Theorizing on Meaning-Making in Classroom Interaction Using "Critical Presuppositions-To-Theory" (C-PRETTY) Research

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Abstract

The paper proposes "Critical Presuppositions-To-Theory" (C-PRETTY) research as a new form of qualitative inquiry due to the realized challenges of grounded theory and the seemingly barren domain of theory building. The C-PRETTY serves as a special type of qualitative inquiry that focuses on *critical presuppositional framework* and *critical presuppositions* as the primary theoretical and methodological compass during the zigzagging data gathering and analysis. Guided by these, observations of two English classrooms, interviews with their teacher, and focus group discussions with the students were done to investigate classroom interaction with the belief that there is an exigency to create a contextualized theory to better depict the contextual realities of meaning-making as an integral part of classroom learning. The theory generated has been formalized as the *Multi-Layered Symbiotic Process of Meaning-Making*, which proposes that meaning-making starts at an Interactional Reference Point (IRP) and is carried through five mediums: locutionary, kinesic, affective-prosodic, cultural, and physical-spatial. These mediums interact with the intermediary layers as meaning travels through them. The findings of this study bring forth new ways of theorizing and conducting investigations, especially in the realm of educational linguistics.

Introduction

Despite the vibrancy and dynamism of qualitative researchers utilizing varying methods to strengthen the potency of investigation, only limited approaches or methods have been actualized to build theories in specific contexts of realities. In fact, Shah and Corley (2006) stated that although many journal editors have desired to cast more attention to theory development, fewer studies of such have been actually undertaken. Theories are regarded to be the "currency of scholarly research" (Corley & Gioia, 2011, p. 12). Therefore, new practical methods to theory building have to be explored and carried out to fortify the methodological efficiency and reliability of theory development, especially within the planes of qualitative inquiry.

Glaser and Strauss (1967), even decades ago, raised already a similar point, prompting them to initiate a notable way of theory building, which has been termed as 'grounded theory.' They expressed their dissatisfaction with the current existing theories that prevailed in sociological research and contended to move from data to theory so that new theories could potentially emanate. Their notion was eventually accepted and applied in several disciplines and later became a distinct type of qualitative study. It even permutated to several versions (MacDonald, 2001) depending on the researcher's ontological and epistemological perspectives (Mills et al., 2006).

However, several criticisms have been hurled against grounded theory and even Strauss and Glaser, who started out as colleagues have separated ways out of ontological and epistemological differences with regard to the method and data analysis.

One of the usual criticisms of grounded theory is the indefiniteness of the time when the researcher has finally achieved the theoretical or data saturation, an important feature of grounded theory (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2018). Theoretical saturation is achieved only when there have been no new patterns expected

to emerge in dealing with the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and that the rigors of the constant comparative analysis of data have been obviously exhausted (Glaser, 1992). This, according to Gasson (2004), is highly iterative and exhaustive. In the same vein, Hussein et al. (2014) pointed out grounded theory as having a potential for methodological errors, multiple approaches that may yield to confusion, and limited generalizability, and for its application of reviewing the literature without assumptions.

Thus, we endeavor to address some of these criticisms by proposing a new method or approach in theory building essentially called the "Critical Presuppositions-To-Theory" research or "C-PRETTY" approach to qualitative inquiry whose goal is analogous to grounded theory. However, the C-PRETTY research will attempt to attain the theoretical saturation by constantly refining the presuppositions after looking into the emerging patterns in data collection and analysis, which are conducted simultaneously. This is to efficaciously and consistently juxtapose the presuppositions with the data and continually refine them until such time that the presuppositions emerge to be (a) convincing theory(ies) after confirming and interpreting the clear connection or interplay between and among the categories, themes, or patterns inherently found in the data.

Theoretical saturation then is achieved in a definite phase when the critical presuppositions found to be truthful in their context and that the emerging themes or categories are at least lucidly auxiliary to these critical assumptions. Meaning, the presuppositions crystallize themselves in the light of the data and become an established theory in its own context. The C-PRETTY approach is a new way of qualitative inquiry, which targets to build a 'contextualized theory' out of critical presuppositions.

