

**'Authentic' Language vs. English Language Teaching Recommendations and Predictions**

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The Department  
of Education**

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## ABSTRACT

### ‘Authentic’ Language vs. English Language Teaching Recommendations and Predictions

Angela Gordon

Classroom language may prepare language students to communicate, but it often doesn’t adequately prepare students to comprehend ‘authentic’ language (i.e., language used by native speakers in real life situations) since some characteristics of authentic language such as complex syntax and lexical variety are quite often not present in teaching materials. Consequently, language students who may be able to communicate successfully to native speakers outside the classroom can encounter difficulty when trying to comprehend language native speakers say to them. The aim of this study was to compare language produced by native speakers to the language presented in ESL materials and language predicted by ESL teachers in relation to giving directions and giving advice tasks. The results indicate that there is little match among the three groups. This study also shows that certain types of tasks, namely close-ended ones, produce certain amounts of predictable lexis and syntax which is often not included in teaching materials.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Speaking without communicating is a tale told by an idiot. How often do we ask adults to play structural games with toy information? How often do our students ask us for meat and drink, and we give them a grammatical vitamin pill? We are becoming more and more sophisticated in isolating delicate points of grammar and preparing them for student use, but when we get them ready for shipment, why must we pack them in communicational styrofoam? (Stevick, 1967, p.3)

Most ESL/EFL teachers have undoubtedly encountered ESL materials and/or textbooks that recommend language for student use in certain communicative situations that sound stilted, unnatural, awkward, or just simply strange. Part of the reason for this may be the fact that the vast majority of ESL material is written based on the materials writers' personal preferences, intuitions and predictions about linguistic performance instead of actual speech behaviour. When teachers and textbooks present and use "unnatural" and "unauthentic" linguistic input during classroom ESL lessons, what are the consequences for second language students? Can we as ESL teachers and materials writers improve the quality and authenticity of the language presented in our classrooms? Should classroom language more resemble real speech behaviour? What role does efficiency play in our choices of what we teach? What is more advantageous for our students, input that is closer to native speaker speech or grammatically correct and efficient language that is easier to teach and learn? These are just some of the questions that as an ESL teacher I have asked myself many times. These are the questions that prompted me to explore the differences between the linguistic recommendations of ESL

textbooks, ESL teacher linguistic predictions and native speaker speech production. In this thesis the language found in ESL textbooks and what teachers recommend is referred to as classroom language and the speech produced by native speakers as authentic speech.

A number of researchers have voiced concerns about basing materials creation and even curriculum development on intuitive judgments of performance, accuracy and appropriateness as our metalinguistic knowledge about native speech behaviour more often than not does not coincide with actual speech performance (Auerbach & Burgess, 1985; Bialystok, 1990; Borkin & Reinhart, 1978; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Cathcart, 1989; Celce-Murcia, 1980; DiVito, 1991; DiVito, 1992; Garrett, 1986; Gilmore, 2004; Glisan & Drescher, 1993; Golato, 2003; Herschensohn, 1988; Higgs, 1985; Peacock, 1979; Renouf, 1986; Walz, 1986; Williams, 1988; Wolfson, 1983). These researchers claim that the practice of selecting material and curricula on the basis of teacher intuition may not be very advantageous for English language students, and that lessons based on such intuitive proposals compromise the authenticity of the input students are exposed to and are being encouraged to learn. Authentic language is referred to here as language produced by native speakers for native speakers. The native speaker data produced for the purposes of this study are therefore considered authentic as per the definition previously outlined; the native speaker language data for this thesis was produced by native speakers for native speakers. The results of the study do not, however, assume that the language produced applies to any other type of context other than the one created for the purposes of this study (i.e., completing ESL activities in a classroom-like setting). How language produced by native speakers in real-life situations differs from language produced by native speakers in a classroom remains to be seen. Nevertheless, observing the language

that native speakers produce in a context in which many people learn a second or foreign language may help inform teachers and textbook writers about what lexis and syntax native speakers prefer in relation to certain types of classroom tasks. This in turn may help students in better comprehending native speaker speech outside the classroom if the language of instruction includes lexis and syntax that is preferred by native speakers rather than language intuited by materials writers and teachers.

Despite the concern with lack of authentic input and the amount of research supporting the need for more empirically based descriptive analyses of native speech performance, there is a dearth of ESL classroom material and reference material that reflect the findings of empirical research on this issue. Instead, teachers and students alike are left with materials where dialogues are most often *written*...to be *read* as if *heard* and to be *spoken* as if not *written*... Expecting students to make the appropriate adjustments to be more native-like may be asking a great deal more than is possible. (Johnson, 1979, p. 76). Are we doing the best we can for our students when we expect them to take such unnatural language from the classroom and apply it to the outside world? Do we actually expect them to be successful when faced with real situations requiring real language?

When [students] come into contact with native speakers of the language, they meet serious problems in comprehension. They may be able to perform adequately themselves in speech, but they frequently cannot understand what native speakers say to them. The fact is that they are not accustomed to hearing the language as it is produced by native speakers for native speakers. (Wilkins, 1979, p. 47).

One key word in the above quote is “adequately”. Is “adequate” performance the goal of ESL and EFL classrooms? If students are not prepared to comprehend authentic language because the language that they have learnt in the classroom is so drastically different from authentic language, then what is it exactly that ESL classrooms are preparing students to comprehend? In the above quote I assume that Wilkins means that students can perform grammatically correct sentences or have the means to convey their message to native speakers “adequately”. But are grammatically correct sentences performed in class equivalent to communicative competence or do they enable students to be communicatively competent outside the classroom? What is communicative competence anyway?

For speakers to have communicative competence, they must be able to use the language grammatically, appropriately and effectively. *Grammaticality* refers to formal correctness; *appropriateness* and *effectiveness* are related to sociolinguistic correctness, that is, the ability of speakers to say the right thing, in the right situation, in order to get what they want. (Yorio, 1980, p. 433)

In other words, successfully creating grammatically appropriate sentences does not necessarily mean that these same sentences are contextually or sociolinguistically appropriate. So a student who is a “fluent” or “proficient” speaker of ESL in the classroom is not expected to demonstrate the same levels of fluency or proficiency outside the classroom since the sociolinguistic contexts of these two settings are so different. Bialystok states that “language mastery must be studied in terms of the contextual and situational demands made on the learner.” (1982, p. 181). Instead, what is happening in many ESL classrooms is that teachers and materials writers are, in effect,

teaching students to be fluent speakers of classroom language instead of teaching students how to interact in real-life situations (Burns & Joyce, 1997). Can we, therefore, aid students toward obtaining a more natural and fluent linguistic performance that is grammatically correct and contextually and sociolinguistically appropriate outside the classroom?

We know that the performance of ESL students and that of native speakers in real-life communication tend to be quite dissimilar for a number of reasons. Consequently, some researchers are calling for materials writers to acknowledge and incorporate knowledge about L1 use revealed through corpus studies to facilitate the development of better teaching materials (Biber, Conrad & Reppen, 1998; Conrad, 2000; Krieger, 2003). However, incorporating language derived from corpora of native speaker use in real life situations into materials designed for the classroom may still not be the answer since the context of the classroom is so very different from the context of real-life situations. So maybe a better question to be asking in terms of language use is, "How do the performances of ESL students and native speakers compare while performing set tasks designed for use in an ESL classroom?" Past studies that have examined ESL teacher intuitions have often compared these intuitions to language produced in real-life situations. So the question remains; are our intuitions as ESL teachers and ESL materials writers more accurate about language produced for classroom use than our predictions of actual native speaker use in real-life situations? In other words, when native speakers complete activities designed for the ESL classroom, do they in fact produce the predicted speech of ESL materials writers and teachers? One study conducted by Renouf (1986) specifically looked at this very question. The study was aimed at

testing the hypothesis that the functional and communicative analyses which underlie language teaching can predict linguistic choice--[testing] the assumption prevalent in the teaching of English as a foreign language that if people are given certain tasks to carry out, they will generate certain types of language (p.183).

Renouf's study compared the intuitions and predictions of the members of the English Language Research team from her university with respect to elicited native speaker speech in the following situations: Free Time, A Typical Day, Daily Routines, and Favourites. The study was conducted to determine precisely what language should be incorporated into the *COBUILD English Course*, which the researchers were designing at the time. The tasks were chosen because they were thought to be typically found in ESL classroom materials. For the first task, Free Time, the participants were asked to "find out three things that [their] partner is planning to do when he/she next has some free time" (p. 184). The lexical realizations "I'll", "I'm going to", and "I'm planning to" were predicted to occur. Instead, "I've got to", "I want to", "I would like to", and "I'd like to" were produced. In the case of A Typical Day, "generally", "usually" and other adverbs of frequency were expected to occur. Subjects were asked to "describe to each other, simply, what [they] do on a typical day (give times where appropriate). Find out what [they] have in common" (p.185). Once again the actual performance was quite different; "I might", "I'd probably", "I will", "It could be", "I may have", "I'll try to", and "I'll try and" were recorded.

For the third task, Daily Routines, the researchers again predicted an occurrence of frequency adverbs. The participants were asked to "compare [their] daily routines to find out what [they] have in common, answering such as who gets up earlier, who has the

longest work [as in “I’m normally in the shower at half past seven”] -, etc.” (p.186). The adverb “normally” was said repeatedly. Other unexpected forms include

- “At 8:00 I’m just leaving my house.”
- “I’m still asleep at 7:00.”
- At one o’clock I’m normally eating my lunch.”
- Seven to seven-thirty I normally read or watch television.”
- “I’ve eaten my supper normally and then I’m just sitting down relaxing so it can be reading a book or it can be watching television.”
- “I try not to...”
- “I like to...”
- “I tend to...”

In the last task, Favourites, the participants were asked to look at lists such as colours, fruits, sports, other activities, and types of holidays. Then they were to write down their favourites from the provided lists, discover their partner’s favourites and find out how many they had in common (p.187). “My favourite is X.”, “I like X best.”, and “I prefer X.” were the predicted forms. But due to the presentation of the tasks, participants were responding more to what they would choose rather than talking about their favorites (Renouf, 1986).

The results of the Renouf study basically concur with the previously discussed studies which focused on “authentic” language, yielding the conclusion that intuitions are not reliable.

Our data indicate that the linguistic choices made by our subjects in response to the tasks prescribed are not those which would be predicted by theorists or



materials writers in the field of English as a foreign language. This is important, since it means that at present, learners are not being given the means to achieve classroom tasks in a way that accords with native-speaker practice, because language specialists are typically not taking account of authentic language behaviour. (p. 184)

The goal of the study described in this thesis is similar to that of Renouf's study. It compared the predicted language of the ESL teachers and those of the textbook writers to native speakers' performance in order to determine whether there was a fit or mismatch between what language is prescribed for tasks created for pedagogical purposes and the language produced by native speakers doing said tasks. However, the study differs from the Renouf study in two ways. First of all, instead of creating activities for native speakers to do or reformulating questions from ESL materials, this study compared the language recommended from 34 ESL textbooks regarding giving advice and giving directions to the language produced by 16 native speakers completing the very same ESL classroom activities as they are prescribed in the textbooks from which they came. These two tasks were selected because they represent two types of tasks typically used in the ESL classroom, "open ended tasks" which have an infinite range of responses (Bilbrough, 2000) and closed tasks which have a more limited range of responses (Bilbrough, 2000). The giving advice tasks are considered to be "open" since the choice of verbs used in giving advice is virtually unlimited. The giving directions tasks are considered "closed" since the act of giving directions relies heavily on prepositions which is a closed lexical group and a more limited choice of verbs are used in giving directions than in giving advice. Secondly, the predictions of 19

ESL teachers concerning their intuitions about what they would teach if they utilized these activities in their classes were included in the comparison since it is a highly common practice for teachers to change, manipulate or add to the ELT materials they use in class based on their intuitions and predictions.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies similar to the Renouf study have been conducted in which textbook language of particular situations was compared to the language produced by native speakers in real life situations. These studies focus on a wide range of situations such as complaints, having a meeting and questioning routines. All the studies outlined below demonstrate that the language prescribed in textbooks does not coincide with native speaker language production. This mismatch of language between textbooks and native speaker use has also been documented in FSL (French as a second language) and SFL (Spanish as a foreign language).

Williams (1988) studied language used during meetings. She recorded and then transcribed 3 one-hour meetings of British senior engineers in Hong Kong. She then contrasted speech from these meetings to the speech prescribed for meetings in 30 textbooks. She found that 17 functions were specifically taught for use in meetings but that only 10 of them were found in the transcriptions of authentic language.

DiVito (1991) conducted a study in which she compared authentic spoken and written French to FSL textbook recommendations of certain grammatical forms such as negation and double object pronouns. The results of this study demonstrated that the grammar used in the textbooks does not match that used by native speakers, and that the differences in frequency and function of the grammatical forms in spoken and written language were ignored.

In a subsequent study, DiVito (1992) recorded the interactions and conversations at a receptionist's desk for one day. In an analysis of transcribed speech for occurrences

of directives, it was found that native French speakers used both imperatives and the present tense. However, in a survey of 19 FSL textbooks, not one mention of the frequent use of the present tense in spoken directives was found.

Glisan and Drescher (1993) recorded and transcribed informal conversations of native Spanish speaking university students. The speech was then analysed and compared to SFL textbooks regarding 4 grammatical items. Their study concluded that textbook language does not reflect authentic language use, and that the textbooks used in this study gave equal importance to all four of the grammatical points in question rather than focusing more attention on those grammatical items that occur more frequently in native speaker speech and less attention on those features that do not occur as often.

In addition to the discrepancy between the frequency of grammatical items presented in language textbooks and the frequency of occurrence of those same items in authentic native speaker speech, Boxer and Pickering (1995) noted that ESL textbooks do not take into account linguistic setting or context. They surveyed seven ESL textbooks focusing on complaints. They compared the prescribed textbook language for complaints to spontaneous native English speech. Their findings state that ESL textbooks do not take into account setting or context. Instead, the language presented is primarily decontextualised and does not reflect native speaker speech.

