Everyday Practices, Everyday Pedagogies
A Dialogue on Critical Transformations in a Multilingual Hong Kong School

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1 'WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "CRITICAL"?' RESEARCH AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION

It is 11 a.m. on a Friday morning in April 2012 when we meet—a researcher (Dr. M') conducting a critical sociolinguistic ethnography in MAT Secondary School (MATSS[2]), a government-aided school in Hong Kong; and a teacher (ME C), who works in this school, teaching English and liberal stud ies to a group of so-called 'ethnic minority' (EM) students through the lens of critical pedagogy—at the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. It is almost four months since the fieldwork carried out in the school ended[3], and we are interviewing each other through open conversation to reflect on our experiences in the process of data collection from our distinct positions. Forty-six minutes into the conversation, the interview unfolds as follows (see the transcription conventions in the Appendix to this chapter):

Mr. C what do you think your- your critical / or A critical sociolinguistic ethnography can offer me in terms of / my practice / uh / as a- as a teacher in the classroom but then also as a researcher?

Dr. M (laughter} wow / uh *I* uuh // well I—I remember the first day / the first day / when I was observing you in the class / after the class / we were going back home / and we were in the MTR (underground) / and you were making questions about / / *but what do you mean by critical?*

Mr. C [(laughter)]

Dr. M !laughter] and then [I was trying]

Mr. C II think we are still negotiating that!] [{laughter}] Dr. M [yeah]

As Chun (Chapter 8, this volume) points out, critical reflexivity includes heightened awareness of representation, positioning, and power and involves interrogating the construction of 'critical.' Apparent in this extract is that the negotiation of what counts as criticality was key in the building of our own relationship and rapport. Mr. C was concerned about the possibility of Dr. M benefiting from ethnographic research that might describe but ultimately leave oppressive structures and relationships in place. But to move beyond monolithic understandings of power where the only goal is pointing out how wider ideologies are reproduced and/or contested in the school context, we both agreed on setting up a more productive dialogue focused on the exploration of how identities, tensions, and moments of transformation are produced and negotiated in the moment-to-moment of the classroom's everyday activity. Indeed, we believe that our own difficulties in getting to this meeting point are to be found in the way critical approaches have been developed across different disciplines.

Critique has been the object of numerous discussions, books, and research articles in social sciences

since the mid-20th century. In reaction to positivist accounts that had previously conceptualized everyday life and social structures as two different and separate realms, this new ontological position brought with it the understanding of social reality as being discursively constructed, reproduced, naturalized, and sometimes revised in social interaction, in the course of large-scale historical, political, and socioeconomic configurations (see Giddens, 1984). In doing so, critique has paved the way to illuminating how social inequality works at the local level, allowing at the same time the development of transformational projects oriented to empower certain social groups who have been historically oppressed. However, these two aspects, intrinsically linked to critique, everyday life, and social structures, have often been taken up as separate or even incompatible, leading to polarized goals focusing either on knowledge-building or political activism.

This has been particularly the case in the educational field, which has often been conceptualized by reference to metaphors such as 'window' or `social laboratory' in critical literature, each of these being metaphors driven in many cases by a different research agenda, namely knowledge-building research or action research. Among these research traditions historically approaching the social space of the school from slightly different angles, we see that critical pedagogy (Akbari, 2008; Camangian, 2008; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Freire, 1970; Lin, 2004; Wink, 2000) and critical sociolinguistics (Heller & Martin-Jones, 2001; Block & Cameron, 2002; Lin & Martin, 2005; Martin-Jones, 2007; Kubota & Lin, 2009, Martin-Rojo, 2010, Perez-Milans, 2013) are useful examples, whereby the former has paid attention to the designing of liberating pedagogics that provide people with tools to critically understand and transform wider social structures, and the latter has devoted most of its efforts in developing a more suitable theory to explain how social inequality in modern institutions is culturally produced, shaped, and naturalized under changing economic conditions.

In contrast to these major disciplinary and historical trends, we aim to provide in this chapter an alternative account, on the basis of an ongoing dialogue between us. We believe this dialogue across the boundaries of disciplinary traditions (ethnographic sociolinguistics and pedagogy) and institutional identities (university researcher and researched school teacher) sets up a terrain for theory development and localized social transformation in critical approaches to the field of education. As we shall see in the following sections, our self-reflexive conversation enriched our respective research and teaching perspectives and goals, allowing us to engage in what Najar (Chapter 9, this volume) refers to as a 'weaving' of method, at the same time providing a base for long-term collaboration, network building, and other forms of action.

We have organized our chapter into five sections. Section 2 begins with a discussion of our specific research agendas and clarifies the nature of our dialogue and how ethnic minority education in the Hong Kong context fits within it. Then we take turns in Sections 3 and 4 reflecting upon observed practices in one of Mr. C's classes. On the one hand, Section 3 will tell the story of the institutional process of transformation faced by MATSS through Dr. M's perspective, with a focus on how this process shaped the interactional and discursive processes by which Mr. C and his students negotiated meaning and interpersonal relationships through their daily practices inside their classroom and through digital interactions on Facebook.

