic writing,
newspaper writing, etc.), these textbooks implicitly portray RS as a monolithic phenomenon, which behaves in the same way regardless of different contexts and situations of use. Again, this is highly misleading. Corpus-based research consistently shows that lexico-grammatical patterns differ systematically across registers (i.e. linguistic varieties defined by communicative purpose and situation of use) at all linguistic levels. Strong patterns in one register often represent only weak patterns in other registers, and, consequently, few descriptions of language are adequate for a language as a whole (Biber et al., 1994; Biber et al., 1998; Biber et al., 1999).

The next section reports on two corpus-based analyses that show that, far from being the ‘monolithic’ linguistic phenomenon portrayed by ESL/EFL grammar textbooks, RS displays significant variation across different registers. The information on the grammatical and discourse patterns of use of RS across different spoken and written registers in English revealed by these analyses questions the way that this linguistic feature is presented in current ESL/EFL textbooks.

IV Corpus-based analyses of reported speech

This section presents the results of two corpus-based studies that we carried out to examine how RS works in real language. The first study (Eckhardt, 2001) focuses on IRS, while the second one (Barbieri, 2005a) focuses on DRS. Table 1 provides an overview of the main features and registers that were analyzed, and of the corpora used as databases for the analyses:

1 Corpus findings for indirect reported speech

Eckhardt (2001) investigated the use of IRS in two different registers, newspaper writing and conversation, using a 3.3 million word corpus of newspaper writing and a 2.1 million word corpus of everyday conversation drawn from the American English component of the Longman Spoken and Written English (LSWE) Corpus (Biber et al., 1999). To put these numbers in perspective, one million words is estimated to equal approximately 4000 double-spaced manuscript pages, or 2850 book pages, or 140–50 hours of conversation (Biber et al., 1999: 39).

The study investigated the frequency of use and register variation of reporting verbs and verb tense combinations in naturally occurring RS. The instances of IRS were retrieved using an especially-designed computer program that searched for say, tell and 42 other reporting verbs identified through the survey of ESL/EFL grammar textbooks, and then isolated instances that were in a grammatical position likely to be IRS. The output yielded by the computer program was then manually sorted in order to eliminate all instances that were not IRS.
The results from the analysis revealed several interesting patterns of the use of IRS in naturally occurring language. First, the findings showed that, perhaps not surprisingly, *say* and *tell* were by far the most frequent reporting verbs in both the registers analyzed, newspaper writing and conversation. As shown in Figure 1, *say* occurred as reporting verb 4205 times per million words in News and 1011 times per million words in Conversation. *Tell* was much more infrequent than *say*, occurring 340 times per million words in News and 317 times per million words in Conversation.

The frequency of occurrence of the other 42 reporting verbs included in the analysis was not comparable with the frequency of occurrence of *say* and *tell*. In News it ranged from 78 occurrences for *announce* and *report* to only two occurrences per million words for *swear*. In Conversation, the only ‘other’ reporting verb that occurred with notable frequency was *ask* (61 occurrences per million words), while the remaining ‘other’ verbs occurred less than ten times per million words, or did not occur at all.

These findings do not completely contradict the textbooks in our survey, all of which focused on *say* and *tell*, but they do question their presentations of the ‘other’ verbs. Of the seven textbooks in the survey, only three (Bland, 1996; Elbaum, 2001; Fuchs and Bonner, 1995) mentioned *announce*, only two (Bland, 1996; Fuchs and Bonner, 1995) mentioned *report*, and only one (Bland, 1996) mentioned *indicate*, which was the third most common ‘other’ verb in News (60 occurrences per million words). By contrast, several of the ‘other’ reporting verbs mentioned in the textbooks did not occur at all in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Overview of main features of Eckhardt (2001) and Barbieri (2005a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Eckhardt (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main focus</td>
<td>Indirect reported speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Features analyzed</td>
<td>• Main/reporting verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tense combinations between reporting verbs and embedded/clausal verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Register differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registers</td>
<td>• Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Newspaper writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Newspaper writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Newspaper writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corpora for analysis</td>
<td>1. Conversation, 2.1 million words (LSWE Corpus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. News, 3.3 million words (LSWE Corpus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. News, 3.3 million words (LSWE Corpus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Study Groups, 141 100 words (T2K-SWAL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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multimillion corpora used in this study. It is not clear which principles informed textbooks authors’ decisions about which reporting verbs to present, other than, as we may guess, their own intuition.