In addition to the differences of frequency and context between textbook language and authentic speech, Basturkman (2001) conducted a study which illustrates that the complexities of native speaker speech are not present in textbook language. Basturkman (2001) collected types of questioning routines in academic and workplace contexts described in ELT material and then contrasted the features found here to those found in

authentic discourse. From a survey of six ELT textbooks, Basturkman identified three types of questioning presentation: form-focused (i.e., how to formulate questions), function-focused (i.e., presenting expressions for specific functional categories), and little to no description at all. From the corpus of spoken discourse in a university setting used in this study, several features of questioning were identified, such as referring to previous discourse to determine topic orientation, including a number of questions in one turn, using questions as indirect suggestions, using the past tense in a question when mildly criticizing, and reformulating phrases into questions to check for meaning. The results of the study indicate that the ELT materials examined neglect to demonstrate the "sophisticated and often strategic use of language by expert users" (Basturkman, 2001, p. 10) because language presented in textbooks is often simplified.

Gilmore (2004) reformulated service encounter questions found in seven ESL textbook transcripts and posed the reformulated questions in real life encounters. The comparison of the language found in the transcripts and the language produced in the authentic situations displayed substantial differences regarding eight distinct features such as length (e.g., the length of contrived texts tend to be longer than authentic interactions), turn-taking patterns, lexical density (e.g., lexical variety in written texts versus authentic speech), pausing, false starts (e.g., performance errors), back-channeling, (e.g., noises and short verbal responses given by listeners to acknowledge the speaker), repetition, and hesitation devices (e.g., 'em' 'er').

In conclusion, these studies demonstrate that prescribed language found in ESL textbooks (and even in FSL and SFL textbooks, as well) differs greatly from authentic speech patterns. Sociolinguistic literature attributes this disparity between prescribed

textbook language and native speaker speech to the fact that predicting language patterns is below the level of conscious awareness (Wolfson, 1983). Corpus linguistics has provided evidence of discrepancies between language derived from introspection and language produced in real-life situations (Sinclair, 1997). Patterns of language use have been discovered by way of corpus studies that had not been present in ESL textbook materials based on introspection (Krieger, 2003). Others point out that textbooks generally focus on decontextualized language, or take data from written corpora and apply it to activities designed to teach spoken language (Basturkman, 2001; Hopper, 1997). The demands of mass marketing also have an effect on the presentation of textbook language as publishers and materials writers attempt to satisfy the demands of learners in different parts of the world (Cook, 2001; Spelleri, 2002).

Some advantages for language being presented in simplified ways even in intermediate level textbooks include efficiency and comprehensibility. Since time is often a major factor in both that available for the students to study language and that available in terms of class time, efficiency is often a major consideration in decisions about what is taught and how it is taught. In other words, the teacher does not have an excess of time in which to teach and the students often do not have an excess amount of time for language learning. So, material that is easiest and most efficient may often be chosen over material that is more cumbersome, yet more authentic. And since authentic material (e.g., language as it is produced for native speakers by native speakers) may not always be comprehensible, especially to lower levels of learners (Richards, 2001), it may also be more difficult for the teacher to present. For example, the following two samples of native speaker speech were taken from the corpus used in the current study.

- Take a right and go about ten yards up to the corner of Essex and Somerset St.
- You'll want to take an immediate left because Dunkin' Donuts is on your left once you come onto Odlin Rd. from Route 2.

The first sample contains fairly simple lexis and does not vary too much from the lexis that is typically presented in ESL textbooks. However, it is a bit longer than a typical textbook example of giving directions. The second sentence is also long and it also contains complicated syntax and lexical items as well. For example, the main verb is in the future tense. Instead of “the next left”, the speaker has chosen to say “an immediate left” which is not typically presented in textbooks. And the conjunction ‘because’ is used to introduce an explanation to the directions that have just been given. Texts prepared specifically for textbook use or classroom use are sometimes easier for the student to understand and easier for the teacher to present within the time frames available to them due to the simplified language used in the presentation. For these reasons, it is not surprising at all that the data from naturally occurring speech do not resemble the language taught in textbooks.

However, not all authentic language may be too difficult or inappropriate for classroom use. “[corpus samples]...offer a welcome alternative to both specially constructed pedagogical texts and authentic texts—the former being densely packed with the target language features, the latter offering only a partial picture of a language element” (Krieger, 2003). In fact, language used by native speakers in certain situations may be somewhat predictable, particularly in situations that use language that is derived from closed lexical groups, such as giving directions. And if closed-ended linguistic acts

do contain a significant amount of predictable language, that could have important consequences on what is taught and how it is taught. The more research discovers about authentic language, the more we, as educators and materials writers, can contribute to an accurate description of language and, therefore, potentially more effective pedagogical materials (Aston, 2000; Hahn, 2000; Mindt, 1997; Nesselhauf, 2004). Using corpus samples as a contributing source for pedagogical materials writing and/or task design exposes learners to a wide range of linguistic features of the target language without compromising natural and authentic use of the language (Krieger, 2003). Authentic materials allow language learners to interact with real language and the content of the message rather than the form (Kilickaya, 2004). According to Willis (1998), exposing students to authentic texts helps them to determine:

- “the potential different meanings and uses of common words.
- useful phrases and typical collocations they might use themselves
- the structure and nature of both written and spoken discourse
- that certain language features are more typical of some kinds of text than others.”

Another major reason for the difference between language in textbooks and language in real life situations relates to the contexts of the language presentation, production and elicitation (Gilmore, 2004; Higgs, 1985; Widdowson, 1998; Wildner-Bassett, 1989). In past studies comparisons of various types of "authentic" speech were made to textbook ELT activities. The contexts of the production types, language produced in real-life contexts and language intended for a classroom context are completely different. Both Renouf (1986) and Gilmore (2004) have recognized this in



their studies and attempted to make the elicitation contexts more similar. Renouf (1986) created ESL classroom-like activities for native speakers to do, and Gilmore (2004) tried to recreate the contexts in which the language was presented in ESL textbooks. However, the context for which the textbook language is intended, (i.e., classroom use), and the context of the native language production, (i.e., a lab setting in the case of the Renouf study and contrived real-life situations in the case of the Gilmore study) are still quite different. Textbook language is intended for use within the confines of a classroom, usually with the hope and even the expectation that the language learned will transfer to real-life situations. Most of the previous studies discussed above have not elicited language from native speakers in a classroom-like setting. Renouf's (1986) study did somewhat replicate the classroom environment, but her elicitation tasks were specifically written for the study. In other words, she did not use "authentic" textbook activities to elicit native speaker speech. In contrast, Gilmore (2004) used "authentic" textbook tasks, though slightly manipulated, and tried to recreate the contexts in which the textbook language occurred to elicit native speaker speech.

The study described in this thesis, first of all, attempted to replicate the context of the classroom in the elicitation procedure. Secondly, it elicited native speaker speech using tasks taken directly from ESL textbooks, thus making the setting and the elicitation procedure for both sets of language—that of the textbook and that of the native speaker speech—more comparable.

ESL teacher recommendations of lexical items and syntax made in reference to the ESL tasks the native speakers completed were also included in the comparison. ESL teacher intuition has been criticized since past studies have shown that intuition does not

match data derived from L1 use in real-life situations. However, nothing has been said about ESL teacher intuitions about classroom language. It is often the case that teachers need to adapt teaching materials to the needs of particular students and classes (Gabrielatos, 2002). Therefore, this study includes ESL teacher recommendations about language intended for classroom use and compares it to language prescribed by ESL textbooks destined for classroom use, also to the language produced by native speakers completing ESL textbook tasks in a classroom-like setting, thus making the elicited corpora from the three groups, native speakers, ESL teachers and ESL textbooks more comparable than previous studies. Another condition not found in earlier studies is a comparison of elicited language from different types of tasks. This study also compares the native speaker production data in relation to whether the language was produced during the completion of a closed-ended task (i.e., giving directions) or an open-ended task (i.e., giving advice). This was done in order to address Renouf's assertion that certain types of tasks will generate certain types of language. (Renouf, 1986).

### *Research Questions*

There were three research questions upon which this study was based.

- 1) Will the language produced by native speakers who are asked to complete a series of ESL textbook tasks differ from the language prescribed by ESL textbooks?
- 2) Will ESL teachers who are asked to complete a series of ESL tasks recommend language that differs from that used by native speakers completing the same series of ESL tasks? Many studies have demonstrated that native speaker intuitions and ESL teacher intuitions are not very reliable. However, it is important to include

ESL teachers' recommendations as teachers are quite often the major, and often times the only, resource in the classroom.

- 3) Will some ESL tasks yield language that is more predictable than language yielded by other types of tasks. To test this, two types of tasks were used—giving advice, an open-ended task, and giving directions, a close-ended task. Since giving advice is believed to allow for a more varied selection of responses, it would seem that the speech produced during the “giving advice” task would demonstrate lower levels of predictability than that of “giving directions”.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

In order to compare and analyze the language presented in ESL materials, ESL teacher predictions, and native speaker speech production, it was first of all necessary to create a corpus of language produced by native speakers containing the linguistic items of focus. Secondly, ESL teacher predictions of lexical items in reference to giving advice and giving directions were gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Finally, a survey of 32 ESL textbooks was conducted to determine what language is typically being presented in reference to the same two tasks. This chapter will consist of the following: a description of the subjects for both the native speaker corpus and the ESL teacher prediction questionnaires, the procedures for gathering the native speaker samples and the ESL teacher predictions, the tasks and procedures used to gather the native speaker samples, the procedures used to gather data from the ESL textbooks included in the materials survey, and the methods of data analyses.

#### *Native Speaker Participants*

The 16 native speaker participants who created the corpus of language used in this study were all living in the state of Maine in the U.S. at the time of the study and ranged in age from 20 to 65. Their occupations included air traffic controller, internet banking customer service representative, TV news producer, computer programmer, executive director, food service director, high school science and math teacher, high school math teacher, direct support professional and part-time cartoonist, 2 university students, assistant manager of a retirement home, housewife, home builder, pre-school teacher's

aide, and an accounts payable clerk. There were 7 men and 9 women. The native speakers completed the tasks in pairs, and the pairings represented a range of relationships: one pair of acquaintances, two pairs of friends, one pair consisting of a boss and an employee, a pair of co-workers, one pair consisting of a sister-in-law and brother-in-law, a mother and daughter pair, and one pair consisting of a father-in-law and son-in-law. All of the native speakers were living in Maine at the time of the study. Thirteen of them were born in Maine, and one each was born in, Tennessee, New Hampshire, and, Massachusetts.

### *The ESL Teacher Participants*

At the time of the study, the ESL teacher participants (N=19) were teaching in Maine, Vietnam or China and were all native speakers of American English. It was impossible to find enough ESL teachers teaching in the area of Maine where the native speakers were from since there were only three small ESL schools in the area. From these three schools, 11 ESL teachers completed the elicitation tasks. Three other teachers were teaching in Vietnam at the time of the study and 5 were teaching in China. The ESL teaching experience ranged from 1 year to 20 years, the average length of experience being 7.1 years.

### *Materials*

Two types of language elicitation prompts were used in this study: one which included ESL tasks used to elicit the native speaker corpus data and a second used to elicit ESL teacher predictions. (See Appendixes A through E.)

### *Corpus elicitation prompts*

This elicitation prompt included six ESL tasks: three about giving advice and three about giving location directions. In each set of three activities, one section focused on a very Basic Prompt, a second on a More Complex Prompt, and a third, a Real-Life Prompt, which demanded the participants to draw upon situations and locations that were real to them. For example, the Basic Prompt on giving advice (see Appendix A) required the participants to respond to a single line of text (i.e., “Tim is under a lot of stress.” “Pam is having trouble sleeping.”). This prompt consisted of seven simple statements for which the native speakers were asked to provide advice. From the Basic Prompt on giving advice, the participants were also asked to provide an eighth situation of their own. (See Appendix A.) The data generated from this part of the task was included in the third section of giving advice which related to a Real Life situation.

The More Complex Prompt on giving advice (see Appendix B) asked the participants to respond to four short letters that were written to an advice columnist. The first part of the More Complex Prompt asked the participants to read two short letters seeking advice, to choose one and then to provide advice for the letter chosen. The second part consisted of three short letters written to an advice columnist. The participants first were asked to match the advice provided by the columnist to the appropriate letter and then to provide advice of their own for each of the three letters. For the Real-Life Prompt on advising (see Appendix C) the participants were asked to propose a problem, drawing upon a situation in their own lives or in the life of someone they know and ask their partner for advice to solve this problem.

The Basic Prompt on giving directions (see Appendix D) was an information gap activity where one participant was “Student A” and the other, “Student B”. Each participant had to provide directions to four locations on a map consisting of only two streets--one running north to south and another running west to east, and intersecting in the south east corner. The More Complex Prompt on giving location directions (see Appendix E, Task A) provided the participants with a map consisting of 12 city blocks displaying a variety of businesses, public areas and a college campus. The participants were simply asked to use the map to ask for and give directions. And the Real-Life giving location directions prompt (see Appendix E, Task B) asked the participants to draw their own map of the neighborhood around their home or place of work. Then, each participant had to give their partner directions to places on their drawn maps.

The three prompts on giving location directions and the Basic Prompt on advice were taken from *Quest*. The remaining two giving advice prompts were taken from *New Interchange 2* and *3*. Both *Quest* and *New Interchange* were chosen for use in the study since they were the major textbooks being used in the three ESL schools in Maine where 11 of the ESL teacher participants were teaching.

### *Procedure*

The 16 native speakers completed ESL tasks in pairs. All the native speaker pairs knew one another; they were friends, family members or co-workers. One of the recordings was completed at the home of the researcher and 7 recordings were completed in an office, conference room or classroom at the workplace of one of the participants of each pair. In each case the recordings were conducted in formal but familiar surroundings

where the participants sat at either a table or desk much like students would in a classroom. The tasks to be completed and their corresponding instructions were placed on the table or desk along with a Sony microcassette-corder M560V.