On the other hand, Section .4 will provide Mr. C's account of his own lived experience, allowing Dr. M to place his analysis in a wider social and pedagogical context that points out a critical moment of transformation at the institutional level of the studied school as well as at the pedagogical order of Mr. C's classroom. Finally, Section 5 will discuss opportunities, tensions, and dilemmas derived from a dialogue such as this, with particular attention to the value of continuity in these forms of collaboration. We envision the involvement of more sites, voices, and resources from here on, especially if our isolated actions as researchers, teachers, and students are to develop into a project as a means of social change.

2 TWO RESEARCH APPROACHES, ONE INSTITUTIONAL SITE: SCHOOLS, ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNGSTERS, AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN HONG KONG

On December 7, 2012, the *South China Morning Post* Hong Kong newspaper published in its Neighbourhood Sounds series a news report titled 'Jordan, Home to a Battling Nepali Community.' Although specifically about the presence of the Nepali community in one of the most famous Hong Kong neighborhoods, this report shows a great deal of the contemporary picture on the EM youngsters portrayed and circulated by public opinion in the Hong Kong context. Accompanied by a photo in which a Nepalese beauty shop owner gives a community worker a quick trim, the report states that `drug pushers get the ethnic minority teenagers to sell drugs in local schools, because if they're caught, they won't be sent to prison for life,' followed by a further comment on their position within the Hong Kong educational system in which it is said that 'less than one per cent of EM students get into tertiary education, so they lose

heart and just want to make money.'

Indeed, this portrayal does not differ from that provided by university researchers, who argue that, although Hong Kong public schools (including government, aided scheme, and direct subsidy scheme schools) serve over 9000 primary and secondary school EM students, those students face a `lower Chinese standard, limited choices of schools, difficulty of adaptation to school life, and narrow way-out' for further education (Wong, 2009: 1). For some commentators, these conditions perpetuate the exclusion of EM in Hong Kong, both in and out of the system of public education, and intensify `race and ethnicity' as 'key dimensions of social stratification and inequality in contemporary Hong Kong society (Ku et al., 2005: 1).

However, and although there seems to be some consensus on this panoramic view on the social position of these youngsters in Hong Kong society, in general and in the educational setting in particular, there is less evidence of the everyday situated practices of these social actors. As a consequence of official figures pointing out educational failure for these youth, more resources and researchers are now approaching this issue by trying to explain causes and developing interventions. Nevertheless, most of the ongoing research centers on academic factors and creating more suitable' Chinese language education programs for these students (see, for instance, Gao, 2011; Tsung et al., 2009; Jin et al., 2009; Shum & Lau, 2009); that is, a lack of access to Chinese language skills, beyond sufficient exploration of their social experiences, is considered to be the main reason of this widespread failure among EM students.

Against this backdrop, we hoped to shed more light on these issues. Although from different disciplinary traditions, we were both interested in looking closely at these youngsters' everyday lived practices. Indeed, it was along the way in the process of collaboration that we found each other's perspectives particularly useful in that regard, and the fact that we did not see that initially is especially significant to us because it reflects the distrust historically constructed between educators and university researchers in the field of education. On the one hand, Dr. M's focus on the study of the moment-to-moment of situated interactions in the classroom setting offered Mr. C's critical pedagogy project a platform for the localized analysis/ transformation of the wider social processes of structurization as played out in the institutional space of the school.

On the other hand, Mr. C's determination to challenge conventions of activity arrangement and evaluation in the everyday of the school in which he worked in order to provide his EM students with learning opportunities, enabling them to reflect critically on their conditions of social oppression, constituted in Dr. M's eyes a key localized moment in which links between the wider economic structures, the social organization of a given (school) community, and the discursive practices through which that community reconstitutes itself as such all get destabilized. At this point, it might be worth taking each of these two angles in turns. We turn now to Section 3 for Dr. M's story.

3 DR. M AND THE STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL COLLUSION

As in the case of any other regular Monday afternoon in the International Section, Mr. C and the 16 students of one of the class groups in Form 2 are already in the classroom at 2.20 p.m. Everything seems to follow the conventional patterns for Mr. C's classes, with a noticeable exception for this day. Against his pedagogical convictions, Mr. C has brought into the classroom a fill-in-the-gaps photocopy about feelings that the students are expected to complete. The school is at this moment working on the preparation of standardized English tests that all students from the Local and International Sections must take in order to allow a comparison of results across the two sections. These standardized practices are common in the organization of educational practices and assessment procedures in the school, particularly in the Local Section, but Mr. C is strongly opposed to those that, according to him, detract from student learning, empowerment, or 'authentic' assessment of learning. However, after arguments with the head of the English language panel in the school regarding previous assessments, Mr. C has agreed to proceed with the test in its existing form in order to avoid further conflict.

Extract 1. 'Sir, keep on talking.'