Since the ‘other’ reporting verbs were relatively infrequent, the analysis of the verb-tense combinations was limited to the corpus samples including say and tell as reporting verbs. For the purposes of the analysis, the tense of reporting and embedded verbs was considered either past or present, and the tense combinations of reporting and embedded verb were classified into four broad categories: 1) Past-Past, 2) Past-Present, 3) Present-Past, 4) Present-Present. Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of the proportional distribution of the four tense combinations with say and tell, in each register.

As shown in Figure 2, the Past-Past tense combination is by far the most frequent tense combination, accounting for over 50% of the four tense combinations for both say and tell, both in Conversation and News. However, in both registers, both say and tell occur in tense combinations other than Past-Past in about one third of the cases. Past-Present is the second most common tense combination, accounting for 20% to over 30% of the four tense combinations combined. The third most frequent tense combination is Present-Present. Present-Past is by far the most infrequent tense combination.

The data in Figure 2 show that Past-Past and Past-Present sequences combined account for over 80% of the possible tense sequences, with both say and tell, and in both registers. This means that past tense reporting verbs are overwhelmingly more frequent than present tense reporting verbs. However,
a reporting verb in the past tense is not necessarily followed by a past tense verb in the embedded clause, and in fact is followed by a present tense verb in approximately 23% to over 30% of the cases. Further, with the reporting verb say, tense combinations other than Past-Past account for 40%–50% of the possible combinations. In sum, while they do not completely contradict textbooks descriptions of tense behaviors with IRS, these findings suggest that textbooks might address these underrepresented tense combinations.

This corpus-based study also shows that the use of IRS varies dramatically across different registers. First, the findings indicate that IRS is approximately 3.5 times more frequent in News than in Conversation (compare the 4500 occurrences per million words in News with the approximately 1300 occurrences per million words in Conversation, as shown in Figure 1). Going beyond the overall frequency level, the findings reveal that reporting verbs other than say and tell occur much more frequently and in a much wider range in News than Conversation, indicating that newspaper writing uses a wider variety of reporting verbs than casual conversation, and that in conversation speakers rely overwhelmingly on say and tell to introduce IRS.

If IRS is so much more infrequent in conversation than newspaper writing, one wonders what other resources speakers rely on to report speech in everyday, mundane conversation, as it seems intuitively unlikely that RS should be used less in speech than in writing. As Mike McCarthy (1998) puts it, ‘hardly

![Figure 2](image-url)  
**Figure 2** Proportional distribution of the four tense sequences in indirect reported speech with *say* and *tell* as reporting verbs, in News and Conversation (based on Eckhardt, 2001)
any stretch of casual conversational data is without reports of prior speech’ (p. 150). This leads us to our second corpus-based study of RS in real language, which investigated the use of DRS quotatives in spoken American English.

2 Corpus findings for direct reported speech

Yule (1993) and Yule et al. (1992) point out that ESL/EFL textbooks descriptions of RS do not account for forms of direct speech quotation that are now commonly used in spoken English, such as the quotative verbs be like and go. Abundant sociolinguistics research suggests that the quotative be like is spreading rapidly, not only in American English, but also in other English varieties (cf. Blyth et al., 1990; Ferrara and Bell, 1995; Macaulay, 2001; Tagliamonte and Hudson, 1999; Winter, 2002; among many).

Mougeon and Rehner (2001) and Rehner et al. (2003) showed that French immersion students use vernacular or ‘mildly marked variants’ (e.g. nous autres and nous on, as opposed to the formal variant nous; rien que and juste, as opposed to the standard variants ne...que and seulement) significantly less frequently than native speakers of Canadian French. They attributed the underuse of these variants to the fact that they are rarely or never used in class by the teachers and are not presented in French language arts materials, and argued that in order to foster the development of sociopragmatic competence, mildly marked variants that represent the preferable option according to native norms should be made ‘the focus of explicit instruction targeting reception, production, or both’ (Rehner et al., 2003: 151).

Based on this background, the study of DRS focused on the innovative direct speech quotatives be like, be all and go (Barbieri 2005a). Specifically, the study compared the frequency of occurrence of the quotatives be like, be all, and go with the traditional quotative verb say in four corpora representing different registers of spoken interaction (see Table 1). Conversation was drawn from the American Conversation component of the LSWE corpus. Service Encounters, Study Groups, and Office Hours were drawn from the TOEFL 2000 Spoken and Written Academic Language (T2K-SWAL) corpus (Biber et al., 2002), and are representative of different registers of spoken language that can be encountered in American universities. Service Encounters comprises service encounters recorded at different campus settings, such as bookstores, copy shops, coffee shops, library information desks, student business services, and media centers. Study Groups includes interactions among two or more students in a group, who meet to complete tasks on class-related topics. Lastly, Office Hours contains one-on-one consultations between students and university instructors. Taken together, these registers provide a wide representation of the spoken language varieties that ESL students may encounter in a university setting, and, at a minimum, of spoken language varieties relevant for EFL and ESL students.