Contextualized theories, nevertheless, do not hold the notional universalities of everything in a specific orbit of human knowledge. As the term itself suggests—'contextualized'—a theory that will have been formed by the C-PRETTY research holds true in its own bounds or in its very context. Despite that, a contextualized theory does not restrict itself merely in its context and can transcend across disciplines and other areas of understanding. This can be done if a contextualized theory is utilized in another
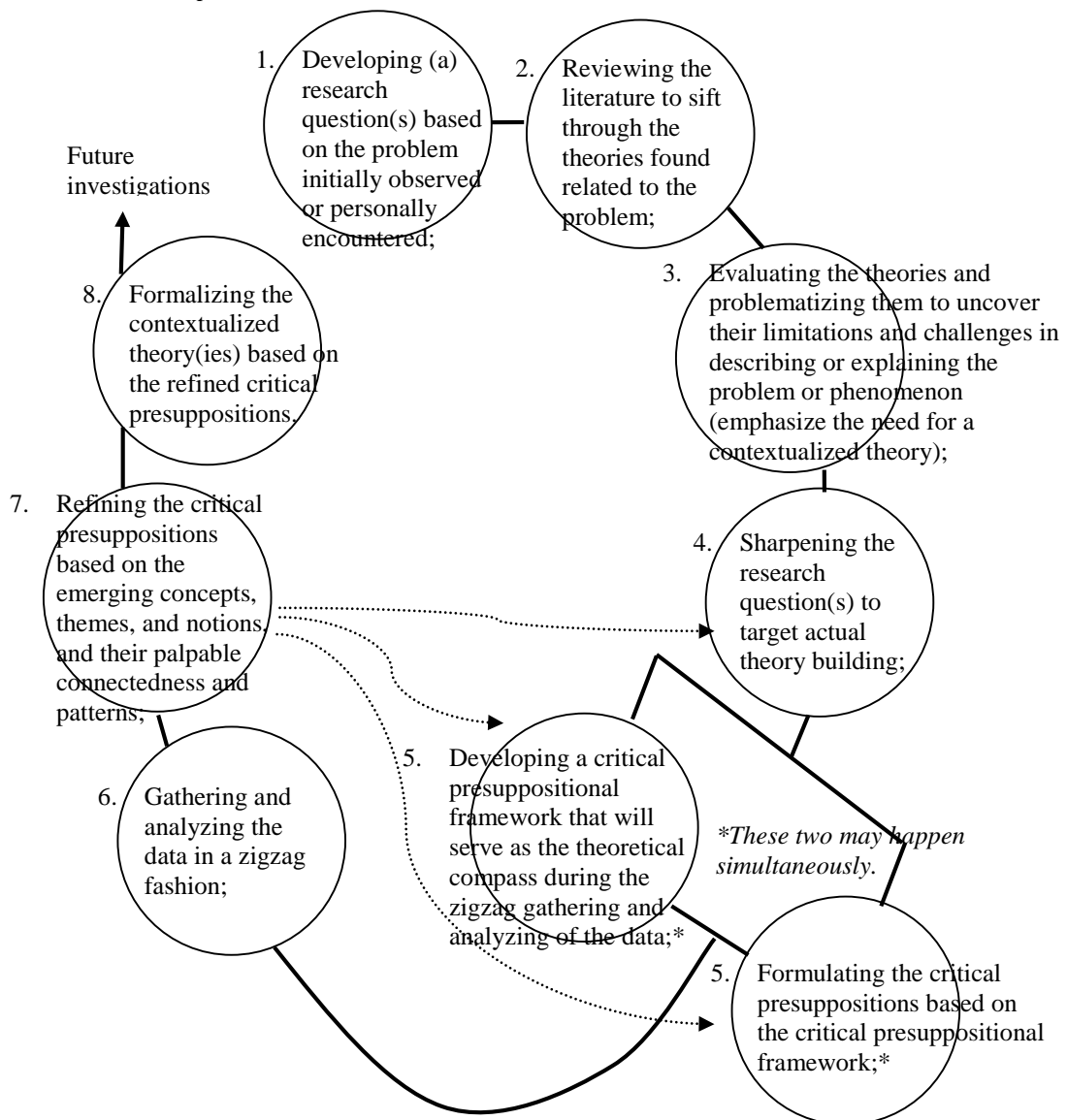
context in a future investigation and yields data and results that prove the theory's appropriateness and reliability. Should the theory transcend many fields of human psychological, social, philosophical, or even material knowledge only then will we behold the authentic capacity and utility of a theory; a contextualized theory then becomes a highly formalized theory with a sort of universal prowess to explicate broader realities or bigger human truths.