1 Mr. C	FRUSTRATED &
2 Ajmal	& fin a bored-like fashion) aah
3 Hasan	[(laugh)]

4 Mr. C   [uuh] / A PERSON FEELS [FRUSTRATED] =
 5   ¿ ?   I
 6 Mr. C   =WHEEN / THEY WANT TO DO
                  [SOMETHING] /
 7 Zareef   [{laugh)]
 8 Mr. C   BUT THEY CANNOT DO IT (2") ok // SO LET'S
                  SAY I [WANT YOU]
 9 Ajmal   [(cough)]
10 Mr. C   =to [(())] /
11 Ajmal   [(makes a sound with his hands]]
12 Mr. C   [AND I CAN'T DO IT↑] /
13 [(laughter)]
14 Mr. C   I will feel frustrated ↓]//
15   (laughs and cough]
16 Mr. C   LET'S SAY I WANT (0) TO BE QUIET &
17 Zareef   {to his peers} & (((0I! WASIF)) MEN!
18   *hey! Wasif*
19 Mr. C   AND THEY KEEP TALKINGT &
20 ¿Hasan?   & nothing
21 Mr. C   [(0)]
22 Zareef   [(0)]
23 Ajmal   [(coughs)]

24 {sounds of Mr. C writing on the blackboard}
25   disgusted &
26 Zareef   & what? // sir / keep on talking
27 ¿?   surprised
28 Ajmal   {laugh}
29Zareef?   (whistles}
30 Ajmal   (laugh)
31¿?   (0)
32 Mr. C   (1") ok / [EMBARRASSED]
33 Husna   [ARRE] / CHOOR NA YAR
34   "oh please / leave him pal"
35 Mr. C   [yeah]
36 Ajmal   (to Husna} [poor (())] &
37 Mr. C   & YOU GUYS KNOW EMBARRASED &
38 Ajmal   & to Husna} kya hei
39   "what is it *
40 Zareef   [{laugh}]
41 Hasan   [YEES!]
42 Zareef   (to Husna} you should report [(0)]
43 Mr. C   [(0)]
44 Zareef?   disgusted
45 {sound of a pen falling down near Zareef's seat)
46 Mr. C   DISGUSTED↑
47 (3"){sound of a pen falling down near Zareef's seat }
48 Mr. C   disgusted↑
49 Zareef   I am the one↑
50 Ajmal   (laugh}
51 Hasan   sir / something really [yuck↑]
52 Ajmal   [paalli]
53   *peanuts* {nickname??)
54 Mr. C   A PERSON FEELS / DISGUS I ED / WHEEN / uh &
55 Hasan   & they say something yuck↑ / (((hum↑)) &
56 Mr. C   & uuh / like /
57 Husna   uusko choor gaya [{laughs}]
58   *he left him *

59 Ajmal	[woo khud bool gaya] / {laugh}
60	*he forgot himself*
61 Mr. C	{in Spanish} como se llama↑
62	*how is it called?*
63 Zareef	SIR / {covering his nose with his fingers} YOU ((DO)) LIKE THIS / AND / [(())]
64 Ajmal	[{laughter}]
65 ¿?	[(0)]
66 Mr. C	[YOU GUYS KNOW / IN CANTONESE] =
67 Hasan	[(())]
68 Mr. C	=wattat?
69 Hasan	no &
70 ¿Zareef?	& WATTAT / YEAH YEAH &
71 Mr. C	& wattat / WATIAT IS / DISGUSTING // like uuh
72 Ajmal	{whispering)
73 Ajmal & Zareef	[{laughs and whispering)]
74 Mr. C	[IF YOU SEEE / A DEAD DOG ON THE STREET] / you would say / *oh hou wattat!* /
75	in English you would say *I feel soo disgusting* & &!(())] [{laughter}]
76 Zareef?	& [(())]
77 Ajmal	[{laughter)]
78 ¿?	& (()) &
79 Mr. C	oor / SMELL [SOMETHING]
80 Ajmal	[{laughter)]
81 Mr. C	BAD / {in Cantonese{ HOU CHOU / [((you feel the same. . .))]
82 Ajmal	{covering his nose with his hand) [SIR / I CAN SMELL NOW!]
83 {laughter}	
84 Zareef	[SIR / (())]=
85 Hasan	[(()) bhatbu↑]
86	*bad smell*
87 Zareef	=SO MUCH WORKING (())
88 Ajmal	[(laughter)]
89	
90 [(coughing)]	
91 Ajmal	SIR / CAN SMELL ((NOW))
92 Mr. C	[{talking to students on the first rows) ((this is-)) &
93 & {coughing) &	
94 Mr. C	& you feel [disgusted]
95 Zareef	[((disgusted))]
96 Mr. C	((makes you feel)) sick &
97 Zareef	& yeah
98 ¿?	(((frightened)))
99 Mr. C	ok I [((next one))]
100 Zareef	FRIGHTENED]
101 Mr. C	frightened↓. // means scared that one ((is)) / easy to remember / [scared]
102 Ajmal	{stretching his muscles) [AAHH!]
103 (3") {sounds of someone walking, probably Mr. C)	
104 ¿?	you know what / ganna lagga ni hai
105	*have to play song*
106 (laughter)	

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107 Mr. C                        Zareef I I want you to write [(())] =
108 Zareef                       [(())]
109 Mr. C                         = ((now I don't want you)) to talk anymore
110 ¿                            [(())]
111 Mr. C                  [otherwise you ((would have to …))]
112 [there is a parallel conversation in the background which is hardly audible on
the recording)
                 (Classroom interaction in 2D. Recording code: 05122011_
                 2Db_extract)
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In the case of the International Section in the studied school, the dialogue with Mr. C was key for the appropriate interpretation of the observed practices in his classes, not only as a participant providing his own retrospective commentary on every activity I observed/audio-recorded/transcribed but most importantly as a window to a long-term pedagogical project that permits one to make sense of the social forms of local positionings displayed by the observed participants during my short two-month period of data collection. Indeed, the understanding of this larger project is central for avoiding a superficial analysis of what participants do in Extract 1, which might be easily described just in terms of a conflict between a group of students and their teacher. Before commenting on this wider pedagogical project, a detailed analysis of this interaction may provide a foundational basis for further interpretations.

