

Abstract

Framed within a sociocultural theoretical approach (Vygotsky, 1978) applied to the field of second language learning (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006), this doctoral dissertation aims to investigate the development of sociopragmatic awareness among Danish learners of Spanish as a foreign language in a university context during the implementation of a pedagogical intervention specifically designed for this purpose. Inspired by the methodological principles related to design-based research (Brown, 1992; Collins, 1992), a pedagogical intervention is designed, implemented in two different contexts, and evaluated. During the intervention, through participation in different types of sessions, students can find opportunities for developing a better understanding of the social and cultural norms that manifest themselves in language use and their social effect in verbal interaction. Applying a blended-learning approach (Helm, 2013; Belz, 2006) three different, but interconnected types of sessions take place through the academic semester: telecollaborative sessions with native speakers of Spanish; explicit instruction sessions on sociopragmatics; and group reflection sessions among Danish students. The group reflection sessions offer students opportunities of interpreting intercultural verbal interaction from their own telecollaborative experience by using the theoretical principles and concepts from the explicit instruction that are related to the study of politeness from a sociocultural approach (Bravo, 2002, 2005; Bravo and Briz, 2004).

Following a qualitative case study methodology (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015) and a microgenetic data analysis approach (Wersch, 1985), the data collected during the group reflection sessions and the final interviews with 11 students in the two different implementations are analyzed and evidence the role that participation in each of these sessions plays in the process of developing second-language sociopragmatic awareness. By using language as a mediational tool, *languaging* (Swain, 2006), during participation in collaborative dialogue (Swain and Watanabe, 2013), students find opportunities of reconstructing and contextualizing their telecollaborative intercultural experience, interpreting this interaction through theoretical sociopragmatic concepts introduced in the explicit instruction sessions and co-constructing sociopragmatic meaning through participation in group reflection sessions. Results show sociopragmatic awareness development, as shown in the students' verbalizations, as a cognitive, social and emotional activity mediated by the use of language and social interaction.