Crucial to this are critical presuppositions. Presuppositions are essential part of scientific investigations. Gay and Weaver (2011) argued that issues in research such as "definition, criteria, and purpose reflect an a priori commitment to certain presuppositional assumptions about what constitutes knowledge (epistemology), reality (metaphysics), the nature of being or existence (ontology), values (axiology), and other philosophical issues" (p. 24). In other words, theoretical presuppositions are but an inevitable part and parcel of any type of study that one wishes to undertake, be it quantitative or qualitative. All researchers are somewhat guided by a theoretical compass—consciously or unknowingly—as they navigate through the data or even at the onset of their scientific voyage.

Having explicated this, we maintain that the building of theory cannot come only from the data itself but from the interaction of the researcher with the data similar to what Charmaz (2000) posited in the light of the constructivist viewpoint on grounded theory. She stated that the data does not automatically offer a reality; rather the 'discovered' reality emerges from the interactive processes in its contextual factors (p. 524).

Hence, we further adhere to the belief that a researcher cannot come to the playing field blinded, unarmed, and incognizant of the surrounding circumstances of the issue they are investigating since the interaction with the data as what Charmaz (2002) suggested, can only be successful when the researcher is sufficiently informed. Having an informed mind before embarking on the actual data gathering in the C-PRETTY research means having an initial judicious evaluation of the problem or the subject in situ and attempting to find existing theories that will somehow capture a part of its reality, not its entirety. This is somewhat contradictory to what Glaser and Strauss (1967)

Figure 1
The C-PRETTY research process

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The C-PRETTY research process

1. Developing (a) research question(s) based on the problem initially observed or personally encountered;

2. Reviewing the literature to sift through the theories found related to the problem;

3. Evaluating the theories and problematizing them to uncover their limitations and challenges in describing or explaining the problem or phenomenon (emphasize the need for a contextualized theory);

4. Sharpening the research question(s) to target actual theory building;

5. Developing a critical presuppositional framework that will serve as the theoretical compass during the zigzag gathering and analyzing of the data;*

5. Formulating the critical presuppositions based on the critical presuppositional framework;*

These two may happen simultaneously.

6. Gathering and analyzing the data in a zigzag fashion;

7. Refining the critical presuppositions based on the emerging concepts, themes, and notions, and their palpable connectedness and patterns;

8. Formalizing the contextualized theory(ies) based on the refined critical presuppositions,

Future investigations

and Corbin and Strauss (2008) advocated in grounded theory, which underscores the avoidance of pre-conceived notions of the situation prior to the data analysis to evade pre-cogitated theories. That is why we categorically distinguish the C-PRETTY research as a separate type of qualitative inquiry although its genesis can be traced back to the tenets of grounded theory, specifically to its methodological criticisms.

Clearly, what set the C-PRETTY research as a distinct lens of qualitative studies are the critical presuppositions and the manner how a theory is formed.

We define critical presuppositions as a paramount element of the C-PRETTY research achieved by looking at the problem in its actuality as an initial phase and checking it against the intensive perusal of related existing theories. The intensive perusal of existing theories in relation to the problem being examined will make the presuppositions *critical.* In other words, critical presuppositions must be a product of judicious understanding of the problem and possible applicable theories before indulging into the inductive-to-deductive interpretive/descriptive process when the researcher finally dives into the zigzag analysis of the actual data. However, the existing theories found to be related have to serve as the basis for problematization of such theories and thus prompt the impetus to question the theories' capacity and extent in describing or explaining the phenomenon. The

problematization will then help the researcher point out the need for contextualized theories as they revise the initial research questions made. Problematization here, as argued, may question the institutionalized line of thinking and break the common notion of the majority (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011, p. 32). Problematizing the existing theories and the other remaining steps for the C-PRETTY research process are indicated schematically in Figure 1.

Literature Review

Admittedly, one of the factors that birthed to C-PRETTY is our contention that most of the gargantuan theories in classroom interactions do not fully capture the realities of classroom communication, specifically the context of meaning-making. Although there are a number of investigations conducted that endeavored to study meaning-making in classroom contexts (e.g. Maarof & Yaacob, 2011; Axelsson & Slotte, 2017), such studies had only used the existing theories that will better explain classroom interactions. What such academic feats have been trying to realize is to continually apply the already existing and established theories in classroom interactional situations in specific actualities.

For example, Pardede (2017) investigated meaning-making of diversity of education students' experience during a 10-day intensive program employing a constructivist educational viewpoint put forward by notable theorist John Dewey. The researcher derived valuable understanding through the constructivist scaffold and presented a dialogic approach in meaning-making. However, what the study actualized was to find the classroom fit for the theory it used, but not really to create a new theoretical perspective of the issue being investigated.