The idealized models canonically used for describing instructional moves and officially expected patterns of collaboration in classroom discourse are difficult to apply in this interaction [see Sinclair & Coulthard's (1975) model based on the so-called initiation-response-feedback talk pattern]. Mr. C's interactional attempts to coordinate the student's actions around knowledge-checking exchanges, which focused on the meaning of 'frustrated' (lines 1-32), 'embarrassed' (lines 32-45), 'disgusted' (lines 46-100), and 'frightened' (lines 99-111), encounter the complexities of the (always) dense social relations being built up in the course of everyday activities. Thus, a single question-answer-feedback structure of participation, which in ideal educational contexts would not require more than three interactional turns for each of the focused vocabulary items, takes dozens of lines in the transcription. A close look at the moment-to-moment of the interaction reveals numerous forms of ambiguous collaboration discursively produced by all participants, even by those who seem to engage in disruptive practices that explicitly challenge Mr. C's attempts to complete the activity.

Among these students, Zareef's forms of participation are particularly relevant in that they show the extent to which he is able to cope with the tension of engaging in peer-mocking practices while willing to collaborate with the teacher simultaneously. In other words, he displays different (not necessarily coherent) social positions which allow him to show compliance with goals that could be seen as contradictory from the perspective of an outsider (i.e., pushing the instructional activity to the limits of what is considered appropriate in the classroom context but making room for minimal collaboration with Mr. C so as to get the activity progressed). Such ambiguous forms of social positioning are reconstructed by Zareef through various communicative resources, in the course of the work of each of the focused vocabulary items.

In the opening of the sequence in which Mr. C is trying to explain the word 'disgusted,' Ajmal and Hasan engage in ostentatious sounds and body gestures that overlap with Mr. C's talk, all followed by reciprocal laughter and coughing signaling the common understanding of these practices as potentially transgressive or disruptive from the perspective of these students (see lines 1-15). This frame of interpretation seems also to apply to Mr. C's understanding of the situation, as he immediately reacts by complaining about the fact that other students are talking while he is explaining (line 8), therefore making explicit a legitimate participation framework where students are expected to keep silent unless asked to participate.

At this point of the interaction, Zareef aligns with Ajmal and Hasan by engaging in laughter (line 7). Nevertheless, he disaligns with his peers later on, right after Mr. C has explicitly disapproved their actions, by requesting them to be quiet (line 17) and by asking Mr. C to keep on

talking (line 26), although subsequent reactions of laughing and whistling by him and his peers seem to construct Zareef's requests as insincere acts of collaboration with Mt C (lines 28-30). This ambiguous position is confirmed a few interactional turns after, in the course of the work with the word 'embarrassed.' Once Mr. C initiates the transition to this item by labeling it (line 32), Husna, a 16-year-old female student with Pakistani background, addresses these students in Urdu in attitude of reprimand by asking them to stop teasing Mt C (line 33), which leads to Ajmal's and Zareef's reactions mocking Husna (lines 36, 38, 42).

Zareef's reaction to Husna's call of attention is nonetheless followed by his labeling of the following item in the vocabulary list, 'disgusted,' therefore anticipating Mr. C's opening of the new pedagogical sequence (line 44). This is a common interactional resource used by students in the classroom context to show interest in the activity and willingness to collaborate with the teacher in getting the task progressed, although in the course of this sequence of action it seems just to reinforce Zareef's ambivalent positioning as he immediately afterward engages in parallel peer interaction, leading to more laughter (see his response to Mr. C's question with another question and the subsequent reaction by Ajmal in lines 48-50). Indeed, such an ambiguous positioning continues in the course of Mr. C's attempts to explain the meaning of 'disgusted' (lines 54-97), when Zareef provides very graphic explanations (line 63) and positive interactional feedback (lines 66-70) in response to the teacher's difficulties to find the appropriate explanation of the word—reflected in Mr. C's numerous self-interruptions (lines 54-56), fillers (lines *54-56, 71)* and code switches to Cantonese (lines 68, 71, 74) and Spanish (line 61) in the search for equivalents.

In an interactional context in which some of his peers start laughing and making comments about Mr. C's difficulties to explain the word (see Ajmal's comment in line 59), Zareef's forms of participation could be also taken as instances of overenthusiasm, which contribute to mocking the teacher (see his loud and latched reply to Mt C's use of the Cantonese term `wattat' in line 70, just before engaging in more laughing with Ajmal in line 73, or his attempts to move the activity on to the new vocabulary item, 'frightened', in lines 97-101, via latched feedback (`& yeah'), followed by the loud labeling of the word in overlapping with Mr. C. In fact, this seems to be the teacher's frame of interpretation, in light of his later reaction in which he calls for Zareef's attention and asks him 'not to talk any more' (lines 107-109). Nevertheless, it remains open as to the extent to which these forms of participation constitute an interactional practice of 'changing hats' through which the student is coping with the tension of building up solidarity both with those peers who often disrupt the classroom activity (i.e., Ajmal) and with the teacher.