Before the start of the recording, the researcher read out a prepared statement of instructions to the native speakers to explain what they were to do. (See Appendix F.) The researcher then turned on the mini-recorder and left the room so that the native speakers could complete the tasks without the temptation to engage the researcher in the tasks or to pose questions to the researcher which could potentially influence the task completion in some way. This imitates the context of a fluency type activity in the classroom where the teacher would not interfere during the completion of an activity. The native speakers were assured that their identities would not be made public at any time, so they could feel free to express what they liked during the task completions. The speakers read the questionnaires and the instructions for the tasks and then proceeded to complete the 6 tasks. All 16 participants completed all 6 tasks without any outside interference or interruption. All participants received the same set of oral instructions. However, the questionnaires varied in the order in which the tasks were presented to prevent factors relating to fatigue that could potentially colour the data. Most pairs took over one hour to complete the 6 tasks which resulted in a 46,910 word corpus.

#### *Prediction Data Gathering*

The teachers included in the prediction data gathering section of the study were given elicitation prompts which were the same tasks as the native speakers completed (see Appendixes A to E). The teachers were allowed to fill in the questionnaires in their



own time. When the prompts were completed, the researcher personally collected each one and analysed the information written in reference to each prompt. The elicitation prompt included the same six tasks that the native speakers completed. The teachers were asked to predict what language they would teach an ESL class if these tasks were to be included in a lesson about giving advice and a lesson about giving location directions. Ten of the teachers were given elicitation prompts that presented the directions tasks first and 9 of the teachers were given elicitation tasks that presented the advice tasks first, again in an attempt to balance the order in which the materials were presented across all participants. However, the teachers were free to fill in the elicitation prompt in whatever order they preferred. None of the teachers were told the actual purpose of the study beyond filling the questionnaires about classroom language so as not to influence their comments on the elicitation prompts in relation to the functions of this study. With each elicitation prompt, the following instructions were included:

Please take a look at the three activities on the following pages which have been taken from intermediate level ESL textbooks. What would you teach preceding these activities? In other words, what grammar, lexical items, expressions, idioms, formulas, etc. would you include in a lesson preceding these activities that would aid the students in successful completion of these exercises?

All the relevant predictions (i.e., formulas, vocabulary, phrases, idioms, sentences, grammar, etc.) were incorporated into the data for comparison with the native speaker corpus and to the surveys of 32 ESL texts to determine the levels of commonality between teacher predictions and ESL text recommendations and also between teacher predictions and the native speaker production samples. (See Appendix G.)

### *ESL Textbook Analysis*

In total, 32 ESL textbooks at pre-intermediate or intermediate level (both supplementary materials books and textbooks designed to be the primary resource) were surveyed; 17 ESL textbooks were surveyed to determine what language was being presented in lessons about giving advice and 17 textbooks were surveyed for the language presented in lessons about giving directions. Two textbooks used in the giving directions survey are beginner level texts since giving directions was not present in the pre-intermediate or intermediate levels of the textbook series. A few of the textbooks contained both giving advice tasks and giving directions tasks so were included in the survey for each task. Most of the textbooks were included in the survey of only one of the tasks. Initially, only textbooks focusing on American English were going to be included in the survey. However, not enough American textbooks could be found. Consequently, the textbooks included in the analysis are a mixture of American, Canadian, and British ESL textbooks that have been used for teaching in various teaching programmes around the world over the past 10 years. The vast majority of the textbooks chosen for this study are commonly found in ESL school libraries. The publication dates range from 1985 to 2004. Nearly all the textbooks included in the study claim to employ a communicative methodology. However, there were three that were better classified as reference, supplementary or self-study texts and were included due to their popularity among ESL teachers and schools (see Appendixes H and I). In each textbook a unit including a lesson on giving advice or giving location directions was identified for inclusion in the survey. The language presented in each unit in regards to giving advice and giving location directions was extracted, recorded and subsequently compared to the

native speaker production samples and the teacher predictions. All the language presented in the textbook activities in relation to giving advice and giving location directions was identified and then entered into a data base. All language presented in the unit in reference to the two functions under investigation and all language presented in subsequent activities were included. Full sentences, phrases, formulas, and individual vocabulary words presented in the unit were extracted, analysed and compared to the results of the ESL teacher questionnaires and the data from the native speaker transcripts.

### *Data Analysis*

The 46,910 word corpus generated from the native speaker pairs completing ESL textbook activities was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. In order to determine how the native speakers stated directions and advice, all utterances clearly demonstrating the speakers' intention to give directions or to give advice were selected for analysis. Any utterances for which the researcher could not ascertain the speakers' intention in relation to giving directions and giving advice were not included. The utterances that were used in the analysis included full sentences, incomplete sentences, phrases, and single word utterances that clearly demonstrated the speakers' intent for giving advice or giving directions. Since this study aimed to investigate the syntactic and lexical frequency of occurrence of particular items, discourse features such as turn-taking patterns, pauses in conversation, overlapping, back-channeling and hesitation devices were not indicated in the transcripts and were therefore not included in the data analyses. Each utterance selected from the transcription was entered into a database as a separate unit without indicating the context in which it was produced. In other words, the utterances preceding

and following each entry were not included. Therefore, each utterance in the database is considered to be a complete syntactic and semantic unit. Within the database each entry is classified in a number of ways: by speaker, by task, by syntax and by lexical items.

The recorded data gathered from the native speaker participants were transcribed, the written information provided by the ESL teachers in the elicitation prompts was recorded and analysed, and the language presented in the ESL textbook activities was recorded and analysed to discover any commonalities among the groups of data. A comparative analysis was also conducted on the data from the native speaker group to determine if the data derived from the giving advice tasks had a lower rate of predictability than those of giving location directions.

The syntactic form of each utterance of giving advice and giving location directions was then identified and coded in the data base for each of the three groups. Then the syntactic forms were categorized (e.g., imperative, You + VP, modals). Finally, the frequency count for each syntactic category was noted. The proportion of occurrence of each category over the total data for each group of participants was calculated which was then used to make comparisons among the three groups. The same data were also analyzed in order to identify the most frequently occurring items in each syntactic category. The frequency occurrence of each lexical category was then noted. The proportions of occurrence of each lexical type per total number of occurrence per group were calculated. The syntactic structures and the lexical entries were the data used in comparing the three groups.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The 16 native speakers produced a 46,910 word corpus from which a total of 1,180 multi-word utterances relevant to the goals of this project were selected for analysis; 647 multi-word utterances used for giving location directions and 533 multi-word utterances used for giving advice. Nineteen ESL teachers completed a series of elicitation prompts resulting in 228 predictions of what utterances would be used; 143 predictions for giving location directions and 85 predictions for giving advice. A survey of 32 ESL textbooks resulted in 428 recommendations; 259 recommendations for giving location directions and 223 recommendations for giving advice (See Table 1). All the utterances were first analysed in terms of their syntactic structures and then each syntactic structure was analysed again to identify what lexical item (especially verbs) were recurrent in these patterns. The same coding procedures and analysis categories were used to analyse the data from all three sources—ESL teachers, native speakers, and ESL textbooks.

Table 1  
*Number of Utterances for Three Groups in Each Task Type*

Sources	Giving location directions	Giving advice
Native English speakers	647	533
Teacher predictions	143	85
Textbook recommendations	259	223

The first question asked in this study was whether there were similarities and differences among the utterances used by the native speakers and those recommended by

the ESL textbooks. The second question asked in this study was whether there were similarities and differences among the utterances used by the native speakers and those predicted by the ESL teachers. To answer these two questions, the utterances from each of these three sources were analysed in three ways: 1) in terms of the semantic contents of the utterances (Semantic analysis), 2) in terms of their syntactic structures (Syntactic Analysis), and 3) in terms of the recurrent lexical items that each syntactic structure contained (Lexical analysis). The utterances for giving directions are examined first.

#### *Semantic Analysis-Giving Directions*

In terms of semantic content, the giving directions utterances produced by the native speakers in completing the ESL textbook tasks were of two types. The first type consisted of step-by-step instructions of how to find a particular location. Examples are sentences like “Go straight” and “You take a right” which focus on what the participants should do in order to find a particular location. The second type consisted of descriptions of a particular place. Examples include sentences like “It’s the second one on the left” and “The hardware store is across the street” which focus on the end of the search, rather than on the process. The utterances recommended by the textbooks surveyed and predicted by the ESL teachers who filled out the questionnaires for this study also focused only on these two types of instructions. The results of this analysis are discussed following a description of the syntactic structures identified in the data.

#### *Syntactic analysis*

A structural analysis of the utterances of giving location directions from the native speaker corpus, the ESL teacher predictions and the ESL textbook recommendations

reveal that the utterances can be categorized into five different types according to sentence or phrase structure:

- 1) *imperative* = VP + NP/PP: An utterance included in this category is a sentence comprised of a verb phrase (VP) where the subject, 'you', is omitted. The verb phrase is followed by either a noun phrase (NP) or a prepositional phrase (PP) or any combination of NPs and/or PPs. (e.g., Go to the end of Tenth St. = VP + PP + PP; Make a right = VP + NP; Take a left on Hildreth St. = VP + NP + PP.)
- 2) *You + VP* = You + VP + NP/PP: An utterance included in this category is a sentence with 'You' as the subject followed by a verb phrase (VP) and either a noun phrase (NP) or a prepositional phrase (PP) or a combination of NPs and/or PPs. (e.g., You cross Gareth Ave. = You + VP + NP; You take a left at the Palace Theater. = You + VP + NP + PP; You go through the intersection of Second and College Dr. = You + VP + PPs.)
- 3) *Sentence I* = NP + be + (NP) + (AdvP)+(PP): An utterance included in this category is a sentence where the subject is 'it', 'there', 'that', or a place name, the main verb is a form of the verb 'to be' which is followed by a possible noun phrase (NP), a possible adverb phrase (AdvP) and possibly a prepositional phrase (PP), or any combination of NPs, AdvPs and PPs. (e.g., It's your first right. = NP + be + NP; The hardware store is the first building on your left. = NP + be + NP + PP; That's Fern St. = NP + be + NP.; The park is on the left. = NP + be + PP; It's basically on the corner of Second St. and

Thorn Dr. = NP + be + AdvP + PPs; It's right across the street. = NP + be + AdvP + PP.)

- 4) (AdvP) + PP: Utterances included in this category are phrases that consist of a prepositional phrase that occurs alone or is preceded by an adverbial phrase (AdvP). (e.g., Right on the corner. = AdvP + PP; Between the video store and the health club. = PP; Right beside it. = AdvP + PP.)
- 5) NP + (PP): Utterances included in this category are phrases that consist of a noun phrase (NP) and possibly a prepositional phrase (PP). (e.g., The middle one. = NP; The second building from the right = NP + PP; A quarter mile on your right. = NP + PP.)

All other utterances that were identified from the transcripts as occurrences of giving directions did not fit the five categories outlined above and were therefore included in the category called "others" in the tables provided in the appendixes. Only the native speakers produced utterances included in this category. These utterances account for only 6.8% of the data, do not consist of forms that were used repeatedly, and contain a variety of structures such as "Where it says Kelley Rd."; "We will go down the Odlin Rd."; "They are all on the same side."

#### *Syntactic categories*

Figure 1 below shows the frequency of occurrence (in percentage form) of each syntactic construction found in the data from the three sources: native speakers, ESL teachers and ESL textbooks. The figure clearly shows the differences between the utterances recommended by the ESL textbooks, predicted by the ESL teachers and those used by the native speakers.



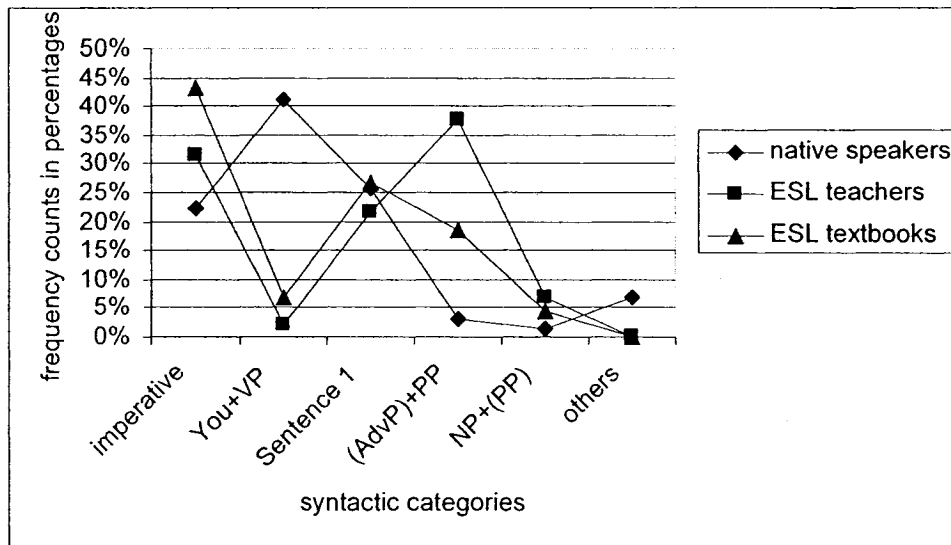


Figure 1. Frequency counts in percentage of occurrence of syntactic categories found in giving directions for three groups

As shown in Figure 1, all 5 of the syntactic categories were found in the data of all three groups of participants. (See Appendix J for full details of data.) The ESL textbooks and ESL teachers both recommended *imperative* more frequently than the native speakers produced this form: 43.2% for the ESL textbooks, 31.5% for the ESL teachers and 22.1% for the native speakers. The ESL teachers recommended the *Adv+PP* category a bit more frequently (37.8%) than the *imperative*. The occurrence of *Adv+PP* is also somewhat frequent in the ESL textbook data (18.5%) though not at all frequent in the native speaker data (3.1%). The ESL teachers recommend *imperative* and *Adv+PP* more than the other syntactic structure, neither of which occurred as frequently in the native speaker speech production data. The most frequently used syntactic structure in the native speaker groups is *You+VP* (41.1%) which was not a frequently occurring structure in either the ESL teacher data or the ESL textbook data: 2.1% and 6.9% respectively.