Simple present and simple past tense forms of be like, be all, go and say were searched for in the four registers using the concordancer MonoConc Pro
(Barlow, 2000). The outputs from the searches were then manually sorted in order to eliminate all tokens that did not actually introduce DRS. Following standard CL analytical procedures, the raw frequency of occurrence of the quotatives in the four corpora was normed to occurrences per 100,000 words to allow for comparisons across corpora of unequal size.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the normed frequency of occurrence of the quotatives in the simple present and simple past tense. Figure 4 shows that the traditional quotative *say* is consistently the most frequent quotative in the simple past tense, across all four registers. Further, across the four registers, *be like* is the second most frequent quotative in past tense. In contrast, *go* and *be all* are both very infrequent in the past tense. By contrast, the distribution of the quotatives in the present tense exhibits much more variation. The data in Figure 3 show that *say* is the most frequent quotative in one register only, Office Hours. In Conversation, the quotatives *say, be like,* and *go* occur with roughly the same frequency. Further, the innovative quotative *be like* is the most frequent quotative in Service Encounters and in Study Groups, where it is far more frequent than *say.* In the present tense, the quotatives *go* and *be all* are much more frequent than in past tense.

Patterns of use of RS that may be relevant for classroom instruction and teaching materials are not limited to the different reporting verbs and their frequency of occurrence across registers. An important characteristic of the use of the ‘new’ quotatives, for example, is their discourse-pragmatic function. Indeed, research has shown that the spread and grammaticalization of the new quotatives is characterized by a development of their discourse function, that

![Figure 3](image.png)

*Figure 3* Frequency of quotative use in the simple present tense across four registers (based on Barbieri, 2005a)
is a shift from their use almost exclusively to represent the speaker’s internal reactions and inner thoughts (in the case of *be like*), or as performatives of gestures and sounds (in the case of *go*), to their increased use to introduce plausibly previously uttered speech (Blyth et al., 1990; Romaine and Lange, 1991; Ferrara and Bell, 1995).

Barbieri (2005a) investigated the discourse-pragmatic function of these quotatives in Conversation, the largest register in the study. The quotatives were classified according to whether they introduce ‘direct speech’ (a representation of previous plausibly uttered speech) or ‘inner speech’ (a representation of the speaker’s thoughts, reactions, attitude, or mimics). The findings revealed that there are clear patterns of association between the grammatical person of the subject of the quotative and the type of quotation that the quotatives introduce (i.e. direct speech vs. inner speech). Specifically, the quotatives *say* and *go* generally introduce plausible dialogue, both with first and third person subjects. In contrast, *be like* exhibits a more complex discourse function: it typically introduces inner speech with first person subjects, and plausible dialogue with third person subjects. Finally, *be all* appears to be used with roughly the same frequency both with first and third person subjects (see Figure 5).

Another important factor (not investigated in the study described here) conditioning the use of the new quotatives is speaker’s age. While *be like* was initially used almost exclusively by teenagers and college-aged speakers (Blyth et al., 1990; Ferrara and Bell, 1995), recent findings suggest that this quotative is now used considerably frequently also by speakers in their late 20s and in their 30s (Barbieri, 2005b; 2007; Singler, 2001), supporting the hypothesis that *be like* is expanding in American English. Speakers over 40, however,
still favour the traditional *say*. Given that age of the speaker (still) affects quotative choice, students should be sensitized to the role of this socio-pragmatic factor in quotative use.

To sum up, the findings from this corpus-based study of DRS show that the use of quotative verbs in spoken American English is conditioned by linguistic factors such as tense, grammatical person, and type of quotation. One especially important finding is the fact that the use of quotative verbs varies considerably across different registers of spoken interaction. Perhaps even more important is the finding that the so-called ‘new’ quotatives *be like, go,* and—to a lesser extent—*be all* occur in three of the four registers included in the analysis, which suggests that these quotatives are now well established in American English. In other words, the traditional quotative *say* is not the only option available to speakers of American English to quote direct speech. Rather, users of English avail themselves of several other variants, including *be like, go, be all,* that are typically not presented in current ESL/EFL textbooks.

V Principles for the design of L2 teaching materials and classroom instruction of reported speech

The patterns of use of RS revealed by the two corpus-based analyses summarized above have a number of implications for the design of L2 teaching materials and classroom instruction of RS. These can be summarized in the following 10 principles:

1) It is neither necessary nor desirable to teach RS as a transformation mechanism from DRS to IRS. Rather, these two different linguistic constructions should be taught as separate constructions, because they have different lexico-grammatical and discourse functions in different situational contexts or registers.
2) Specifically, IRS should be taught in conjunction with samples of newspaper writing, since it is much more frequent in newspaper writing than casual conversation.