A close examination of moments like these provides a platform for further ethnographic enquiry, beyond the premature interpretations often found in critical research. Although critique in discourse studies has historically looked at the links between local discursive practices and the wider socioeconomic processes of change—with the subsequent expanding of our knowledge on how wider social structures are enacted in everyday life—it has, however, led in some cases to reductionist (modernist) views of power (Rampton, 2006); no matter what set of data is being analyzed, it is taken for granted that one or some participants need to be identified as the holders of powerful positions exercising domination over others. This has been the case at the school; in much of the critical research, teachers are usually described as representatives of the institution, projecting the state's stable forms of symbolic domination on the students' subjectivities, leaving these students no other choice than to accept or resist it.

As a critical sociolinguist looking at the social space of the school for more than 15 years, I have found myself struggling with this reductionist perspective from time to time. I have not been always successful in overcoming it, though. I believe ethnography has much to provide in this regard because it allows the situating of practices within the frame of the participants' lived experiences, therefore avoiding the brutal analytical impositions that have often been attributed to critical discourse analysis practitioners (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In fact, the social significance of this fragment of interaction relies on its temporal position within the course of the academic year. As mentioned, the framing of this very local practice within the wider pedagogical project in which it took place was possible only through an ongoing dialogue with Mr. C that continued after the data collection period, which included face-to-face conversations, e-mails, and multimodal exchanges through Internet multimedia formats like Evernote a nd access to their class Facebook group where teacher–student and peer interactions took place beyond the physical boundaries of the school. So this understanding emerged because the ethnography was jointly constructed fieldwork (Holmes, Chapter 4, this volume) that allowed both researcher and the participating teacher to 'reflexively shape' and be 'shaped by the research process.'

These practices and spaces allowed me to see the International Section as a social space in which Mr. C and his students were doing more than engaging in instructional activity; despite their different individual perspectives, goals, life trajectories, and interests, all of them enacted and negotiated in everyday life with

the same degree of tension and uncertainty, as shown in Extract 1, they all were collectively involved in a much deeper process of counter-cultural transformation, which was made possible by recent changes experienced in their school.

Due to MATSS's difficulties in reaching the government's required minimum student intake, the school's administrators decided to shift their traditional focus from a sole interest in Chinese working-class families living in the area toward targeting ethnic minority students whose parents had migrated to the school's surroundings after Hong Kong's return to China in 1997. This shift opened MATSS's doors to teachers like Mr C, who had previous experience in the education of ethnic minority students and was able to teach in English through a critical approach. However, due to the school's discursive redefinition of its linguistic and pedagogic policies—from an only-Chinese medium to the incorporation of an International Section driven by a tailor-made curriculum with strong emphasis on English as the medium of instruction and non-test-taking oriented philosophical approaches—it also lead to subsequent dilemmas and paradoxes that derived from the coexistence of these and more traditional approaches in the school's daily life.

The fact that the Local and the International Sections followed different pedagogical approaches reinforced the tensions between teachers across them because they all had to collaborate in order to design standardized tests for each subject and grade in the school. As a result of all these changes and tensions, Mr. C ended up finding increasingly difficult to accommodate, with a high degree of freedom, the Hong Kong local school curriculum in the International Section, as officially announced by the school in its publicity. The polarization between the two sections ended up also reinforcing the lack of cooperation between the youngsters across the two sections, which in turn resulted in experiences of isolation on the part of the ethnic minority students, as explained in the course of an interview by Yamu, a 13-year-old female student with Nepali background from the International Section who stated, about most of her local Chinese peers, that 'they don't like minorities / becausse I uuh // they will think that the teachers have divided / them.'

All in all, the ethnographic exploration of the site provides a wider socioemotional, institutional, and pedagogical frame for the interpretation of the previously analyzed interaction; it allows for an understanding of those ambiguous forms of interactional collaboration displayed by Zareef and Mr. C in Extract 1 as instances of interpersonal 'collusion' (McDermott & Tylbor, 1986). In other words, these instances enact forms of collaboration across the boundaries of stable institutional roles (teachers and students) under conditions in which they all try to overcome institutional difficulties and dilemmas, beyond simplified accounts reporting domination on the part of either the teachers or students.

I will now pass the floor to Mr. C, who will provide a more nuanced picture of how this pedagogical project looked in the everyday life of his classes.

4 MR. C AND THE STUDY OF MOMENTS OF TRANSFORMATION IN MULTIMODAL PRACTICE

Like Chun (Chapter 8, this volume), I have been committed as an educator to dialogue as a tool for questioning and negotiating discourses of power within spaces created with students. But after moving to Hong Kong from the United States in 2009, engaging in multimodal dialogue and working in a multilingual environment where English was both a 'second' or 'foreign' language was forcing me to think and act in new ways. There was a complex web of processes my students and I were negotiating, and it took the participation of Dr. M in my classes to help me see transformation and turning points more clearly within a microethnographic perspective, essentially turning moments in my critical pedagogy from 'invisible' to 'visible' (Martin, 1999), allowing me to see transformation as a localized everyday experience.