There were two more syntactic constructions found in the data which occurred in all three groups: *Sentence 1* (e.g., It's your first right. The hardware store is the first building on your left. That's Fern St. The park is on the left. It's basically on the corner of Second St. and Thorn Dr. It's right across the street.), and *NP+(PP)* (e.g., The middle one. The second building from the right. A quarter mile on your right.) The frequency of *Sentence 1* in the data of both the native speakers and the ESL textbooks are nearly the same, 25.7% and 26.6% respectively. *Sentence 1* is also the second most frequently occurring structure in each of these two groups. The data of the ESL teachers also yielded a similar rate of occurrence as the other two groups (21.7%), but both the *imperative* and the *(AdvP)+PP* occurred more frequently. The category *NP+(PP)* occurred infrequently in the data of all three groups.

To sum up, where one finds the greatest similarity among the three groups is their preference for the *imperative* category, but even here the ESL textbook and ESL teacher groups seem to prefer it more than the native speakers, whose preferred syntactic structure is *You+VP*. This structure occurred infrequently in the ESL teachers and the ESL textbook data. The category *Sentence 1* occurred at nearly the same rate of frequency in the data of all three groups, but was not the most preferred category by any of the three groups.

#### *Semantic Analysis – Giving Advice*

Analysis of the utterances of giving advice from the native speaker corpus reveals nine categories of utterances used by this group of participants: *modals*, *imperative*, *noun phrase (NP)*, *Why don't you*, *there is/are*, *infinitive*, *subjunctive*, *simple present* and

*others*. And additional 8 categories were recommended by the ESL teachers and textbooks for a total of 17 syntactic categories among the three groups' data.

#### *Syntactic analysis*

- 1) *modals*: Utterances included in this category are any sentences in which the main verb is accompanied by a modal auxiliary. (e.g., I think she *should* get some exercise; I *would* have done the same thing; You just *need to* take some quality time to talk.)
- 2) *imperative*: Utterances included in this category are sentences in which the main verb is in the imperative form and the subject *you* is omitted. (e.g., Don't draw a line in the sand; Offer to pay for it; Give her time to sort through things on her own.)
- 3) *NP*: Utterances in this category consist of advice given in the form of a bare noun phrase. (e.g., Four fingers of bourbon; Maybe a warm glass of milk; Some Nicorette.)
- 4) *Why don't you*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase "*Why don't you...*" (e.g., *Why don't you* just take a bath before you go to bed.)
- 5) *There is/are*: Utterances included in this category are sentences that begin with *There is* or *There are*. (e.g., *There are* books at libraries and whatnot; *There's* probably books and computer programmes.)
- 6) *Infinitive*: Utterances included in this category are advice given in which the main verb is in the infinitive. (e.g., To set aside like his cigarette money every

week in a jar; And to not just eat a lot of junk food because he's busy and what's to get stuff done; To talk is the main thing.)

- 7) *Subjunctive*: Utterances included in this category include sentences in which the main verb of the subordinate clause is in the subjunctive. (e.g., I advise you not to take him; I suggested that he take care of himself; I recommend that he go to a real city where there's real modern art to evaluate.)
- 8) *Simple present*: Utterances included in this category include sentences in which the main verb is in the simple present tense. (e.g., You replace it with something else; The internet is a good place to find out all that information; I think having arguments is sometimes a good thing for a family.)
- 9) *Others*: Utterances included in this category only occur in the native speaker data and do not fit the previous 8 categories outlined above. The forms in this category do not occur repeatedly in the transcripts and include a variety of syntactic forms. (e.g., Delegating more work to everyone else; The more exposure, the better).
- 10) *What about*: Utterance in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'What about...' (e.g., What about taking time off and relaxing more? What about helping your friend out?).
- 11) *It's a good idea*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'It's a good idea...' (e.g., It's a good idea to take vitamins. It's not a good idea to dress too formally.).

- 12) *It's advisable to*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'It's advisable to...' (e.g., It's advisable to stretch before running.).
- 13) *Have you*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'Have you...' (e.g., Have you thought of trying to be more friendly? Have you tried any natural remedies?).
- 14) *How about*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'How about...' (e.g., How about trying to meet some new people? How about sending her some flowers?).
- 15) *What if you*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'What if you...' (e.g., What if you stopped eating meat?)
- 16) *Why not try*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'Why not try...' (e.g., Why not try having a short nap?)
- 17) *I recommend+NP*: Utterances included in this category consist of advice given utilizing the phrase 'I recommend + a noun phrase' (e.g., I recommend not putting your feet up on the table or else some people might be offended.)

### *Syntactic categories*

Figure 2 shows that in all three groups, the category occurring the most frequently is *modals* (see Appendix K for full details). However, this category occurred much more frequently in the ESL teacher and the ESL textbook groups, 70.9% and 69.5% respectively, than it did in the native speaker group, 47.1%. No other category occurred frequently in the ESL teacher and ESL textbook data.

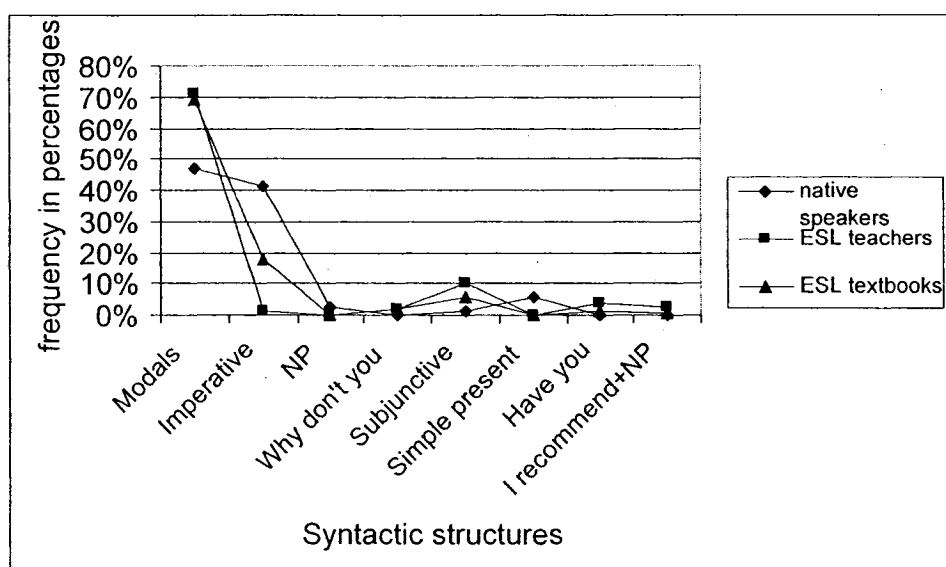


Figure 2. Syntactic structures occurring at least 2% in the data for giving advice for three groups

In contrast, the category *imperative* (41.5%) occurred nearly as frequently as *modals* (47.1%) in the native speaker data. Since all the native speaker pairs knew each other, the fact that the imperative was the preferred syntactic form used in advice may reflect the informality of their relationship. However, rather than giving advice to one another, the vast majority of the instances of giving advice tasks were directed at a third party who was a stranger to the participants. We might expect to find more instances of the imperative in authentic texts when the speakers' relationship is informal, such as friends or family, and more instances of modals in more formal situations as seeking advice from a doctor. In other words, the relationship between the speaker pairs was informal but the situation in which they were giving advice was a formal one. So it is interesting that the participants used the imperative nearly as often as they did modals despite the formality of the situation. In contrast, in the ESL textbook data *imperative* occurred much less frequently (17.9%) and very infrequently in the ESL teacher data

(1.3%). All the remaining categories did not occur frequently in any of the data from the three groups. Appendix K shows that the ESL teachers recommended 10 different syntactic structures, the ESL textbooks recommended a total of 10 structures and the native speakers, 8 recurrent structures. Overall, there were a total of 17 different syntactic structures occurring in the data but only 4 categories occur in all three groups: *modals*, *imperative*, *Why don't you* and *subjunctive*.

Combined, the ESL teachers predicted and the ESL textbooks recommended 8 syntactic structures that the native speakers did not produce: *What about...*, *It's a good idea...*, *It's advisable to...*, *Have you...*, *How about...*, *What if you...*, *Why not try...*, *I recommend + NP*. All these syntactic structures can be described as lexicalized chunks (Pawley & Syder, 1983; Wray, 2002) that are easy to teach and learn since they can be memorized as stems that students can simply add various endings to according to the situation at hand. But not one of the native speakers produced any of these forms. So the only point where the three groups demonstrate similarity is in the category of *modals*.

### *Variety of Verbs*

Table 2 shows the variety of verbs occurring in the data of the most prevalent syntactic categories from both the giving directions tasks and the giving advice tasks of the three groups. This means that from the giving directions tasks the verbs from only the *imperative* and *You+VP* are included in the figure because these were the most frequently used or recommended categories. From the giving advice tasks only the verbs occurring in the *modals* and the *imperative* are shown. (From the giving directions tasks, no other categories included any variety of verbs; *be* was the only verb occurring in the categories

of *Sentence 1*. The other two syntactic categories, NP+(PP) and (Adv)+PP, consist of verbless phrases. From the giving advice tasks, only the *imperative* and *modals* were found to occur frequently in the data.)

Table 2  
*Variety and Frequency of Verbs for the Three Groups in Each Task Type*

	Giving Directions <sup>a</sup>	Giving Advice <sup>a</sup>	Giving Directions <sup>b</sup>	Giving Advice <sup>b</sup>
Native speakers	34	109	go 21.4 get 7.7 take 21.4 see 5.1 come 17.9 be 4.8  There was a total of <b>313</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.	go 9.5 get 4.5 try 6.9 make 3.7 do 5.4 find 3.2 be 5.4 take 3.2  There was a total of <b>462</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.
ESL teachers	8	12	turn 36.7 go 30.0  There was a total of <b>30</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.	advise 18.5 recommend 18.5 do 14.8  There was a total of <b>27</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.
ESL textbooks	15	56	go 26.7 turn 23.3 come 10.0  There was a total of <b>60</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.	go 12.2 try 6.5 take 6.5 be 5.8 study 6.5  There was a total of <b>139</b> occurrences of verbs in the data.

<sup>a</sup>Number of different verbs

<sup>b</sup>Frequent items are shown in percentage.

It is clear from Table 2 that the giving advice tasks produced a wider variety of verbs than did the giving directions tasks for all three groups of participants. The native speakers produced the widest variety of verbs (34 in the giving directions tasks and 109 in the giving advice tasks) and the ESL teachers the least variety (8 in the giving



directions tasks and 12 in the giving advice tasks). However, many of the ESL teachers, in predicting language, simply predicted syntactic categories (e.g., modals, imperative, etc.) and often did not provide many exemplary verbs with these categories, which accounts for the very low variety of verbs occurring in the data of this group. In both the giving directions tasks and the giving advice tasks, the verb *go* occurred more frequently than any other in both the native speaker (21.4% of the giving directions data and 9.5 of the giving advice data) and the ESL textbook groups (26.7% of the giving directions data and 12.2% of the giving advice data). The native speakers produced the verb *take* at the same rate of frequency (21.4%) as the verb *go* in the giving directions tasks, but data from the other two groups do not contain frequent instances of *take*. The verbs *try* and *take* also occur somewhat frequently in the data of the native speaker and ESL textbook groups for the giving advice tasks; *try* represents 6.9% of the verbs used and *take* 3.2% of the verbs in the native speaker data; and *try* and *take* both represent 6.5% of the verbs found in the ESL textbook data.

In summary, the native speaker group produced a far wider variety of verbs in each of the two task categories of the three groups. The verb *go* occurred the most frequently for the native speaker and ESL textbook groups in both the giving directions tasks and the giving advice task.

### *Lexical Analysis – Imperative*

#### *Giving directions*

Figure 3 displays the frequency counts in percentages of the lexical items occurring the most frequently in the syntactic category *imperative* found in the data of the native speaker transcripts, the ESL teacher predictions and the ESL textbook

recommendations. In total 21 different verbs were used across the three groups. (See Appendix L.) Of those, only 2 verbs were present in the data of all three groups: *take* and *go*. The percentages of occurrence for the verbs in this category are not very high, less than 50%, since there was such a wide variety of verbs occurring in the data.

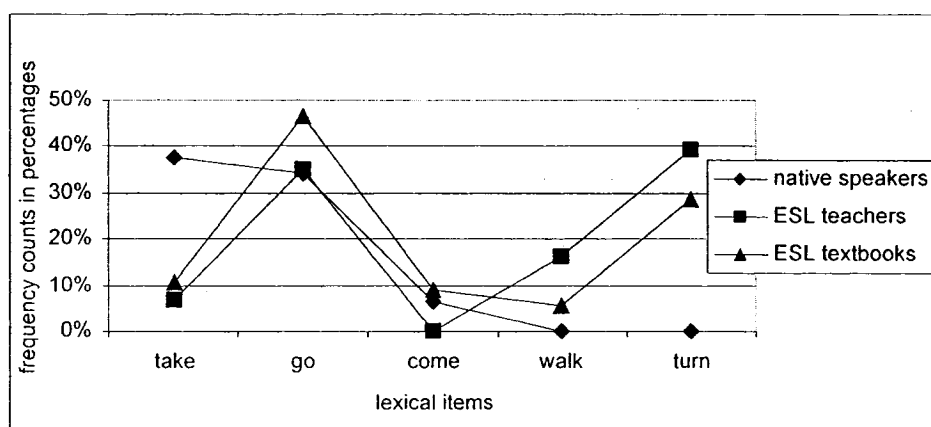


Figure 3. Frequently occurring verbs in the syntactic category *imperative* in giving directions for three groups

The verb *go* occurs the most frequently in the ESL teacher and the ESL textbook data, 34.9% and 46.4% respectively. In the native speaker data, *go* also occurred nearly as frequently as it did in the data of the other two groups (35.0%). However, the verb *take* was the most frequently used by the native speaker participants (38.6%) which was not a significant occurrence in either the ESL teacher data (7.0%) or the ESL textbook data (10.7%). Among the ESL teachers, the verb *turn* was predicted fairly frequently (39.5%) and it was also recommended by the ESL textbooks (28.6%). But *turn* was not produced a single time by the native speaker participants. So, the one point of similarity among the groups is the verb *go*.