3) Conversely, DRS should be taught in the context of casual conversation (or other conversational spoken registers) since it is a salient feature of this register.

4) For IRS, prioritize *say* and *tell*, but positive evidence of other verbs that are frequently used with reporting functions (e.g. *announce, report, agree, claim, warn*, etc.) should also be provided.

5) With IRS, prioritize Past-Past tense sequences, but provide positive evidence of other widely used tense sequences, such as Past-Present and Present-Present.

6) For the less frequent but widely used tense combinations such as Past-Present or Present-Present, draw attention to the grammatical patterns and discourse functions that are associated with them.

7) For DRS, teach the standard, unmarked quotative *say*, but provide positive evidence of at least two widely used, non-traditional quotatives: *be like* and *go*.

8) For the quotatives *be like, go, be all* raise awareness about their discourse-pragmatic function. Specifically, for *be like*, draw attention to the fact that this quotative is often used to report inner speech or thought (rather than actual speech), particularly with first person singular subjects.

9) For the quotatives *be like, go, be all* raise awareness about the situational factors that affect their use. Specifically, draw attention to the fact that they are used more often in informal, casual conversation, and less frequently in more formal, institutional registers such as university office hour consultations, etc.

10) For the quotatives *be like, be all, go* raise awareness about the sociolinguistic factors that constrain their use, particularly speaker’s age.

Having identified these principles for the design of L2 teaching materials and classroom teaching of RS, what framework can we adopt for their presentation, so that they can be ‘implemented’ in a way that is grounded in theories of language learning, and is thus ‘SLA-driven,’ rather than merely ‘corpus-driven’? We propose that ‘focus-on-form’ theory and form-focused tasks provide a well suited framework for the presentation of the patterns of real language use and language variation based on corpus findings.

VI Form-focused instruction and structure-based tasks

Since Michael Long (1991) introduced a distinction between *focus on form* (FonF) and *focus on forms*, many different interpretations and operationalizations of form-focused instruction (FFI) have been proposed (e.g. *planned* or *proactive* FonF, *unplanned* or *reactive* FonF, *implicit* and *explicit* FonF; see Doughty and Varela, 1998; Ellis, 2001; and Spada, 1997, for comprehensive reviews). Rod Ellis (2001) makes a threefold distinction between 1) Focus on Forms; 2) Planned FonF; 3) Incidental FonF. Incidental FonF is reactive, and consists of a responsive
teaching intervention that involves ‘an occasional shift of attention to linguistic
code features—by the teacher and/or one or more students—triggered by
perceived problems with comprehension or production’ (Long and Robinson,
1998: 23). This is the type of FFI that is closest to Long’s (1991) initial concep-
tualization of FonF, and has been claimed to be ‘most congruent with the general
aims of communicative language teaching’ (Doughty and Varela, 1998: 205).
However, when it comes to actual implementation in the language classroom, this
reactive, completely unplanned instructional intervention poses obvious problems
of impracticality and unfeasibility; in contrast, planned or proactive FonF has
been claimed to be more feasible (Doughty and Williams, 1998: 208). Moreover,
explicit types of instruction have been shown to be more effective and beneficial
than implicit types of instruction (Norris and Ortega, 2000).

This debate on whether planned-proactive or unplanned-reactive FonF is
more beneficial has generally overlooked the issue of the authenticity of the
materials, and of the sort of input that a totally unplanned, reactive FonF
assumes. This issue is however critical for the use of corpus-based materials
in the classroom. In terms of practicality, indeed, only planned or proactive
FonF that allows for the design of structured input can be regarded as a real-
istically suitable framework for the principled introduction of corpus-based
findings in the language classroom and in L2 instructional materials.

The impracticalities involved in the implementation of purely incidental, reac-
tive FonF in the context of communicative instruction have been addressed by
Ellis (2003) and Fotos (1993; 1994; 2002), who, drawing upon current claims
concerning the positive role of ‘consciousness raising’ (Rutheford and Sharwood-
Smith, 1985) and ‘noticing’ (Schmidt, 1990) in second language learning, since
the early 1990s have proposed the use of ‘structure-based interactive tasks’
(Fotos, 2002) or ‘focused, consciousness-raising tasks’ (Ellis, 2003; Fotos, 1994).
Ellis (2003) distinguishes three types of focused tasks: 1) structure-based pro-
duction tasks, 2) comprehension tasks, 3) consciousness-raising tasks (CRTs).