Similarly, Maarof and Yaacob (2011) tapped in the theory of interactive reading and other existing reading theories in their investigation whereas Ganapathy et al. (2017) used theories on multimodal learning to scrutinize meaning-making in their own pedagogical sphere. None of them seemingly attempted to establish a certain theory that will fully capture the classroom interaction in their specific contexts, particularly focusing on meaning-making as an integral part of learning.

Meaning-making, as used in the literature for a long time, has yielded a number of definitions. One of which is Charanchi's (2016) definition; he defined meaning-making as an event which "involves mental activities and processes of constructing or deconstructing meaning of any linguistic aspect by the language learner" (p. 145). Such a definition is contextual and is specifically applicable in a language classroom. However, other definitions of meaning-making, which involve larger and complex interactional and pedagogical aspects can be found in the literature such as Barber's (2009) study which circumscribed meaning-making as a process of "connection, application, and synthesis" as part of "integrative learning" (p. 6).

As for the classroom interaction, insightful findings about it have been brought about by plethora of scholarly studies such as the investigations of Scott and Mortimer (2005), Kupferberg et al. (2009), Watanabe (2016), and Hamre et al. (2013) whose scope and rigor are perhaps the widest for they "test[ed] a developmental framework of teacher effectiveness in over 4,000 classrooms" in the light of "teaching through interactions" framework.

Clearly enough, the constructivist view of learning has become the primary theory that most academic researchers have taken into account for quite a long time and even heavily affected the methodological aspect of scientific inquiry.

For instance, the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC), which is also called as Flanders Interaction Analysis System (FIAS) has long gained the attention of many academicians and has been extensively used in the field to understand and evaluate the student and teacher interaction.

FIAS/FIAC has been used since its early recognition in many scientific investigations, which looked into the dimensions of classroom behavior (Medley & Hill, 1969), the verbal interaction between and among student teachers and educators (Smith, 1976), and even the interaction of physical education teachers with the students (Ritson et al., 1982). Attention to FIAS as a major framework for analysis has not waned and continuously gained the focus of recent scholarly investigations (e. g. See & Lim, 2006; Li et al., 2011; Amatari, 2015; Sharma, 2016). However, even before, Walker and Adelman (1975) already pointed out the

limitations of FIAS in evaluating classroom interaction, especially of implicit "theory of instruction." He argued that alternative methods of observation have to be developed to fully evaluate the meaning of interaction.

Apart from Flanders' (1960) scholarly contribution, other methods of analysis have emerged that have served a great role in understanding the educative process. In the linguistic context, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, critical discourse analysis, and other pragmatically and socio-linguistically associated analyses have been applied to deepen and sharpen the scrutiny of classroom interactions, especially in line with meaning-making (see Maftoon & Shakouri, 2012; Sadeghi et al., 2012; Rogers et al., 2016).

Furthermore, another emerging perspective, which is strongly rooted from linguistics and has affected classroom praxis and ultimately the interaction that transpires therein, is the interactional sociolinguistics. Interactional sociolinguistics, as linked and associated to intercultural pragmatics, deals with "how language conveys meaning in interaction" (Tannen, 2005).

Tannen (2005) argued that researchers of interactional sociolinguistics tend to look into the intercultural interaction because meaning created through language out of this interaction appears lucidly on the surface. However, she noted that the role of linguistic processes in intercultural interaction as influenced by varied social factors shall also be taken into account.

Tannen's (2005) position on interactional sociolinguistics is essential in our attempt to create critical presuppositions on classroom interactional framework in relation to meaning-making. This is so because if the meaning is constructed through language as a 'dynamic' and 'emergent' product of interaction among participants and not from a 'single-handed linguistic production of individual speakers,' we can actually regard classroom interaction as a dynamic and interconnected communicative event involving all the participants.

Apart from the interactional sociolinguistics, classroom interactions have long been investigated using several theoretical scaffolds such as Searle's (1969) and Austin's (1956) Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987). While it is true that such theories have helped explained and described classroom interactions in considerable ways, their limitations in capturing the actual classroom interaction especially in the context of meaning-making and learning cannot be altogether jettisoned.