### *Variety of verbs*

A significant difference among the three groups is the variety of verbs in the *imperative* category occurring in the data (see Table 3). In total there were 18 different verbs produced in the imperative form by the native speaker group while completing the giving location direction tasks. The ESL teachers predicted a variety of only 5 verbs and the ESL textbooks recommended a total of 11 different verbs in the *imperative* category. Of the 5 verbs predicted by the ESL teachers, only 2 of them were produced by the native speakers, and of the 11 recommended by the ESL textbooks, only 8 were produced by the native speakers. (See Appendix L for full details.)

Table 3

*Number of Different Verbs Used in the Category Imperative in the Giving Directions Data for Three Groups*

Native speakers	ESL teachers	ESL textbooks
18	5	11

### *Lexical Analysis – Head Noun Phrase in Sentence 1*

Figure 4 displays the frequency of the lexical items occurring in the head noun phrase of the syntactic categories of *Sentence 1* and *Sentence 2* from the giving directions tasks for the three groups. Only four lexical items occurred in the head noun phrase across the three groups: *it*, *place name*, *there* and *that*. *It* was the most frequent choice for all three groups: 56.6% for the native speakers, 93.5% for the ESL teachers and 52.1% for the ESL textbooks. (See Appendix M.) *That* was the least frequent lexical item in the

head noun phrase of the ESL teachers (0%) and the ESL textbooks (1.4%), but for the native speakers, *there* occurred the least frequently (6.0%).

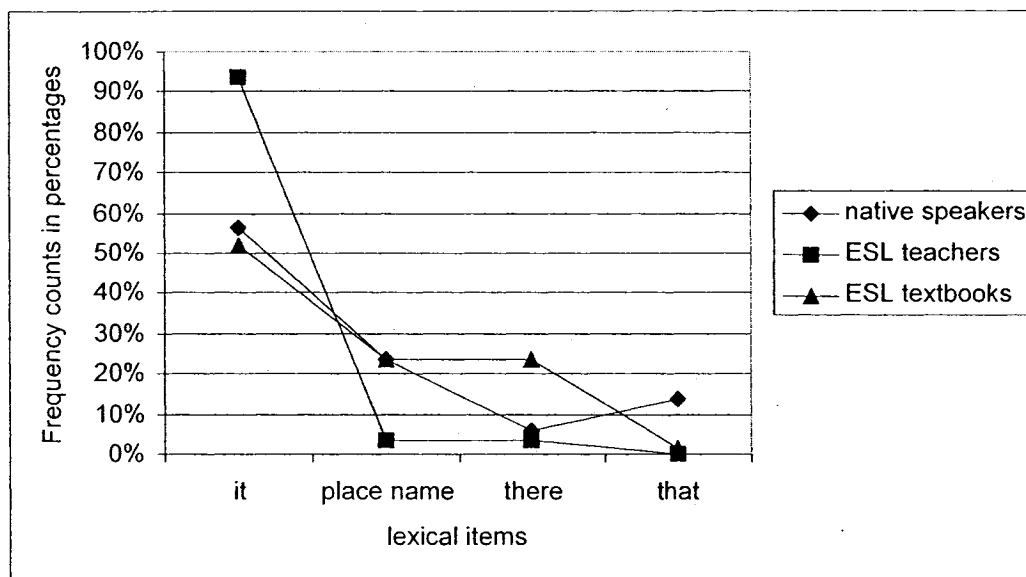


Figure 4. Frequency of lexical items occurring in the head noun phrase of *Sentence 1* for three groups

#### *Lexical Analysis – Prepositions*

Due to the wide variety of prepositions found in the data, Figure 5 shows only those prepositions that occur at a rate of 5% or higher. In order to calculate how often an occurrence of giving directions contains a preposition, only one preposition was counted from each utterance even though several utterances of giving directions included more than one preposition. For example, in the sentence “Go all the way to the end of the road to the first four corners” only “to” of the prepositional phrase “To the end of the road” was counted. From Appendix N, one can see that a variety of 38 prepositions occurred in the data across the three groups. The native speakers produced a variety of 33 prepositions and the ESL textbooks recommended a variety of 29 different prepositions, while the ESL teachers only predicted 17 different prepositions. The preposition

occurring the most frequently in all three groups is *on*: 22.7% for the native speakers, 38.9% for the ESL teachers and 27.9% for the ESL textbooks. The frequency of occurrence for all the other prepositions is quite low due to wide variety occurring in the data, thus making comparisons among the groups difficult. This is significant since it was expected that the data from the giving directions task would be somewhat predictable since prepositions are considered to be a closed lexical group, therefore limiting the variety of lexical items occurring in the data.

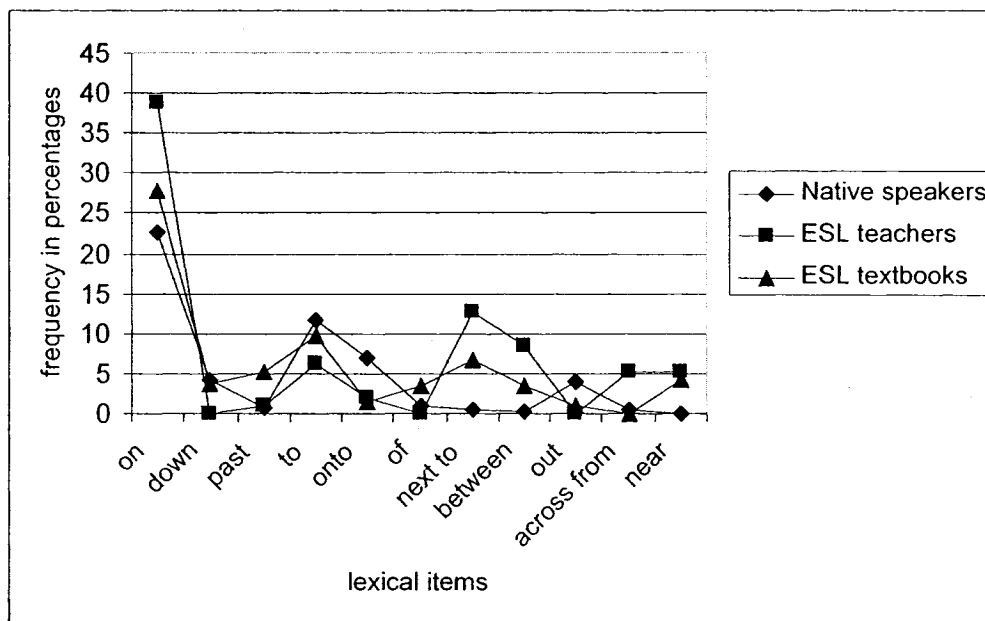


Figure 5. Prepositions occurring at 5% frequency or higher in the data of the three groups

#### *Lexical Analysis – Modals*

In Appendix O, it is shown that the native speaker group produced the largest variety of modals—12 in total—whereas the ESL teachers predicted a variety of 10 and the ESL textbooks a variety of only 8. The modal *should* occurs the most frequently in the ESL teacher data (44.6%) and in the ESL textbook data (56.1%). But for the native

speaker group, *should* only represents 20.7% of the total number of occurrences of modals (see Figure 6). The modal *would* occurs the most frequently in the data of the native speakers (33.9%). But in the ESL teacher group *would* represents only 14.3% of the occurrences of modals and it only represents 7.1% for the ESL textbook group. There was a fairly high percentage of occurrences of *ought to* in both the ESL teacher data (12.5%) and the ESL textbook data (14.2%), but in the native speaker data, *ought to* only represents .4% of the occurrences. From the ESL textbook data, *had better* occurred at a frequency of 11.0% while there was not even a single occurrence of *had better* in the ESL teacher data and *had better* represents only .4% of the occurrences in the native speaker data.

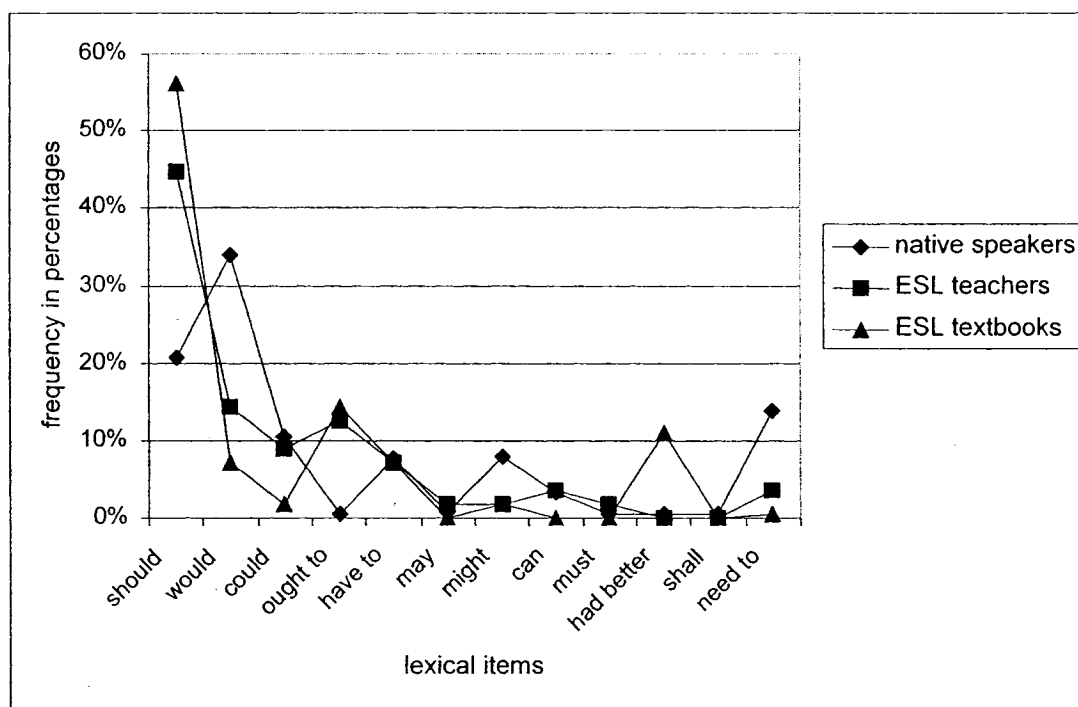


Figure 6. Frequency of lexical items in syntactic category *modals* for three groups

## Summary

All the groups displayed similarity in the giving directions data in that they either used, predicted or recommended the same syntactic forms: *imperative*, *You+VP*, *Sentence 1*, *Sentence 2*, *(Adv)+PP*, and *NP+(PP)*. This was not true for the giving advice data. The groups were quite dissimilar in terms of the syntactic structures found in the data. Of the 17 structures recorded from the three groups, only four occurred in all three groups: *modal*, *imperative*, *Why don't you* and *subjunctive*. This may point towards giving directions being a more closed-ended task and giving advice being a more open-ended one in terms of syntactic structures used. However, the three groups were quite dissimilar in what syntactic structure they preferred in giving directions. The structure *imperative* did occur frequently in all groups, but the native speakers preferred *You+VP* over *imperative*. These two structures differ only in the fact that 'you' is either present or not, but the data of the native speakers clearly demonstrate a preference for this structure over *imperative*. *You+VP* was hardly mentioned at all in the data of the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks. The ESL teachers preferred *(Adv)+PP* over the *imperative* which occurred very infrequently in the native speaker data.

The groups were dissimilar in the variety of lexical items occurring in the data. In both sets of tasks, the native speakers produced a wider variety of verbs than the other two groups; in the giving directions task the native speakers produced a wider variety of prepositions than the other two groups; and in the giving advice task the native speakers produced a larger variety of modals than the other two groups. Finally, in terms of the most frequent lexical items occurring in each syntactic category for both sets of tasks, the groups were rarely in agreement.

The data from the ESL teacher and the ESL textbook groups show that there were similarities between these two groups. In the giving advice tasks, both groups preferred *modals* over the *imperative* and the most preferred modal is *should*. The data from the giving directions tasks from these same two groups show that the verbs *go* and *turn* are preferred more than any others. Both groups also preferred the preposition *on* more than any others.

### *Predictability*

The entire native speaker corpus was re-analysed in order to determine if there was a difference in predictability rates between the two task types; giving directions and giving advice. It was expected that the giving directions tasks would yield more formulaic language (i.e., two-, three- or four- word chunks that are utilized by more than one of the native speakers) than the giving advice tasks. For example, ‘take a right/left’ occurred 103 times and was produced by 15 different speakers (see Appendix P), and ‘would suggest’ occurred 7 times in the data and was produced by 4 different speakers (see Appendix Q). In the native speaker data, there were utterances of giving directions that included more than one chunk of formulaic language. For example, “take a right at the corner” includes two formula types: “take a right” and “at the corner”. In order to determine the frequency of occurrence of formulas in the number of occurrences in the giving directions data and the giving advice data, only one of the formula types was counted, not both. In other words, only one formula was counted in each of the identified utterances in the giving directions data and the giving advice data even though there may have been more than one formula type present. Since no other studies could be found that



looked at the formula types found in giving directions and giving advice, the choice of which formula type to use was an arbitrary decision.