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Transformative tensions emerge if the study is situated inside the subjectivity of the students in such a way to detach students from that very subjectivity into more advanced reflections. (Shor & Freire, 1987: 19)

Understanding another's subjectivity is challenging, maybe more as the multilingual and multicultural dimensions of a setting intensify. In my classes, students employ a wide range of registers, cultural references, and other linguistic repertoires that may not be intelligible to teachers or observers. So if we are to enter into critical dialogue with students, to make and remake reality, then how do we read their meaning-making practices in order to situate our

learning? As a teacher, how do I recognize the 'trans-formative tensions' that emerge? Answering these questions is crucial if we are to 'open up access to genres, especially those controlled by mainstream groups' (Martin, 1999: 124) and move students from disengagement with academics to proficiency in creating the types of texts necessary for school success. Overcoming this internal struggle requires attention to everyday classroom and social life. Dr. M suggests listening to everyday patterns of interaction and reading beyond the surface. So instead of merely hearing classroom disturbances in Extract 1, we reposition student behavior as part of a negotiated collusion in a space fraught with tensions.

Opportunities for dialogue and learning also arise when we acknowledge students' everyday learning and social lives online. In the rest of this section, I describe an interaction that begins not in the physical classroom but within a class Facebook group and culminates with the publishing on Facebook of visual texts crafted by students. Along the way, students and teachers co-construct a pedagogical interaction that crosses fields of study, online sites, physical spaces, and authorship. From a more practical pedagogical point of view, the interaction introduces participants to new forms of vocabulary and expression while reinforcing existing knowledge in the fields of English, science, art, and popular culture. From the perspective of a critical pedagogy, the interaction offers a window into how dialogue might move in a multimodal setting.

But first we should stop to reflect on the meaning of dialogue, a cornerstone of most critical pedagogies. Burbules (2000) challenges us to 'shift in our understanding of dialogue from a prescriptive model' to one more bounded by context:

Attending to the social dynamics and contexts of classroom discourse heightens the awareness of the complexities and difficulties of changing specific elements within larger communities of practice. These communities may be the primary shapers of teaching and learning processes, but not always in ways that serve intended or ideal educational objectives; other purposes, such as identity formation or negotiating relations of group solidarity, may predominate. The power of such social processes may restrict lines of inquiry, distort dialogical interactions, and silence perspectives in ways that conflict with the explicit purposes of education . . . Rethinking dialogue along these lines holds promise for developing theoretical accounts of dialogue that are richer, more complex, and better attuned to the material circumstances of pedagogical practice. Dialogue, from this standpoint, cannot be viewed simply as a form of question and answer, but as a relation constituted in a web of relations among multiple forms of communication, human practices, and mediating objects or texts. (pgs. 35-36)

Rethinking dialogue (who is involved, when, where, why, and how it takes place) can lead us as teachers to greater possibilities beyond the prescriptive notions of dialogue and classroom practice. Collaboratively reflecting on the contexts and processes of dialogue with Dr. M helped me to extend my pedagogy beyond the classroom and to situate learning for students within the context of their online worlds, while exposing 'blind spots' (Byrd Clark & Dervin, Introduction, this volume) in my own reflexivity.

An example is a pedagogical sequence that is surfaced through dialogue involving Sita, a 14-year-old student who often described herself as 'bored,' as can be seen in Extract 2.

Extract 2. 'I just want to go outside and see the world/how life is and stuff.'

Mr. C um / tell me a little bit just about your life
Sita well / I'm just an ordinary student from Hong Kong and
my life in here is quite fine // but for me I I'm always bored
because I want to do many things / but I can't because there are
problems for me because—there are problems for me in many
ways but I don't know (. . .) because it's hard for my mother and
for me too II because I'm from a single parent and it's quite hard for
me *II* my mom really wants me to be educated / she really forced
me to study and I kind of don't like it because sometimes I think
that she doesn't understand what education mean because she
always wants me to study books like that I don't like reading books
// I just want to go outside and see the world / how life is and stuff
Mr. C urn / so um / what do you think education should be
about (. . .) what do you think education should be?

> Sita urn / education is also like studying in school but it's more better to learn outside from school (. . .) because we study from books but we don't experience them 1/ to know that what other things that we study we should experience—we should experience it outside the world

> (Interview with Sita. Recording code: 060712)

In this extract, Sita points to a theme in her life, boredom. Many educators would dismiss this as a common teen sentiment, but I interpreted it as the absence of possibility for creative engagement with the world. In other words, Sita may see her life as bound by the circumstances of her family and the limiting notions of what it means to be educated, and these circumstances (as well as the school) do not offer opportunities for meaningful experience, for creative play, or for her own dialogue with the world. As a teacher, I try to create these opportunities within the school's physical space, and sometimes dialogue and learning extend into online spaces. This was the case near the end of the academic year as a series of interactions on Face-book culminated with cultural/textual production by a group of students including Sita (see Table 10.1).

One Friday at 9:40 p.m., I began series of posts to our class Facebook page with a link to photographs on the website yowayowacamera.com, where a Japanese photographer posted daily 'levitation' photographs, mostly

Table 10.1 I love Japan!'