For example, the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary concepts in Speech Act Theory, which concerns how meanings are formed in its expressive sense (locutionary), the motive or intention of the speaker (illocutionary), and the perception of and action done by the message receiver (perlocutionary), do not fully capture a classroom interactional situation. This is said so due to the fact that meaning-making can transpire as these three acts—locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary—interact with one another and affect related meaning-making situation. For instance, when a language teacher says, "This is what you get for behaving the way you wanted to yesterday," it may create multiple meanings in the minds of the students and a perlocutionary concept of one student may affect their classmates' own perception. Assumingly, a student interprets it and whispers to John, "The teacher is angry," the perlocutionary act or perception of the student then becomes another linguistic item for locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary concept waiting for John's personal interpretation and for other students who might have heard the whisper. John's interpretation and of the ones who might have heard the whisper then will become another carrier of meaning expected to influence others' perlocutionary acts if it is uttered in a speaking situation. This shows that meaning is negotiated as the participants and communicators interact and interchangeably take the role of the producer and receiver of messages.

Similarly, Politeness Theory which suggests that speakers have this 'face' which is defined as "a public self-image" and that 'politeness' is "showing awareness and consideration for another person's face" (Yule, 2006, p. 119) seems to be problematic in many situations inside the classroom. The intended meaning of the teacher as constructed by their language is not consistently defined by the 'face-threatening act' or 'face-saving act' that they do in the actual teaching process. A teacher's 'face-threating act' that may assert authority can just be deemed as nice and a seemingly similar thing with 'face-saving act' because of the consensual context and of the mutual cultural factors of both the students and the teacher. For example, a teacher's utterance,

"Here we go again! You're late! Sit down!" can be regarded clearly as a 'face-threatening act', but if the students just take it lightly and are cognizant that it is an inherent part of the teacher's personality, the utterance can be taken as a normal teacher's parlance and a non-threatening expression. The communicative meaning then is apparently arbitrarily cultural and contextual.

Such limitations of the aforementioned theories can be attributed to the fact that classroom interaction is a special type of communicative event different from a normal typical conversation since there are learning and teaching elements and features involved in its very fabric of dynamism. Further, since Speech Act Theory and Politeness Theory were not cogitated in the context of the classroom itself, the assumption that they will not fully and consistently capture the contextual realities of classroom interaction is but inevitable. A contextualized theory then is needed to better explicate classroom interactions. The stance of many to rely heavily on the existing theories not initially crystallized in the actual classroom set-up but will serve as a point of reference for pedagogical research should be exigently reevaluated.

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

As discussed, we employed the C-PRETTY research as the design of this study with the chief aim of generating a theory that will explain meaning-making that transpires in classroom interaction. Although the C-PRETTY is still in its infancy, its nature and aims are qualitative in essence and so will be classified as such.

Crucial to the design is the critical presuppositonal framework. Thus, having informed of the major notions and assumptions of classroom interactions in relation to meaning making, we constructed a critical presuppositional framework that served as a helpful scaffold in attaining initial critical presuppositions.

Even so, this framework evolved just as anticipated with the critical presuppositions during the actual data gathering and analysis. The framework chiefly served as our system of synthesizing and connecting conceptual and theoretical assumptions, which helped us in angling the investigation to have a more guided exploration and creation of a contextualized theory.

Table 1 succinctly indicates how we implemented the different stages of the C-PRETTY research along with some notes.

Table 1
Implementation of the C-PRETTY research as a method and approach

Stages	Implementation
1. Developing (a) research question(s) based on the problem initially observed or personally encountered;	We formulated two initial research questions that focused on how meaning transpires in the classroom and how we can come up with a theory that will better explain meaning-making.
2. Reviewing the literature to sift through the theories found related to the problem;	We tried to zero in on meaning-making as it happens inside the classroom. Keywords such as *interaction* were also found in the literature, which further aided our sharpening of research questions. Theories that were found were mostly linguistic in nature, such as the *interactional linguistics* among others.
3. Evaluating the theories and problematizing them to uncover their limitations and challenges in describing or explaining the problem or phenomenon (emphasize the need for a contextualized theory);	We asked two major questions in problematizing each of the theories we had found: "Has this theory been formed in a classroom context? How does this theory fully capture classroom realities? Since we found that there is an apparent lack of theories that were generated in actual classroom contexts, we could now underscore the need to come up with a theory that is particularly focused on meaning-making and classroom interaction.