It is the last type of tasks that is of interest here. CRTs differ from structure-
based production tasks and comprehension tasks (type 1 and 2) in two ways.
First, while production and comprehension tasks are intended to develop implicit knowledge, CRTs are meant to develop awareness at the level of ‘understanding.’ Second, while production and comprehension tasks are
designed around some sort of general content, in CRTs, language itself is the
content. Ellis (2003) further suggests that CRTs should consist of ‘1) data
containing exemplars of the targeted features, and 2) instructions requiring
the learners to operate on the data in some way’ (p. 163). He also identifies
four main characteristics of CRTs (2003: 163):

1) There is an attempt to isolate a specific linguistic feature for focused atten-
tion.
2) The learners are provided with data that illustrate the targeted feature and
they may also be provided with an explicit rule describing or explaining
the feature.
3) The learners are expected to utilise intellectual effort to understand the targeted feature.
4) Learners may be optionally required to verbalise a rule describing the grammatical structure.

Ellis’s (2003) focused CRTs and Fotos’s (1994; 2002) structure-based interactive tasks provide a suitable framework for the implementation of corpus-based findings and thus for the design of a ‘corpus-based, form-focused treatment’ of RS, to which we now turn.

VII The corpus-based form-focused treatment

This section outlines a corpus-based form-focused treatment of RS which we designed based on the corpus findings from Barbieri (2005a) and Eckhardt (2001), and following the ten principles outlined above. The treatment proposed here (see Appendix B) is appropriate for (higher) intermediate to advanced, academically oriented language learners both in ESL (e.g. in intensive or academic English programs) and in EFL contexts. It comprises three units or sets of activities, each focusing on a different aspect of RS: the first unit focuses on the grammatical patterns of IRS; the second unit focuses on the patterns of register variation with IRS; finally, the third unit focuses on the grammatical and sociopragmatic aspects of DRS. Crucially, the activities were designed to provide an accurate, proportional representation of the patterns of use that emerged in the two corpus analyses of RS (though this is not evident from the sample activities reproduced in Appendix B, which were shortened due to space constraints). All examples used in the activities were drawn from the American News and American Conversation sub-corpora of the LSWE Corpus.

Each unit comprises two parts. The first part is designed to provide positive evidence of the targeted form through input flood and typographical input enhancement. Input flood simply assumes that ‘the more opportunities there are in the input for learners to notice a linguistic feature, the more likely they are to do so’ (Doughty and Williams, 1998: 236). Typographical enhancement is a relatively implicit technique that has been used to direct learners’ attention and to increase perceptual salience (cf. White, 1998). Thus it is hypothesised that input flood coupled with typographical enhancement will help direct the learners’ attention to the targeted feature(s) and facilitate noticing. Corpus-based texts are by definition authentic, and as such naturally lend themselves to input flood and input enhancement. In other words, carefully selected corpus texts drawn from particular registers will likely contain several instances of the targeted feature, which can then be made more perceptually salient via typographical enhancement to provide rich positive evidence. For example, in the second unit (not reproduced in Appendix B), which focuses on the differences in the use of IRS in newspaper writing and conversation, the positive evidence consists of two extended samples from News and Conversation highlighting the contrast between the wide variety of
reporting verbs used in newspaper writing and the almost exclusive reliance of conversation on *say* and *tell*. Similarly, in the third unit, which focuses on the innovative quotatives *be like*, *go*, *be all* and the sociolinguistic competence affecting their use, the positive evidence consists of excerpts from Conversation illustrating the use of the traditional quotative *say* and the use of the quotatives *be like* and *go*.

The second part of the units is designed to provide metalinguistic awareness-raising through a structure-based interactive task in two steps. In the first step, students are guided to interact with texts and to extract information on the use of RS. In the second step, students are guided to abstract patterns and induce ‘rules’ on the use of RS. Thus, the activities aim at promoting learners’ noticing, and, by drawing their attention to the targeted features, at raising learners’ awareness of how they are used in naturally occurring texts; however, they do not necessarily require learners to produce those structures.

Awareness raising or noticing tasks that promote recognition but do not require production of the target features have been suggested to be particularly appropriate for teaching spoken grammar, on the grounds that for some features of the spoken language in particular it is at a minimum questionable whether it is desirable that learners produce them at any stage (Timmis, 2005). These kinds of tasks may also be appropriate for teaching linguistic features that exhibit lexico-grammatical variation based on contextual and register factors—as in the case of IRS—because the production circumstances that constrain language use in different registers may be difficult to reproduce for meaningful production purposes.