All times on June 22, 2012, in p.m.	
9:40	Carlos Soto
	I think some of you might like this photographer; let me know, I haven't made up my mind yet.
	よわよわカメラウーマン日記
	yowayowacamera.com
	Lives in Tokyo with two cats. Photographs mainly levitating self-portraits (and cats not levitating). *Yowayowa* is a Japanese term meaning .
10:20	Sita I love jApan!
10:21	Sita Wow. She's like she flying whenever she goes.
10:22	Sita Does she have a super power??
10:24	Sita I LOVE This photographer YowaYowa! She's a amazing!
10:27	Sita MEEEEEE I"M VERY INTERESTED >< OMG
10:33	Amita WOW, I WANT TO TAKE PICTURES LIKE HER!!! AMAZING LADY!!!! HOW COULD SHE DO THAT??!!!! I LOVE IT!!!! I AM REALLY INTERESTED ON IT!!
10:36	Sita NOW I HAVE SOMEONE WHO I ADMIRE!!
10:46	Carlos Soto She uses a good camera that can take photos at a high speed. she explains on the website. These are "levitation" photos; floating in the air with some super power
10:48	Sita Wow!!
10:51	Sita What is mean by levitate?
10:52	Carlos Soto in the photos, she is "levitating"; staying above the ground

self-portraits depicting her seemingly floating in air in a variety of urban and rural landscapes. They conveyed to me a sense of freedom, invisibility, and otherworldliness, as if she is dislocated somewhere beyond present-time material existence. I had discovered the artist on the blogging site Tumblr, and, when I posted the link, I 'tagged' Sita along with two other students I knew liked to play with cameras.

Sita responded 40 minutes after my initial post, at first to affirm her love of Japan and then to share her interpretation of the photographs, including her recognition of the theme of invisibility. Following this, students entered and exited, showing excitement, seeking clarification of unfamiliar words, and claiming authorship. For example, at 10:43 p.m., Sita posted another levitation photograph, adding 'Now I'm curious! DOES SHE REALLY HAVE A SUPERPOWER???? Owo.' Over the next hour and a half, I continued the interaction with Sita and Amita, another student, trying to encourage them to try this kind of photography. In reflecting on this interaction, Dr. M noted, in an e-mail exchange with me, that:

> this figure is an example of the way you try to bring a new frame of action/interpretation: from acknowledging the photographer's pictures of levitation to involving them into the production of their own pictures. You do this by a first contribution, which brings the space of HK and the fact that other people do it. This first contribution is followed by contributions from Sita and Amita who, although excited (I see also the use of 'likes' here, and I wonder who liked what and when), do not address yet the issue of their own capability to do it, which is followed by a new contribution by you in which you explicitly state you can do it', this time leading to contributions oriented towards how they can do it and an to an explicit instance in which you mention the word 'experiment' which is often pedagogically loaded in educational contexts (you wanted them to experiment by themselves!). (E-mail communication between Mr. C and Dr. M, December 18, 2012)

By turning his ethnographic lens onto me and including me in his process, Dr. M allowed me to re-see my own position within the online interaction and made me aware of the subtle semiotic shifts that invited action.

Later on, at 11:04 p.m., Sita started a parallel discussion on another Facebook page moderated by Mr. TS, a Nepali math and science teacher (see Table 10.2). There, she asked him, can we people levitate?' and she, Amita, Mr. TS, and Sam, a classmate, discussed levitation in relation to scientific concepts and experimentation.

Over the next few days, the dialogue on levitation continued on the pages, moderated by Mr. TS and myself. The dialogue turned from online talk to engagement with the physical world when Sita, Amita, and a third Nepali girl from the class, Susan, took their own levitation photographs around Hong Kong and posted the photos on Amita's personal Facebook page. Subsequently, we examined the photos in our class as part of our study of Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

Reflecting with Dr. M, I was forced to ask myself, 'What am I doing here? How am I doing it? Does this constitute meaningful transformation? Am I being critical?' In the preceding interactions, I tried as a teacher to `be critical' and to build 'dialogue' in relation to the factors mediating the interactions, including our school and social context, the sites on which we interacted, and the texts we produced, as well as my perceived subjectivities of my students. My perception of Sita's subjectivity included her experiences within a struggling family, her school (which separated

Table 10.2 'Mr. TS can we people levitate??'

All times on June 22, 2012, in p.m. and June 23 in a.m.	
11:04 p.m.	Sita Mr. TS can we people levitate??
11:19 p.m.	Mr. TS To levitate is possible if Earth's gravitational pull do not pull us anymore. However, looking at this Japanese photographer, all we need to do is click the shot while jumping in the air . . QUICKLY!
11:41 p.m.	Sam :D
11:41 p.m.	Sam Moon! :D
12:09 a.m.	Sita ahh yeah we can levitate on the moon! hha-

12:50 a.m.	Amita By GRAVITY :D haha
12:50 a.m.	Amita or by wings..!!
12:52 a.m.	Sita Amita someday let's go to the moon and take out portraits of ourselves > < by levitating!
12:54 a.m.	Amita ahahah,
12:54 a.m.	Sita xDD

learning from experience), and a life in Hong Kong perceived by her as boring. Within this activity, Sita and her classmates used new vocabulary, synthesized art with science learning, and invested in identities as producers of visual texts. Whether this will extend itself into more sophisticated social critique and social action, I can only guess, but it increases my investment into forms of dialogue that go beyond question and answer in a physical space.