A higher rate of predictability was expected from the language produced in the giving directions tasks for two reasons. First of all, this type of task relies heavily on the use of prepositions, which is a closed lexical group. Second, a limited variety of verbs would be used to complete the giving directions tasks. The giving advice tasks also rely on a closed lexical group—modals. However, the verb accompanying the modals are not as limited in variety as those used in the giving directions tasks which illustrates the fact that giving advice is an open-ended task and giving directions, a closed ended one.

In calculating the number of formulas occurring in the native speaker data, each two, three or four word utterance produced by at least 2 of the participants was identified following the procedure established by Gatbonton and Segalowitz, (2005). These formulas were then tallied to find the total number of occurrences in each of the task types. The total number of formulas for each task type was finally divided by the total number of occurrences in the giving directions tasks and the giving advice tasks. In the giving direction data, there were a total of 647 utterances and 55.8% of these utterances contain formulaic language as defined above. There were 533 occurrences of giving advice in the native speaker data, and 37.0% of these utterances contained formulaic language.

Only six syntactic structures were found to occur repeatedly in the giving directions data of the native speakers. The ESL textbooks and the ESL teachers also predicted these same six structures and no others. However, in the giving advice data, the native speakers produced a total of eight syntactic structures. Of these eight structures,

only three were predicted by the ESL teachers and only 4 were recommended by the ESL textbooks. The fact that there was much more agreement among the three groups in terms of syntactic structures in the giving directions tasks, and the fact that the data from the giving directions tasks contain more formulaic language than the giving advice tasks supports the prediction earlier given that giving directions, a closed-ended task, may be more predictable in terms of language used and syntactic structures produced than the giving advice tasks (an open-ended task).

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### *Research Questions*

There were three predictions in this study. The first was that the native speaker speech produced during the completion of a series of giving advice and giving directions tasks would differ from the language prescribed by ESL textbooks in reference to these same two task types. The question addressed was whether or not ESL textbooks are recommending language for classroom activities that is similar to that produced by native speakers completing the same classroom activities. The expected answer to this question was that the data from these two groups would differ.

In comparing the data from the native speaker group and the data from the ESL textbooks, only a few points of similarity between the native speaker data and that of the ESL textbooks were found. Only one similarity was found in the giving advice data between the two groups; the verb *go* was the most frequently occurring verb in both the giving advice data and the giving directions data. From the giving directions data, the syntactic analysis found two points of similarity between these two groups. The syntactic category *Sentence 1* occurs at nearly the same level of frequency and both groups produced the same 6 syntactic constructions. However, of these syntactic structures, the native speakers preferred *You+VP* (41.4%) and the ESL textbooks preferred *imperative* (43.2%). The lexical analyses of the giving directions data reveal 2 points of similarity. *It* occurs more than any other of the lexical items in the head noun phrase of *Sentence 1* syntactic category, and the preposition *on* occurs more frequently than any other preposition. In summary, between the native speakers and the ESL textbooks only one

lexical similarity was found in the giving advice data; and from the giving directions data, two lexical similarities and 2 syntactic similarities were found. Of these similarities, none involve items occurring at high levels of frequency in the data. Therefore, the present study yielded support for the first hypothesis.

The second prediction was that the native speaker speech production would differ from the language predicted by ESL teachers concerning the same series of giving advice and giving directions tasks. The question explored here was whether or not ESL teachers are predicting language that is produced by native speakers while doing ESL classroom activities. The expected answer to this question was that the data from the two groups would differ.

The syntactic and lexical analyses of the data from the native speakers and the ESL teachers revealed three points of similarity. From the giving advice data, the two similarities were that the two groups preferred the preposition *on* more than any other preposition and the modal *could* occurred at nearly the same frequency in the data of each group. Only one similarity was found between the native speakers and the ESL teachers in the giving directions data; each group produced the same 6 categories. However, each group preferred a different structure—the native speakers preferred *You+VP* (41.1%) and the ESL teachers preferred *(AdvP)+PP* (37.8%). No other similarities were found in the data between these two groups.

The third prediction was that the predictability rates of giving directions would be higher than the predictability rates of giving advice since these two tasks differ in the fact that giving directions is a close-ended type task and giving advice is an open-ended type task. The implication of close-ended tasks being more predictable is that language being

presented in textbooks and taught in classrooms could possibly contain syntactic structures and lexical items that are more typically used in authentic interactions between native speakers if formulaic chunks of language can be identified.

From the results of this study, it does appear that giving directions is a more predictable task than giving advice since the language produced by native speakers while giving directions contains a significant amount of formulas. There was also complete agreement among the three groups in terms of syntactic structures occurring in giving directions; all three groups produced, predicted, or recommended the same six syntactic structures.

### *Incidental Findings*

The syntactic analyses of the data revealed that there was a similarity in giving directions among the **three** groups in terms of the syntactic structures occurring in each group: only six syntactic structures were found in the giving directions data and all six structures occur in the data of all three groups. However, the frequency with which each structure occurred in the data varied among the three groups; each group preferred a different structure. A second similarity among the **three** groups was also found in the giving directions data. The lexical analyses showed that all three groups preferred the preposition *on* more than any other preposition. Although the data revealed these two similarities among the three groups, these similarities did not involve syntactic structures or lexical items that occur at high levels of frequency in the data.

Ten points of similarity were found in the data between the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks. From the giving directions data, there were four points of similarity. Both

the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks preferred the syntactic category *imperative* over the category *You+VP* which was preferred by the native speakers. In the lexical analyses of the giving directions data, both groups recorded fairly high occurrences of the verb *turn* (39.5% in the ESL teacher group and 28.6% in the ESL textbook group) which was not produced a single time by the native speakers. The ESL teachers and textbooks did not recommend the verb *take* very often (7.0% and 10.7% respectively) which was the highest occurring verb in the native speaker data (38.6%). Finally, the lexical analysis revealed that both groups preferred the preposition *on* more than other prepositions.

From the giving advice data, six points of similarity were found between the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks. Both groups recommended the syntactic category *modal* (70.9% for the ESL teachers and 69.5% for the ESL textbooks) more than any other category. However, the category *modal* did not occur at a similar frequency in the native speaker data (47.1%). Neither the ESL teachers nor the ESL textbooks recommended the syntactic category *imperative* frequently (1.3% and 17.9% respectively), whereas the native speakers produced the imperative form quite frequently (41.5%). The lexical analyses from the giving advice data found that the modal *should* occurs frequently in both groups (44.6% in the ESL teacher group and 56.1% in the ESL textbook group), but *should* was not produced at a similar rate of frequency by the native speakers (20.7%). Both the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks recommended *ought to* fairly frequently (12.5% and 14.2% respectively) while *ought to* was only produced once by the native speakers (.4%). The modal *would* was not found to occur at high rates of frequency in the ESL teacher and textbook groups (14.3% and 7.1% respectively) but was the most frequently produced modal in the native speaker group (33.9%). Finally, the modal *need*

to was barely mentioned in the data of the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks (3.6% and .6% respectively) but was produced fairly frequently by the native speakers (13.9%).

### *Implications of the Findings*

The results of this study suggest that the language predicted by ESL teachers and recommended by ESL textbooks in relation to certain tasks do not resemble the language produced by native speakers completing these same tasks. The majority of past research suggesting a mismatch between native speaker speech patterns and ESL classroom language compared language destined for use in the ESL classroom to language from real-life situations. Since these elicitation contexts are quite different, it is not surprising that there is a mismatch of language. This study attempted to make the elicitation contexts more comparable. However, despite creating similar contexts from which to elicit the data, this study demonstrates a mismatch still exists among the language produced, predicted or recommended by the three groups.

The mismatch among the data could point to a couple of factors. Firstly, only one of the textbooks included in this study was written based on a native English corpus. The others, like most ESL textbooks published, were written according to the writers' or possibly even the publishers' intuition about what language should be taught, or written according to what the ESL textbook market demands at the time. This is a major concern since studies have demonstrated that the language being taught and/or presented in ESL textbooks does not resemble native speaker use of the language. Possible repercussions of such a mismatch in language are that students may, and sometimes in fact do, fail to gain sociolinguistic fluency and competence in the target language (Baird, 1990; DeVito,

1991; Yorio, 1980). Textbooks written based on intuition or market demands instead of criteria supported by native speaker corpora often fail to make students aware of linguistic structures that are appropriate and most likely to occur in specific contexts (Baird, 1990; DeVito, 1991). Instead, students are being exposed to language that is simply grammatically correct but not necessarily contextually appropriate or even accepted by native speakers of the language. “By presenting to our students the full range of structural possibilities in the target language, or the language as it *might* be, we are preventing our students from grasping the target language as it actually is” (DeVito, 1991, p. 393) and ignoring the frequency of certain lexical items and syntactic structures occurring in the language in relation to various contexts of use (Biber, Conrad & Reppen, 1998).

Many ESL textbooks present language to be learned in the form of lexicalized chunks or stems for students to memorize. The textbooks in this study offered a total of eight lexicalized stems in the giving advice data, none of which were produced a single time by the native speakers. Many research studies have concluded that learners (Nattinger, 1988; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Ellis, 1997) and native speakers do make use of formulaic language, lexicalized chunks and routines (Cook, 1998; Coulmas, 1981; DeVito, 1991; Glisan & Drescher, 1993; Lewis, 1997; Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Pawley & Syder, 1983; Walz, 1986). So, the presentation of language in the form of lexicalized chunks does reflect SLA research findings. But what textbook presentation continues to lack are the lexicalized chunks or formulaic language that native speakers tend to use in specific contexts (Koprowski, 2005). Simply offering a



variety of lexicalized chunks for students to memorize is not taking the role of context into account.

Many such stems have a grammar that is unique in that they are subject to an idiosyncratic range of phrase structure and transformational restrictions; that is to say, by applying generally productive rules to these units one may produce an utterance that is grammatical but unnatural or highly marked. (Pawley & Syder, 1983, p. 192)

Offering a list of lexicalized chunks may help students to communicate to other speakers of the language, but this does not prepare students in understanding authentic speech since the characteristics of classroom language and those of authentic language are often quite different.

The results of this study suggest that the use of intuited lexicalized chunks that are presented in textbooks and recommended by ESL teachers do not contribute to the learners' exposure of authentic and natural language use which consequently can be a major factor in a learner's success. In other words, teaching and learning lexicalized chunks of language that are not produced by native speakers themselves cannot lead to native-like fluency of the language. "Exposure to a non-target variety cannot lead to the acquisition of the target variety...classroom learners cannot learn the language of outside-the-classroom if they are not exposed to it" (Lightbown, 1985, p. 265). If students are only exposed to classroom language, they may encounter many difficulties in comprehending native speaker language when trying to communicate with others outside the classroom. Language production is only part of the problem. Lexicalized stems may help students to get their point across and communicate adequately, but they certainly do

not prepare students for the language that they must comprehend when native English speakers speak to them. “Textbooks and the sheltered language they provide have their place in the classroom, but there is a gap between communicative competence as measured in textbook tasks and as needed by [EFL students]” (Spelleri, 2002).

The predictions of ESL teachers were included in this study which not many studies in the past have done. Including these predictions is particularly important since the ESL teacher is an important resource in the classroom. Most ESL teachers make use of their intuition to change or adapt ESL materials in an attempt to better suit the needs of their students and classes (Gabrielatos, 2002). The basis of the changes made to ESL classroom materials is often a teacher’s intuition. However, intuition can either come from an intuition about what native speakers would say in certain situations or from an intuition about what is easily and efficiently taught and learned in the classroom. Time is such a major factor for both the teacher and the student that, sometimes efficiency can often be the deciding factor in what is taught and how it is taught.

Another possibility is that a teacher’s intuition is affected by the ESL materials themselves. If a broad range of ESL textbooks teach lexicalized chunks in giving advice tasks, for example, it is possible that a teacher’s “intuition” can be coloured by the language presented in ESL materials. In other words, if textbooks recommend a certain formula repeatedly, both native English speaking teachers and non-native English speaking teachers are most certainly going to be affected by this since textbooks are such an important classroom tool. Even though this study was not focusing specifically on this issue, the fact that the data from the ESL teachers and the ESL textbooks resemble each other much more than they do the data from the native speakers certainly points to this

possibility. So the question remains: to what degree are ESL teachers' intuitions informed by exposure to ESL textbooks that are not based on actual native speaker production data? And in turn, how does this affect L2 learners?

### *Limitations of This Study*

There were only 16 native speaker participants who produced the corpus for this study, all of whom live in and work in the New England area of the United States. Due to the small number of participants and the fact that they are all from the same area of the U.S., the results of the study cannot be generalized with much confidence since there is a possibility that aspects of the native speaker data occurred due to regional characteristics of the language. Instead, the results are merely implications towards possible future research. The relationships of the participants may also have an effect on the language produced. All of the participants knew one another; the relationships among the participants varied from family members to casual acquaintances. Some pairings among people unknown to one another might have been interesting to include in order to investigate whether or not the formality or informality of the relationship of the interlocutors has an effect on the language produced. In future studies involving native speaker production, more participants are desirable as is a geographical variety of English in order to try to avoid possible effects of regional idiosyncrasies in the language of the participants.

The ESL textbooks used in the study include a variety of American, British and Canadian publications. Initially only American English textbooks were planned to be included but not enough different American English textbooks could be found at the time

of this study. In another study, more effort to use texts including corpus samples of native speaker English or even authentic native speaker audio texts would be recommended. Even though this study included an analysis of 32 ESL textbooks, including a larger selection in subsequent studies would improve the generalizability of the findings.