This second part of the units is designed to be carried out in pairs, in order to promote interaction as well as accuracy. A considerable amount of SLA research has investigated interaction in meaning-based tasks, showing that pair work is beneficial, in that it allows learners to engage in the negotiation of meaning. Although relatively less is known on the effect of interaction on grammar-focused tasks, recent research on pair work in grammar-focused tasks suggests that pair work has an overall beneficial effect on accuracy (Storch, 1999).

We now illustrate this second part of the units for each of the three units. The reader is referred to the sample excerpts included in Appendix B (for units 1 and 3; unit 2 is not reproduced here).

**Unit 1.** In the first stage, students are asked to refer to the sample sentences in the first part of the unit (positive evidence), and, for each sentence, identify the main/reporting verb, the embedded verb, and their respective tenses. Next, students are asked to interact with the samples and their own output, by counting the occurrences of the verbs *say*, *tell*, and other verbs, and by counting the occurrences of the four tense combinations. In the second stage (not reproduced in Appendix B), students are presented with corpus samples with Present-Present tense combinations. Each individual sample is followed by multiple choice or Yes-No questions that aim at directing students’ attention
to the discourse function and the grammatical constraints associated with the use of Present-Present tense combinations. The samples are followed by True/False questions that present meta-linguistic explanations on the grammatical and discourse properties of these tense combinations, and by open-ended questions that guide students to formulate hypotheses on and synthesize these grammatical and discourse properties.

**Unit 2.** In the first stage, students are presented with newspaper writing and conversation corpus samples, and are asked to decide whether the samples are from newspaper writing or conversation, indicating which particular element of the sentence makes them believe so. Similar to Unit 1, stage two includes questions asking students to formulate hypotheses about the differences in the use of RS in newspaper writing and conversation.

**Unit 3.** In the first stage, students complete a task designed to draw their attention to the differences in quotative use in two conversations, one including only *say* (and one instance of *think*), and the other one including several instances of the quotatives *be like*, *be all*, and *go*. The students first read and identify the reporting verbs in the two conversations; they then count the occurrences of each verb of quotation, and fill in the information in a table.

In stage two, students are guided to discuss the pragmatic and sociocultural factors that might affect the use of ‘non-traditional’ quotatives by completing a discourse rating task (DRT) (Lee and McChesney, 2000). Modelled on the discourse completion task (DCT), the DRT has been proposed to promote pragmatic awareness and sociocultural competence. The DRT asks students to rate a given prompt (e.g. a dialogue or conversation excerpt) on a continuum or scale for a series of parameters. Here, students rate the two conversations along four parameters: general tone of the conversation, relationship between the speakers, friendliness, and age of speakers. Age of the speakers is an important socio-pragmatic factor to raise learners’ attention to, because research has shown that the new quotatives are favored by young speakers, teenagers and 20–30 years old, while speakers over 40 years old continue to favor the traditional quotative *say* (Barbieri, 2005b; 2007; Singler, 2001). The two conversations in this unit reflect this pattern: the women in the first conversation are in their late 50s, while the participants in the second conversation are in their early 20s.

**VIII Conclusions**

The two corpus-based analyses of RS summarized here reveal the complex nature of this linguistic feature, which varies considerably across different registers, and varies at different levels, that is, from the choice of the RS ‘mode’ (IRS vs. DRS) to more fine-grained linguistic factors, such as reporting verbs, tense, etc. Our findings show that IRS is far more frequent in newspaper writing than in conversation, and that this register exhibits a much wider variety of reporting verbs than does conversation. In contrast, when
speakers use IRS in conversation, they rely overwhelmingly on *say* and *tell*, and seldom use other verbs of reporting. Corpus-based analyses show that speech reports in the form of direct quotation are pervasive in conversation. However, again, more fine-grained analyses of RS across different registers of spoken interaction (e.g. Conversation, Study Groups, etc.) reveal that there is variation in the way it is used, in terms of choice of reporting verbs, tense, etc. These analyses also show that such variation is affected by various factors, including level of formality of the register, type of quotation, and tense.

The complexity of RS revealed by these corpus-based analyses contrasts with the descriptions of RS found in many popular ESL/EFL textbooks, which typically focus on grammatical transformations and backshifting, and neglect register variation in the use of this structure.

If ESL/EFL learners are to be presented with representative and authentic descriptions of RS, L2 instructional materials should reflect the findings of empirical, corpus-based research. The ten principles for the design of L2 teaching materials and classroom instruction outlined above are based on the corpus findings on RS that emerged in Barbieri (2005a) and Eckhardt (2001). These principles implicitly assume that frequency of occurrence in real language should be a crucial factor when determining what to prioritize in L2 materials design and classroom instruction. Although we would not argue that these principles are exhaustive, they provide a principled starting point, until more research into the lexico-grammatical patterns and the discourse functions of RS is carried out.