4.	Sharpening the research question(s) to target actual theory building;	After perusing the literature, we polished our research questions. We now asked, "How does meaning transpire through interaction in a language classroom?" and "What theory we can formulate that can best explicate this meaning-making in classroom interactions?"
5.	Developing a critical presuppositional framework that will serve as the theoretical compass during the zigzag gathering and analyzing of the data; and Formulating the critical presuppositions based on the critical presuppositional framework;	Informed by our personal experiences and guided by relevant ideas and insights derived from the literature, we devised a framework that initially explained meaning-making as it transpires in a classroom interaction. Then, we formulated critical presuppositions. The names or labels of the elements indicated in the framework were tentative and were expected to have changed during the actual data gathering and analysis. Developing a critical presuppositional framework and coming up with critical presuppositions can occur simultaneously or the theorizers can do one first before the other or vice-versa depending on how they deem to best realize them.
6.	Gathering and analyzing the data in a zigzag fashion;	We conducted first a classroom observation to initially investigate how meaning-making transpires in an actual classroom interaction and to determine the potential students who can participate in our focus group discussion (FGD). After this, interview data were sent to an intercoder for her independent analysis while we were also doing our own qualitative data analysis. Then, another classroom observation and batch of FGDs were done. Again, the data were sent to the same intercoder. After comparing our own data analysis with the intercoder's analysis and determining the areas and aspects on which we have to focus more, we interviewed the teacher and proceeded with another classroom observation. In this manner, we were actually gathering data and immediately analyzing them—a zigzag fashion of collecting and analyzing data, which is essential in efficaciously refining the framework and critical presuppositions or even in possibly re-sharpening the research questions initially formulated. (For the detailed process, see the Procedure.)
7.	Refining the critical presuppositions based on the emerging concepts, themes, and notions, and their palpable connectedness and patterns;	In this stage, we continually refined the framework and the critical presuppositions based on the themes generated by us and our intercoder. We then gave a tentative name for the theory. The name was "Multi-layered process of meaning-making."
8.	Formalizing the contextualized theory(ies) based on the refined critical presuppositions.	We finalized the name of the theory to be *"Multi-Layered Symbiotic Process of Meaning-Making"* to demonstrate the interplay of the elements found in the framework and the claims that have been put forward based on the critical presuppositions. We also consulted the two teachers involved in our study. We discussed with them the theory and employed a simple quantitative assessment of their confidence in the theory in explaining meaning-making in classroom interactions. This stage is called the Consensual Formalization of Theory. (For other details, see the Procedure.)

3.2 Participants

The participants in the study were two English language teachers and their classes; one taught Grade 8 class and the other Grade 6. At the time of data collection, the former class was composed of 28 students while the latter consisted of 24 students. Among the Grade 8 section, 15 of them participated in two batches of focus group discussions (FGDs). As to the Grade 6 class, 16 of them took part in two batches of FGDs. We purposively selected these learners based on their participation during the classroom observations conducted.

The students and teachers were from a small private school in Metro Manila in the Philippines.

3.3 Procedure

After securing necessary permission from the school authorities, explicit consent from the parents and the two teachers, and the students' assent, the first observation was done to Grade 6 English class. On the same day of the class observation, the first FGD was carried out with eight students. The selection of eight students was based on their participation, behavior, and performance during the class observation.

After the first FGD, the interview was translated and transcribed. The data then was given to the intercoder to look at the possible themes and categories to be coded. The intercoder has been a teacher of English language for six years and was oriented first prior to the actual coding process.

The second observation was done to the same Grade 6 English class and after which, the second recorded FGD was undertaken with another set of eight students. The interview was translated and transcribed and sent again to the intercoder for her independent analysis.

After her initial data evaluation, a developed tool for determining the confidence of the intercoder in relation to the themes and categories in the data was accomplished. We formulated this tool to determine the "Percentage of Confidence (PoC)" of the intercoder and checked it against our own independent coding of the data. PoC requires the intercoder to rate each element or category in critical presuppositional framework based on some given ordinal criteria: '4' for strongly confident, '3' for confident, '2' for doubtful, and '1' for strongly doubtful. The answer for each category or element is then divided by the total highest possible score for all elements and is multiplied by 100 (e.g. 4/20 x 100). Finally, PoC is computed by getting the sum of all the elements in critical presuppositional framework. Thus, in this study, after checking the intercoder's independent data analysis against the elements in the critical presuppositional framework that we discussed with her, her level of confidence reached 85%,

which is according to the developed tool can be regarded to be 'strongly confident.' The PoC range is as follows: 85-100= strongly confident; 75-84=confident; 50-74=slightly confident; 25-49=doubtful; 1-24=strongly doubtful.