To engage Sita in dialogue and move her toward remaking her world meant thinking and acting in a multitextual, cross-disciplinary way, and generating temporal, geographic, and participatory displacement as the dialogue shifted across time and online and physical locations, while participants and authors entered and left the dialogue at various points. Because I was aware of her interests and life circumstances, I interpreted her musings about boredom as expressions of the limiting boundaries of her everyday life. In Zareef's class, seeing the students' everyday resistance as a desire for participation likewise led to change. Thus, meaning making and reflexivity happened in 'motion' (Malinowski & Nelson, Chapter 6, this volume), not through a static process. In both cases, my ongoing dialogue with Dr. M allowed me to gain greater insights into the moment-by-moment development of dialogue and action.

I will now turn to the last section of this chapter, where Dr. M and I discuss what this dialogue highlights for us.

5 BEYOND THE POLITICS OF THE ACADEMIA: CONTINUITY IN MULTISITED, MULTIVOICED, AND MULTIRESOUREED COLLABORATION

The data analyzed here reveals how Mr. C and his students get constructed as value (commodity) in a school system where competition between schools for access to public resources makes English language, internationalism, and pedagogic progressivism an added value for a band-3 school located in working-class areas with high rates of EM population. Although this process of transformation could be taken as a positive feature in that it allows them to access the public system in a context in which EM students have been historically underrepresented in the Hong Kong school population, the research experience in Mr. C's school illustrates the subsequent tensions and dilemmas derived from the actual difficulties to accommodate English language, internationalism, and pedagogic progressivism in the local order of the school, beyond marketing campaigns and official propaganda.

It is precisely in this complex social and changing space where pedagogi cal projects like the one conducted by Mr. C have a role to play in that they take advantage of the opportunities opened up by these shifting institutional conditions and offer a new space for interactional and emotional collusion where teachers and students can engage more fruitfully in the building of more empowering identities, practices, and communities.

In addition to this broad note, we also conceptualize this chapter as a discursive process of dialogue and self-reflection that has enabled us to engage in further conversation regarding (1) what we have learnt from this research collaboration and (2) to what extent this experience could go beyond grand academic narratives that only advance our professional careers and actually lead to some impact on other people's lives. Mr. C put this way in the course of one of our e-mail exchanges:

[T]he greater value in this kind of dialogues comes (for researcher, teacher, students) when continuity is maintained. So for example, I was able to understand more about the interaction around the *levitation* photos because we continued to discuss them for the sake of this chapter. . . . I also tried to maintain continuity between our dialogue and your interaction with my students by soliciting you to post your feedback on our Facebook group page. Your feedback in turn became a classroom activity.

I turned your reply into a text that we dissected in class. I wanted students to understand your academic discourse by helping to break it down into chunks that students could digest more easily. Then students had to write a response to you. I'm not exaggerating when I say that one student (Susmita) spent an hour an a half carefully crafting and editing her 102 word response to you. Currently, our on-going dialogue is helping to develop the 'academic literacy' (Gibbons, 2009) of my students. In a broader view, I think that dialogue is enhanced by a broad set of voices and resources. We are in complex environments, in complex times. Bringing more voices into the dialogue seems to help! (E-mail communication between Mr. C and Dr. M, January 1, 2013)

This chapter has been also an opportunity for us to expand our interaction, bringing it at the same time to other spaces involving Mr. C's students. However, this dialogue extended far beyond the physical space of the school. Students and Mr. C were invited by Dr. M to give a guest lecture in one of the university courses on literacy across the curriculum that Dr. M teaches to Hong Kong educators (present and future) at the University of Hong Kong.

The experience in Mr. C's classroom (both the physical space and the online space), as well as the subsequent dialogue regarding the writing of this chapter, provided Dr. M with insightful perspectives on issues having to do with language education, critical pedagogy, and multimodal literacy. Thus, the arrangement of a joint activity involving Mr. C, his students, and Dr. M at the University of Hong Kong constituted an excellent opportunity for other educators in the Hong Kong context to learn from the experience deriving from our research collaboration, at the same time setting up the conditions to maintain continuity of action for Mr. C's students to navigate across different institutional spaces—in line with Mr. C's concerns about creating stable links between his school and the university level in order for higher education to be part of his students' life from this crucial stage in their academic lives.

For Mr. C, the experience of becoming a researched teacher and the subsequent dialogue around this chapter facilitated the building of academic literacies and university links for his students, while helping him to clarify an understanding of his own teaching practices as well as his notions of what it means to be critical. But as he and his students continue to struggle and negotiate with daily tensions, all their everyday experiences point to the need for an institutional educational space that is more responsive to the pedagogies they seem to favor. We hope this dialogue and what we have learned from it will support our ambitions of creating educational spaces that support transforming researchers, teachers, students, and communities.

APPENDIX: Symbols Used in the Transcripts

Laura: participant
CR   (CAPITAL LETTERS) loud talking
ee   vowel lengthening
Ss   consonant lengthening
/   short pause (0.5 seconds)
//   long pause (0.5-1.5 seconds)
(n")   n seconds pause
[ ]   turn overlapping with similarly marked turn
=   continuation of utterance after overlapping
(())   nonunderstandable fragment
{ }   researcher's comments
↑   rising intonation
↓   falling intonation
-            self interruption
&   latched utterances
**   English translation of words uttered in other languages

NOTES

1. Names for the researchers correspond to those forms officially used in the studied school.
2. Pseudonyms have been chosen for schools at random. The initials typically refer to an industrial or charitable sponsoring body.
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