Nineteen ESL teachers participated in the study. The design of the questionnaires used in this study did not encourage the scope and breadth of data that was desired. The questionnaires were intentionally brief in their instructions so as not to influence the teachers' responses in any way. But the consequent language produced from the questionnaires was also somewhat brief. There is no guarantee that the language the teachers provided in the questionnaires matches what they would actually teach in class, and there is no guarantee that the teachers took the time to give thorough and exhaustive answers. Therefore, a different design would be preferable in subsequent studies that would encourage a more in depth analysis and response from the teachers. For example, asking teachers to design lesson plans around the topics being studied might encourage more "accurate" predictions of what language teachers would typically teach. Designing a lesson plan is an activity that may better tap the teacher "mode" than simply filling in a questionnaire about a few ESL activities.

Another possible alternative could be to record teachers actually conducting lessons about certain topics which could then be used as a type of "authentic" corpus of classroom language. This type of corpus could then be compared to the data of native speakers completing the activities the teachers used in the recorded lessons. Designing the study in this manner would serve to bring the elicitation contexts even closer than was done in the current study.

### *Future Research*

Research has yet to determine how the elicitation context affects language production. In other words, research has not yet explored native speaker production in different contexts. This study attempted to determine what language native speakers would say in reference to two topics in a classroom-like setting. If the language was elicited in a more “natural” context, for example, asking people on the street for directions, would the language produced in these two settings be similar or different? And how would this affect pedagogical materials and language teaching?

An extension to this study would be to record ESL learners completing the series of giving advice tasks and the giving directions tasks, transcribe the language produced, and conduct a comparison to the ESL teacher predictions and ESL textbook recommendations. It would be interesting to see if the ESL teachers and ESL textbooks would compare more favorably with the ESL student production than they did to the native speaker production in this study to determine whether or not students are mimicking the structures and patterns taught to them in the classroom or whether they are using language more creatively, which is to say, they are using language successfully but not necessarily strictly through the use of the linguistic patterns and lexical items taught in class.

### *Pedagogical Implications*

“The aim of language use is not simply to be understood, but to make it impossible to be misunderstood” (Higgs, 1985, p. 293). If textbooks and teachers are recommending and teaching language that does not conform to native speaker use simply

because some patterns of language use are more efficient to teach and learn than other patterns or due to a lack of knowledge or resources about native speaker use, how is the language learner to learn the language and then produce it effectively outside the classroom? For many L2 learners, the teacher and the textbook represent their major linguistic resources. At present, very few textbooks, and most likely few ESL teachers, help language learners to distinguish which target language patterns are more communicatively important than other target language patterns (DeVito, 1991, p.383). Consequently, students are left to deal with lexical items, grammatical structures and syntactic structures that are given equal attention in ESL textbooks which implies that “various grammatical patterns are equally generalizable, equally important communicatively, and equally productive in the target language, which is, of course, simply not true” (DeVito, 1991, p.383). Until teachers and textbooks accurately present native speaker use, L2 learners will continue to produce unrealistic uses of the language that is contextually inappropriate and semantically awkward. Obviously not all language can be learned or taught in its “natural” context 100% of the time. But what is important is to place learned language within an appropriate semantic and sociolinguistic context at some point in the learning stage to help students conform and streamline their language skills to help ensure their ultimate communicative competence outside the classroom.

### *Conclusion*

This study attempted to answer the following questions: 1) Do ESL textbooks present language that coincides with native speaker production in relation to two types of tasks—giving advice and giving directions? 2) Do ESL teachers predict language that

coincides with native speaker production in relation to two types of tasks—giving advice and giving directions?

What was found was that for these two tasks, the language recommended in the ESL textbooks included in this study and the language predicted by the ESL teacher participants do not resemble language that is similar to native speaker production in a classroom-like setting. Consequently, ESL learners may be taught language that is not typical of native speaker use and may therefore be contextually and semantically inappropriate in reference to giving advice and giving directions.

The results of this study suggest that more materials based on native speaker corpora are desired. ESL materials that are written and lessons that are taught based on intuition may not be providing students with communicatively useful language since textbook language often does not conform to native-like patterns of use.

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## Appendix A

### Basic prompt – giving advice

**A. What Should I Do?** Read the following situations and think of advice for each one.

**B. Giving Advice.** Student A gives advice for one of the situations. Student B will agree or disagree with the advice and then give his or her advice. Exchange roles.

**Situation 1:** Michael wants to see the video *Allen*.

**Situation 2:** Tim is under a lot of stress.

**Situation 3:** Pam is having trouble sleeping.

**Situation 4:** Harrison wants to stop smoking.

**Situation 5:** Brandon has to write a paper about modern art.

**Situation 6:** Wei wants to get a better score on the TOEFL exam.

**Situation 7:** Nadia needs information about cultural differences in attitudes towards health.

**Your situation:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### More Complex prompt – giving advice

# Ask Alice

Do you read advice columns in newspapers and magazines?  
Do you think they are helpful to everyone who reads them?

**Dear Alice,**  
Someone told me that my brother's girlfriend was dating another guy. I felt I should let my brother know, and after I did, he confronted her with the story. Although she denied it, it caused a terrible argument and they almost broke up. Now it turns out that the rumor wasn't true, and my brother has stopped speaking to me.

*Distraught Sister*

**Dear Alice,**  
I was at a friend's house for dinner recently. During dinner, I accidentally broke a beautiful vase. It was my friend's favorite wedding present. I offered to pay for it, but she refused. Should I have insisted? I still feel bad about it.

*Feeling Guilty*

**Dear Alice,**  
My son is 23 years old. He finished college last year, but he can't seem to find a job that he likes. He still lives at home, and I'm worried that he's not trying hard enough to get a job and be on his own. Meanwhile, I've been cooking his meals and doing his laundry.

*Tired Mom*

**Dear . . . ,**  
You're making it too easy for him to stay where he is. Be firm and tell him he has two months to find a job (any job) and get his own place. He's old enough to take care of himself – but you have to be willing to let him go.

*Alice*

**Dear . . . ,**  
You should have thought more carefully before you acted. It wasn't necessary to get angry. Next time, speak to the child immediately and warn him or her not to do it again.

*Alice*

**Dear . . . ,**  
Well, you learned a lesson. You shouldn't have listened to gossip. And you shouldn't have passed it on. Now you have to repair the damage. Apologize sincerely and hope that he will forgive and forget.

*Alice*

**Dear . . . ,**  
I think you did the right thing. It was important to offer to pay for it, but it's not surprising that she refused. Perhaps you could give her a special gift to make up for it.

*Alice*

**A** Read the letters to the "Ask Alice" advice column and Alice's replies. Match the letters with the replies.

**B Pair work** Talk about these questions.

1. Do you agree with the advice in the letters? What advice would you give?
2. Think of a problem you or a friend is having. Ask your partner for advice.

## Appendix C

### Real Life prompt – giving advice

**A Pair work** Read these letters that teenagers wrote to an advice columnist. Choose one of the letters and discuss suggestions for the problem. Then write your own reply.

*A friend of mine seems anxious a lot. She pushes herself really hard and looks tired all the time. How can I help her?*

*Worried*

*I argue with my family all the time, but I like to get along with them better. It's hard for me to see all my friends getting along so well with their families. What can I do?*

*Frustrated*

**B Group work** Take turns reading your advice. Whose advice is best? Why?

## Appendix D

### Basic Prompt – giving directions

**B. Information Gap.** Work with a partner. One of you works with the map on this page. The other works with the map on page 218. Don't look at your partner's map. Take turns. Ask and answer questions about the location of buildings. Put letters on your map.

**Example:** A: Where's Sam's Store?

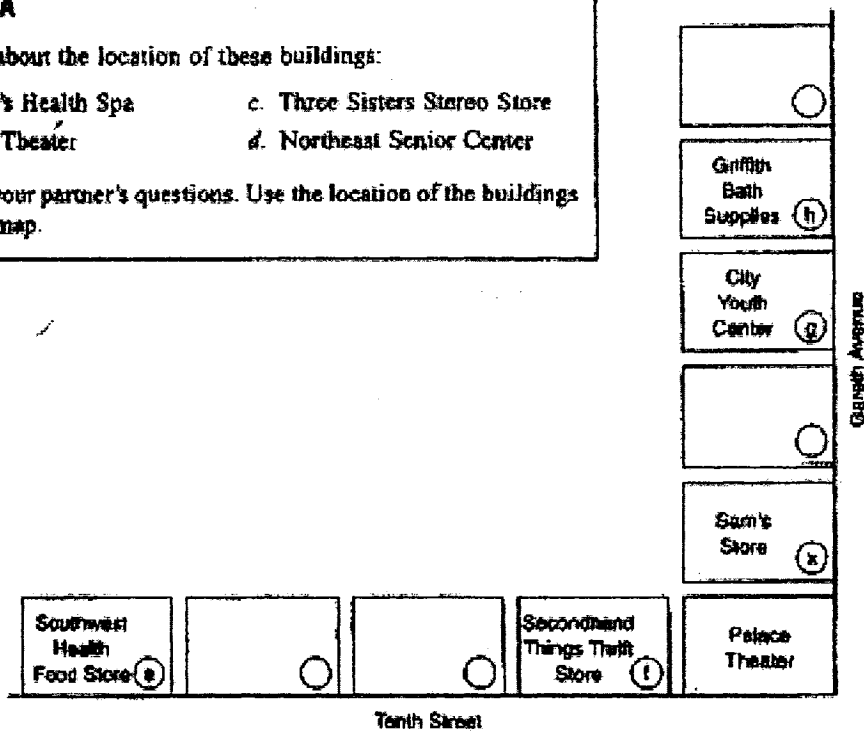
B: It's on Gareth Avenue. It's the second building from the corner.

#### Student A

You ask about the location of these buildings:

- a. Beth's Health Spa
- b. City Theater
- c. Three Sisters Stereo Store
- d. Northeast Senior Center

Answer your partner's questions. Use the location of the buildings on your map.



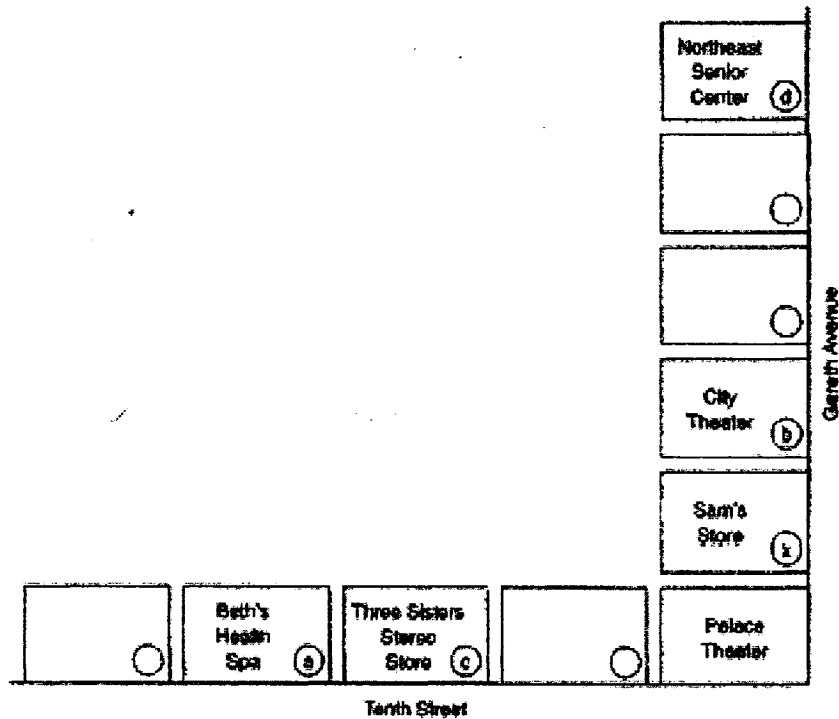


**Student B**

You ask about the location of these buildings:

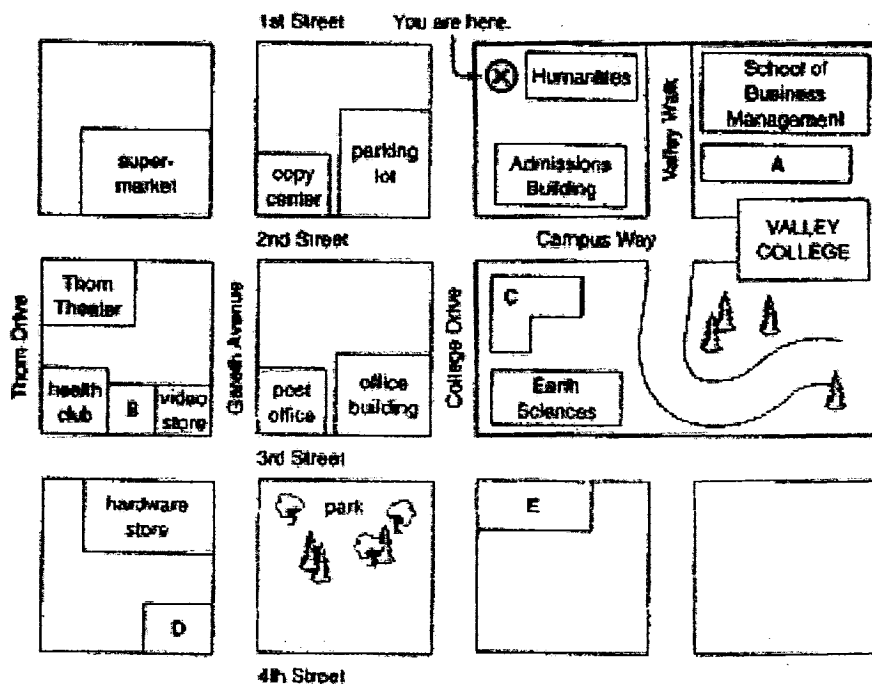
- e. Southwest Health Food Store
- f. Secondhand Things Thrift Store
- g. City Youth Center
- h. Griffith Bath Supplies

Answer your partner's questions. Use the location of the buildings on your map.



## Appendix E

More complex and Real-life prompts – giving directions



### A: Asking for and Giving directions:

1. Use the map above to ask for and give directions.

### B. Talking about your neighborhood:

1. Think of two or three places near your home, school or work place. Then practice asking for and giving directions to these places.
2. Draw a map of the neighborhood around your home, school or work place. Use it with your partner. Practice asking for and giving directions.