After computing for the PoC, a one-on-one interview with the Grade 6 teacher was done. The 85% level of the intercoder's confidence prompted us also to continue the classroom observation by taking into consideration also the areas that the intercoder considered to be 'doubtful.' So, the third observation was done to Grade 8 English class, which followed by a recorded FGD with another set of eight students. Then, the transcribed and translated interview was sent to the intercoder for further evaluation while we also did our independent analysis. Finally, the fourth classroom observation and recorded FGD with seven students, and second one-on-one interview with the teacher were executed. The interview with the students and with the teacher was translated and transcribed, and was sent to the intercoder.

After the intercoder was done with the entire independent analysis and we also with our own data evaluation, we met with her and compared our codes and themes guided by the revised critical presuppositional framework. We discussed and we decided to collaboratively rate each element in the critical presuppositional framework using the PoC tool. The PoC now then yielded the Percentage of Consensual Confidence (PCC), the level of confidence emerged from our discussion with the intercoder. For this study, PCC reached 100%.

After reaching 100% of consensual confidence, we now discussed the critical presuppositional framework and the critical presuppositions with the two teachers who participated in the study. We also collaboratively rated each element in presuppositional framework and the critical presuppositions to get another PCC. In this process, a 100% of consensual confidence was reached anew. We propose this stage of C-PRETTy research as the Consensual Formalization of Theory; this is an essential stage as it actively involves the participants themselves in formalizing the theory per se.

Results and Discussion

We have named the theory that was formalized in this C-PRETTY research as the *Multi-Layered Symbiotic Process of Meaning-Making* given the contextual symbioses of the different factors and elements and their connections with one another as explored and examined in the study. The framework of this theory is indicated in Figure 2.

The following are the theoretical claims of the *Multi-Layered Symbiotic Process of Meaning-Making*, which emanated from the critical presuppositions that were formulated, revised, and crystalized during the actual data gathering and analysis.

1. Every classroom teaching and learning communicative event has an Interactional Reference Point (IRP). The IRP refers to the starting plane of the conversation where either the teacher or the student performs an activity (linguistic or not or multi-modal) that serves as an impetus for continuous flow of interactional situation.

2. Meaning is carried through several mediums such as: (a) locutionary, (b) kinesic, (c) affective-prosodic, (d) cultural, and (e) physical-spatial. Locutionary medium refers to the actual words uttered by the speaker, which intrinsically carries meaning. These actual words are carried through the kinesic medium (gestures, facial expressions, body movements, etc.) and affective-prosodic medium which refers to the intonation, tone, juncture, and volume that carry the affective (feelings and emotions) of the speaker. Meaning then travels through the cultural medium from the speaker to the receiver of the message; cultural medium is the carrier of meaning on the layer of shared beliefs, practices, and understandings of the participants in the communicative situation. Finally, physical-spatial medium carries meaning through the present spatial context and proxemics of the participants and the entire physical dynamics of the interactional event.

3. These mediums that carry meaning then interact with the Intermediary Layers (ILs), which now form the interplay of complex factors of meaning-making in the teaching and learning process. These intermediary layers, which subtly or overtly influence meaning-making, can be outlined in a consequential and causal arrangement such as follows: teacher's style and personality → pedagogical/instructional decisions→ social climate→ cognitive processes→ meaning-making. We contend that the teacher's style and personality do determine their pedagogical/instructional decisions not the other way around. For instance, in the classes involved in our study, the personality of the teachers determines the type of decisions—instructional or social—which they make