In the present paper we have argued that the implementation of corpus-based findings in L2 teaching materials and classroom instruction should be SLA-driven rather than corpus-driven; that is, it should be guided by theories of language learning and acquisition, rather than a mere wish to bring the corpus into the classroom. Selected principles of current theories of FFI offer a suitable theoretical framework for such an endeavor. Specifically, planned, proactive, explicit approaches to FonF may be more suited to the use of corpus-based findings than incidental, reactive, unplanned approaches. Corpus-based findings and texts can be fruitfully used to design structure-based, grammar-focused tasks that provide positive evidence of the targeted linguistic feature(s), draw learners’ attention to the targeted features and their patterns of use, and explicitly guide students to formulate hypotheses and verbalize rules on the use of the targeted features.

To conclude, we believe that structure-based grammar-focused tasks offer a promising framework for the principled implementation of corpus-based findings in L2 teaching materials and classroom instruction. The next step in future research will be investigating the effectiveness of this approach to the application of corpus-based findings to LT in promoting language learning. In a classroom-based pilot study of the materials conducted in a small Intensive English Program, Barbieri (2006) found promising indications for the fruitful use of these activities to teach RS. Of course, however, in order to determine the extent to which the materials are actually effective in promoting learner’s
noticing, in raising their awareness of the use of the target features, and possibly even in improving subsequent production, it will be necessary to test the materials through carefully designed instructional studies.

Notes

* A previous version of this paper was presented at the Second Language Research Forum, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, 16–19 October 2003.

1 Suzanne E.B. Eckhardt was a lecturer at Beloit College at the time of writing this article.

2 This notion of salience or scope refers to how productive linguistic features are in real language use, and, more specifically, in different registers. For example, the French pronoun y is quite common, yet quite unproductive in that it tends to occur almost exclusively in the fixed expression il y a, and, to a lesser extent, in y aller (Lawson, 2001).

3 These examples were taken from the Longman Spoken and Written English (LSWE) Corpus (Biber et al., 1999).

4 Service Encounters also includes considerable amounts of workplace conversation among co-workers.

5 The proportions of use for quotative be all should, however, be carefully considered because they are based on small numbers (i.e. 23 occurrences only).

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IX References


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Appendix A: ESL/EFL grammar textbooks


Appendix B: Corpus-based form-focused sample activities

**Reported speech – Unit 1**

Speakers and writers often need to report what others have said. To do this, they often use **indirect** reported speech, as in this example:

> The engineer said his family would harvest four sacks and give two back to the collective farm. (news)

The part that is underlined is the reported speech, that is what the engineer reports.

In the corpus samples below, mark which part of the sample is the reported speech, as in the example above. Work individually.

1. Never one to eavesdrop, Karen said she didn’t hear what was said. (news)
2. In a wide-ranging talk, 25-time Grammy winner Dylan Jones told the program director that he understands the pressure to fight for ratings. (news)
3. Fox, who lives with his wife, actress Tracy Pollan, and their 2-year-old-son Sam in rural Connecticut, says he prefers not to play the image game the way many other actors do. (news)
4. Stone says he was informed by one *Time* magazine writer that three high-powered senior editors—whom he alleges are anti-Garrison—weighed in when it came to putting together the June 10 story. (news)
5. Vasily Gromyko, a deputy sports minister, claimed the test was flawed. (news)

**Step 1 – Work in pairs**

In the above samples . . .

1) Mark: a) the main / reporting verb, and b) the verb in the reported speech clause
2) Make a list of the verbs and their tenses in the table below:

   1. Never one to eavesdrop, Karen said *she didn’t hear what was said.* (news)
Main / reporting verb | Tense of the main verb | Verb in the reported speech clause | Tense of the verb in the reported speech clause
---|---|---|---
1 | said | past | didn’t hear | past
2 | | | |
3 | | | |
4 | | | |
5 | | | |

3) Note how many times each of the above verbs and verb tenses occur. (You will need to go back to the table and count.)

Types of reporting verbs:

a. Some form of the verb ________ occurs as the main reporting verb _____ time(s) and seems to be the most common reporting verb.

b. Some form of the verb ________ occurs as the main reporting verb ____ time(s) and is the next most common reporting verb.

c. Other verbs (verbs that are *not* ‘say’ or ‘tell’) occur as the main reporting verb ______ time(s) and are less common as reporting verbs.