## Appendix F

### Questionnaire for Native English Speakers

#### Biographical Data:

Age:

Gender:

Birth place:

Native language:

Occupation:

Please carefully read the instructions provided for each exercise. With a partner, complete the exercises as outlined in the instructions.

You will be recorded as you complete the exercises. At a later date the recording will be transcribed and then analyzed as part of an MA thesis at Concordia University. Please understand that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time during the exercises. What you say during the recordings is confidential. The data gathered from the recording may be published.

## Appendix G

### Questionnaire for ESL teacher participants

Biographical data:

Age:

Gender:

Birthplace:

Native language:

Total number of years teaching ESL:

Name of workplace:

Please take a look at the three activities on the following pages which have been taken from intermediate level ESL textbooks. What would you teach preceding these activities? In other words, what grammar, lexical items, expressions, idioms, formulas, etc. would you include in a lesson preceding these activities that would aid the students in successful completion of these exercises?

(These instructions were provided twice; once for the giving directions tasks and again for the giving advice tasks.)

## Appendix H

### Textbook List for Giving Advice

- Azar, B. S. (1999). *Understanding and using English grammar*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Doff, A., & Jones, C. (2000). *Language in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frazier, L., & Mills, R. (1998). *NorthStar: Basic*. White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Gershon, S., & Mares, C. (2002). *English upgrade*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- Hartman, P., & Blass, L. (2000). *Quest 1*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hopkins, A., & Potter, J. (2000). *Look ahead*. Essex: Longman.
- McKay, I. (1999). *Have your say*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Paul, D. (1994). *Communicate*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Raimes, A. (1990). *How English works*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Richards, J. (1997). *New interchange 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Savage, K., Gonzalez, P., & McMullin, M. (1996). *Crossroads café*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Schoenberg, J. (2004). *Speaking of values*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Soars, J., & Soars, L. (2000). *Headways pre-intermediate*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Solorzano, H., & Schmidt, J. (1998). *NorthStar: Intermediate*. White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Viney, P. (2004). *Survival English*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- Wallwork, A. (1997). *Discussion A-Z*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Appendix I

### Textbook List For Giving Directions

- Adams, C., & Toyama, S. (1997). *Journeys*. Hong Kong: Pearson Education.
- Cellman, C., & Kharde, L. (1988). *On course*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cunningham, S., & Moor, P. (2001). *Cutting edge*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Gershon, S., & Mares, C. (2002). *English upgrade*. Oxford: Macmillan.
- Hadfield, J., & Hadfield, C. (1999). *Oxford basics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hartmann, P., & Blass, L. (2000). *Quest 2*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hutchinson, T. (1997). *Lifelines: Intermediate*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Littlejohn, A., & Hicks, D. (1996). *Cambridge English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McArthur, D. (1993). *English for living and working in Canada*. Toronto: Act of Learning.
- McCarthy, M., & O'Dell, F. (2000). *Basic vocabulary in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Paul, D. (1994). *Communicate*. Oxford: Macmillan.
- Richards, J., & Barbisan, C. (2004). *Connect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J., & Bycina, D. (1985). *Person to person*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Soars, L., & Soars, J. (2000). *New headway: Elementary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tanaka, G., & Ferrell, K. (1998). *English extra*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Willis, J., & Willis, D. (1988). *Collins COBUILD English course*. London: William Collins Sons.
- Viney, P. (2004). *Survival English*. Oxford: Macmillan.

## Appendix J

### *Frequency Counts (Raw Numbers and Percentages) of Occurrences of Syntactic Categories Found in Giving Location Directions for Three Groups*

Syntactic categories	Native speakers (16 in total)		ESL teachers (19 in total)		ESL textbooks (19 in total)	
imperative	143	22.1%	45	31.5%	112	43.2%
You+VP	266	41.1%	3	2.1%	18	6.9%
Sentence 1&2	166	25.7%	31	21.7%	69	26.6%
(AdvP)+PP	20	3.1%	54	37.8%	48	18.5%
NP+(PP)	8	1.3%	10	7.0%	12	4.6%
others	44	6.8%	0	0	0	0
totals	647		143		259	

## Appendix K

*Frequency Counts (Raw Numbers and Percentages) of Syntactic Structures Occurring in the Data for Giving Advice for Three Groups*

Syntactic categories	Native speakers		ESL teachers		ESL textbooks	
Modals	251	47.1%	56	70.9%	155	69.5%
Imperative	221	41.5%	1	1.3%	40	17.9%
NP	15	2.8%	0	0	0	0
Why don't you	1	0.2%	5	2.2%	5	2.2%
There is/are	2	0.4%	0	0	0	0
Infinitive	8	1.5%	0	0	0	0
Subjunctive	6	1.1%	8	10.1%	12	5.4%
Simple present	29	5.4%	0	0	0	0
What about...	0	0	1	1.3%	2	0.9%
It's a good idea...	0	0	0	0	2	0.9%
It's advisable to...	0	0	0	0	1	0.4%
Have you...	0	0	3	3.8%	3	1.3%
How about...	0	0	1	1.3%	2	0.9%
What if you...	0	0	1	1.3%	0	0
Why not try...	0	0	1	1.3%	0	0
I recommend+NP	0	0	2	2.5%	1	0.4%
totals	533		79		223	



## Appendix L

*Frequency Table of Lexical Items Occurring in the Syntactic Category Imperative Found in Giving Location Directions for Three Groups*

Imperative	Native speakers (15 in total)		ESL teachers (15 in total)		ESL textbooks (14 in total)	
take	54	38.6%	3	7.0%	12	10.7%
go	49	35.0%	15	34.9%	52	46.4%
come	9	6.4%	0	0	1	0.9%
make	4	2.9%	0	0	3	2.7%
cross	3	2.1%	0	0	1	0.9%
turn	0	0	17	39.5%	32	28.6%
walk	0	0	7	16.3%	6	5.4%
continue	5	3.8%	0	0	1	0.9%
count	2	1.4%	0	0	0	0
stop	2	1.4%	0	0	0	0
follow	1	0.7%	0	0	1	0.9%
drive	1	0.7%	0	0	1	0.9%
keep	0	0	1	2.3%	2	1.8%
look	2	1.4%	0	0	0	0
head	2	1.4%	0	0	0	0
stand	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0
leave	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0
hang	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0
travel	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0
pedal	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0
wait	1	0.7%	0	0	0	0

## Appendix M

*Frequency Counts (Raw Numbers and Percentages) of Lexical Items Found in the Head Noun Phrase of Syntactic Category Sentence 1 from Giving Location Directions for Three Groups*

Head noun phrase	Native speakers (16 in total)		ESL teachers (9 in total)		ESL textbooks (17 in total)	
It	94	56.6%	29	93.5%	38	52.1%
Place name	39	23.5%	1	3.2%	17	23.3%
There	10	6.0%	1	3.2%	17	23.3%
That	23	13.9%	0	0	1	1.4%
totals	166		31		73	

## Appendix N

### *Frequency of Prepositions Occurring in the Giving Directions Data of All Three Groups*

Prepositions	Native speakers		ESL teachers		ESL textbooks	
1. Over	6	0.93%	1	1.1%	1	0.5%
2. On	147	22.7%	37	38.9%	58	27.9%
3. Down	28	4.3%	0	0	8	3.8%
4. Past	5	0.77%	1	1.1%	11	5.3%
5. To	75	11.6%	6	6.3%	20	9.6%
6. At	22	3.4%	4	4.2%	9	4.3%
7. Onto	45	7.0%	2	2.1%	3	1.4%
8. Up	25	3.9%	0	0	9	4.3%
9. From	11	1.7%	0	0	0	0
10. Of	7	1.1%	0	0	7	3.4%
11. In	6	0.9%	0	0	1	0.5%
12. Next to	3	0.5%	12	12.6%	14	6.7%
13. Next door to	3	0.5%	2	2.1%	0	0
14. Before	2	0.3%	0	0	3	1.4%
15. Beside	3	0.5%	2	2.1%	0	0
16. Above	3	0.5%	0	0	0	0
17. After	4	0.6%	1	1.1%	3	1.4%
18. Ahead	2	0.3%	0	0	0	0
19. Around	1	0.2%	0	0	1	0.5%
20. Between	1	0.2%	8	8.4	7	3.4%
21. Behind	1	0.2%	1	1.1%	5	2.4%
22. Out	26	4.0%	0	0	2	1.0%
23. By	2	0.3%	0	0	3	1.4%
24. Through	21	3.2%	0	0	3	1.3%
25. Across	5	0.8%	0	0	0	0
26. In front of	5	0.8%	2	2.1%	6	2.9%
27. Across from	3	0.5%	5	5.3%	0	0
28. Opposite	1	0.2%	4	4.2%	7	3.4%
29. Under	2	0.3%	0	0	1	0.5%
30. Into	9	1.4%	0	0	6	2.9%
31. Off	1	0.2%	0	0	2	1.0
32. Toward	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0
33. Prior to	1	0.2%	0	0	0	0
34. Near	0	0	5	5.2%	9	4.3%
35. Along	0	0	2	2.1%	6	2.9%
36. In back of	0	0	0	0	1	0.5%
37. Close to	0	0	0	0	2	1.0%
38. In the middle of	0	0	0	0	1	0.5%
totals	477		95		209	

## Appendix O

### *Frequency Counts of Lexical Items Occurring in the Syntactic Category Modals in Giving Advice for Three Groups*

Modals	Native speakers		ESL teachers		ESL textbooks	
Should	52	20.7%	25	44.6%	87	56.1%
Would	85	33.9%	8	14.3%	11	7.1%
Could	26	10.4%	5	8.9%	3	1.9%
Ought to	1	0.4%	7	12.5%	22	14.2%
Have to	19	7.6%	4	7.1%	11	7.1%
May	2	0.8%	1	1.8%	0	0
Might	20	8.0%	1	1.8%	3	1.9%
Can	8	3.2%	2	3.6%	0	0
Must	1	0.4%	1	1.8%	0	0
Had better	1	0.4%	0	0	17	11.0%
Shall	1	0.4%	0	0	0	0
Need to	35	13.9%	2	3.6%	1	0.6%
totals	251		56		155	

## Appendix P

*Formula Types Found in the Native Speaker Data, the Number of Tokens and Frequency of Occurrence*

Formula types	# of tokens	# of speakers	Frequency of occurrence
1. Take a left/right	103	15	15.91
2. On the left/right	25	9	3.86
3. On your left/right	25	12	3.86
4. To your left/right	4	3	0.62
5. Come out	13	5	2.01
6. Follow that	4	3	0.62
7. Go down	15	9	2.32
8. Keep going	4	3	0.62
9. Go up	10	5	1.55
10. Go straight	8	6	1.24
11. Go to	5	3	0.77
12. Continue on	4	2	0.62
13. Go through	13	7	2.01
14. Go out	4	3	0.62
15. Go all the way	3	2	0.46
16. Turn left/right	2	2	0.31
17. Cross over	3	2	0.46
18. Get out	2	2	0.31
19. You get to	13	9	2.01
20. You come to	12	7	1.85
21. You will come to	14	5	2.16
22. Going to come to	5	4	0.77
23. Get in	2	2	0.31
24. Going to see	3	3	0.46
25. You will see	2	2	0.31
26. Take another left/right	4	3	0.62
27. Get off	3	2	0.46
28. You'll be	7	3	1.08
29. Come up	2	2	0.31
30. Across from	4	3	0.62
31. To the end	4	3	0.62
32. In front of	4	4	0.62
33. At the end of	2	2	0.31
34. Into the center	2	2	0.31
35. On the corner of	7	7	1.08
36. Across the street	4	3	0.62
37. At the corner	6	3	0.93
38. Next to	4	3	0.62
39. Down from	2	2	0.31
40. From the left/right	4	4	0.62
41. Up from	4	3	0.62
Total of tokens	361		55.80

## Appendix Q

### *Formula Types Found in the Giving Advice Data, the Number of Tokens and the Frequency of Occurrence*

Formula types	# of tokens	# of speakers	Frequency of occurrence
1. Should (not) be	7	4	1.31
2. Should get	3	3	0.56
3. Should tell	2	2	0.38
4. Should have	2	2	0.38
5. Should go	3	3	0.56
6. Should help	2	2	0.38
7. Should take	2	2	0.38
8. Should try	3	3	0.56
9. Would be	6	5	1.13
10. Would suggest	6	4	1.13
11. Would ask	3	2	0.56
12. Would say	3	2	0.56
13. Would want	2	2	0.38
14. Would try to	4	4	0.75
15. Would tell	6	4	1.13
16. Would advise	4	3	0.75
17. Would go	2	2	0.38
18. Would (not) do	3	3	0.56
19. Would (not) let	3	2	0.56
20. Try to	23	15	4.32
21. Talk to	10	4	1.88
22. Give her	2	2	0.38
23. Offer to	2	2	0.38
24. Talk with	4	2	0.75
25. Let her know	2	2	0.38
26. Do something	7	2	1.31
27. Go to	17	7	3.19
28. Get some	5	4	0.94
29. See if	3	2	0.56
30. Support him	2	2	0.38
31. Look at	3	2	0.56
32. Go ahead	3	2	0.56
33. Learn how	3	2	0.56
34. Find out	7	4	1.31
35. Work on	3	2	0.56
36. Come back	2	2	0.38
37. Could help	2	2	0.38
38. Could read	2	2	0.38
39. Could go	5	4	0.94
40. Need to do	4	4	0.75
41. Need to make	2	2	0.38
42. Need to take	4	2	0.75
43. Need to talk	2	2	0.38
44. Need to get	3	2	0.56
45. Might want to	4	4	0.75
46. Might be	5	2	0.94
47. Should go to	2	2	0.38
48. Try to find out	2	2	0.38
Total of tokens	201		37.71