Figure 2
Schematic representation of the
Multi-Layered Symbiotic
Process of Meaning-Making
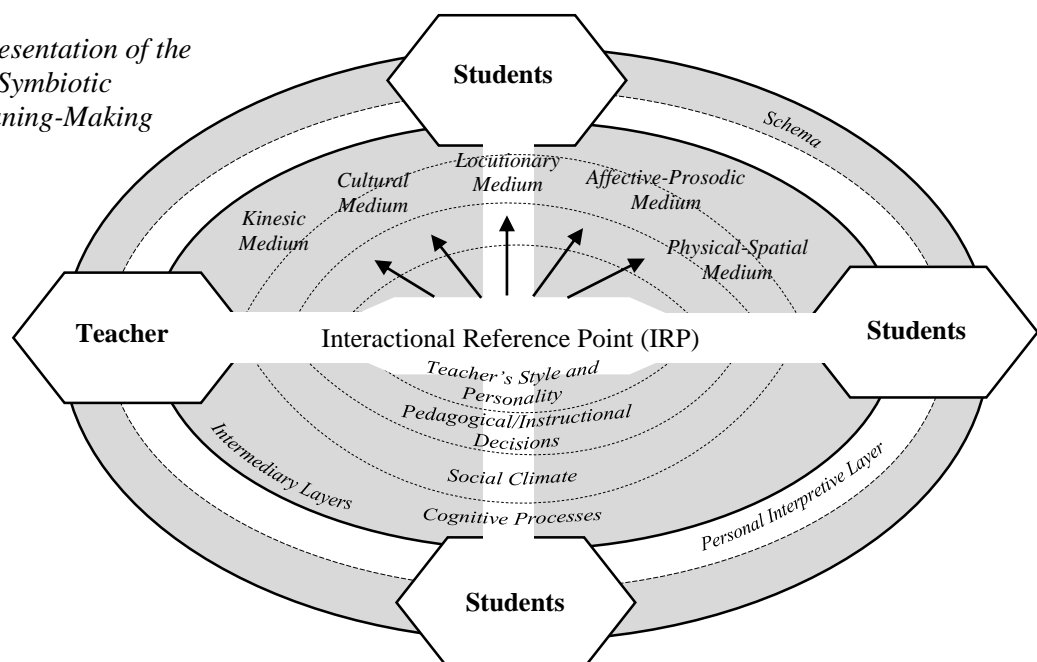
in the classroom, such as correcting an answer through jokes, giving comments and suggestions, smiling, etc. It is not the pedagogical decisions that determine the personality or style of the teacher. Similarly, the pedagogical/instructional decisions coupled with the teacher's style and personality impact greatly the social climate of the classroom—whether it is accepting, positive, nurturing, or emotionally damaging. We likewise contend that the social climate profoundly impacts the student cognitive processes, which closely influence the personal meaning-making of the students.

4. Meaning therefore resides both in the mediums as it interacts with the intermediary layers and in the personal interpretive layer of the receiver of message. It travels through the interactions and does not hold fixed interpretion until it reaches the receiver's final interpretive layer. Hence, meaning is also a product of the interactive process of the message and the receiver's schema. Then, as shown in the framework, the meaning made in the personal interpretive layer may be used by the receiver as they continuously participate in the interaction in the Intermediary Layers (ILs) of the entire classroom communication.

5. ILs are crucial factors in meaning-making as they refer to the activities shared by both the teacher and the students—in other words, the interlocutors—as meaning travels through the mediums. They are pivotal since we critically presume that meaningful ILs create the intended meaning of learning.

6. Thus, meaning-making as an integral aspect of learning happens in a multi-layered fashion as the teacher and the students interact with one another creating intermediary layers that influence each student's personal interpretive layer.

Conclusions & Recommendations

After having endeavored to initiate the C-PRETTY research as a new qualitative way of generating a contextualized theory, we have concluded that it is possible to create theories in a specific context by addressing the limitations and criticisms of grounded theory without losing scientific rigor. With this, we have somehow democratized theory creation and made it more appealing even to neophyte or greenhorn theorists and researchers, such as undergraduate and master students since the C-PRETTY, if implemented systematically, can be comparably manageable, efficient, and practical.

As one implication of the theory generated to classroom instruction, teachers must also focus on the other mediums that carry meaning in the classroom especially the seemingly neglected elements such as kinesic, affective-prosodic, and even cultural mediums, alongside the intermediary layers. Equipping the teachers with good or even great teaching strategies is not enough as the question now is how these teaching strategies are implemented by the teacher and thus help build significant meaning-making in the classroom. There shall be a serious focus now, as implied by the theory, on the teachers' manner of using the mediums and the intermediary layers that carry meaning in the classroom since meaning is often associated with learning. The findings then in this study were relevant in potentiating our ways of theorizing especially in the field of educational linguistics.

To end, we put forward three recommendatory remarks. First, a continuous application of the C-PRETTY in many areas of learning or disciplines should be desired since we believe that the C-PRETTY is still on its refining stage; hence, suggestions and even criticisms should help its sharpening and development. Second, the C-PRETTY can be coupled with other quantitative research methodologies as one of the strategies in employing mixed-method type of research in order to stretch and determine the extent of its practicality, manageability, efficiency, and reliability both as a method and approach. And third, the theory of *Multi-Layered Symbiotic Process of Meaning-Making* may be employed in the same contexts such as the one within which the present study situates itself and even in other academic spheres in order to determine its usefulness or even weaknesses in capturing instructional and some general communicative truths and realities. This is due to the fact that the theory formed in this study, alongside the design and approach employed, is open to challenges and can still be refined by others.

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