Types of verb tense sequences: (reporting verb – clausal verb: Past-Past, Past-Present, Present-Past, or Present-Present)

d. A __________ - __________ verb tense combination occurs ____ times and is a very common combination.

e. A __________ - __________ verb tense combination occurs ____ times. It is also very common.

f. A ________ - ________ verb tense combination occurs ____ time, and a ________ - ________ verb tense combination occurs ____ time. Both of these are much rarer and occur with more particular contexts and situations.

Reported speech – Unit 3

Part 1:

In everyday life, we often report what other people said or told us, to the people we normally talk to (our friends, our family, our boss, etc.). Very often we do that by using their own or similar words, as in:

(1) <Armrel>...Well he knows those people, as a matter of fact he said the lady took her cat to the vet the other day and her cat was sick. She told the vet, she said ‘I only want to spend a hundred dollars. I don’t want to spend anymore than that.’ Well, the cat died and he wanted a hundred and thirty and she was pissed.

This way of reporting previous speech is called direct reported speech or direct quotation. English speakers use many different verbs to introduce direct reported speech:
(2) <Jennifer> Oh it was that chocolate he had left over from making the cake. He was like ‘he can have this’ I said ‘no it’ll make him sick.’ He goes ‘why?’ I said ‘I don’t know why I just know that you’re not supposed to give chocolate to dogs’.

<Jill> It kills them.

Part 2:

**Step 1 – Work in pairs**

Read the following conversations. While you read, underline all reporting verbs.

**Conversation 1**

**Scenario:**
The conversation takes place during the celebration of two birthdays by two women who grew up together. The participants, Diana and Barbara, are at the birthday party.

<Diana> She was in the office the other day.

<Barbara> What?

<Diana> She was in the, you know in our office, yeah the health food and I, and I haven’t seen her for years you know and she kept looking at me and as I got closer to the thing I thought ‘oh gosh that’s got to be somebody I know’, so finally I tried to <unclear> and I said ‘oh, I haven’t seen you for like years’ and so I said ‘you didn’t come to our luncheon’, I can’t remember her reason but she said, ‘well you know Barbara called and left a message but . . .’

<Barbara> I talked to her husband.

<Diana> Her, yeah to her husband, but he didn’t remember her married name and I didn’t know how to get hold of her. And I said, ‘aren’t you at Evergreen Health Food’ and she said ‘yes’, and I said ‘well, she’s right in your building’.

**Conversation 2**

**Scenario:**
Kristina and John are colleagues and work together at a bank. They are both bank tellers.
The conversation takes place on the workplace, at the bank.

<John> You want to call Eric?

<Kristina> Actually he called me at like six thirty he’s like ‘hello’. ‘Hi’. I’m like ‘what’s wrong with you’, he’s like ‘I don’t feel good’. ‘Why don’t you go back to bed’. ‘I’ve been sleeping.’ ‘Go back.’ ‘No I can’t sleep’, he said ‘I have a headache’. ‘take something, what’s wrong’, ‘they’re still making my throat hurt.’ ‘I don’t want you to stay home and relax if you feel like you’re going to puke then you’re, I don’t want you to come over for dinner and stuff’ and he goes ‘no’ and I’m all ‘just come over and see me later on, you know, after bathing and stuff’ and he was like ‘oh okay’ and I’m like ‘do you want me to call you later?’ ‘Yeah’. ‘okay, get some sleep and take care.’ Okay and I was going to Jason he’s laughing, having a great time, wide awake. Okay.

<Kristina> Acting all stubborn. Picks up milk, he has a glass of milk, takes a look at <unclear> supposed to be chocolate milk. She puts it down she puts it in his mouth and swishes it around then drinks the milk and swishes it around. Okay . . .

Federica Barbieri and Suzanne E.B. Eckhardt 345
Now that you have underlined the reporting verbs, look for the different *types* of reporting verbs in the two conversations, and count how many times they are repeated. For ex., in Example 2 (page 1) the verb *say* is repeated twice but it is the same verb, so you would count it as one verb, repeated twice. Fill in the information in the table below and compare your answers with your partner(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation 1</th>
<th>Conversation 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Times repeated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>__________</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>__________</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>__________</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2 – Work in pairs**

Re-read the conversations and complete the rating scale below. There are no right or wrong answers; circle the rates that you and your partner think best represent the situation of the conversation (relationship between participants, age, etc.).

**Conversation 1 [note: repeat for Conversation 2]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General tone of the conversation</th>
<th>Very formal</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between the speakers</td>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>Very unfriendly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very friendly</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of speakers*</td>
<td>Very young</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key:

Very young = ~16–25 1
Fairly young = ~26–40 2
Middle aged = ~40–60 3
Old = ~60 and above 4
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