

# Classroom oral interaction in foreign language lessons and implications for teacher development

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**Abstract:** *This paper reports on two studies on classroom interaction in an EFL context in Brazil. It presents an analysis of teacher talk and student speech, and students' views on communicative practices in FL classrooms. One assumption is that language classrooms are sociolinguistic environments in which interlocutors use various functions of language to establish a communication system. The studies were conducted at a state university and the majority of the students were doing English as a regular subject. Questionnaires and interviews were used for data collecting; lessons were observed and recorded, and transcripts were produced. A reflection on the characteristics of FL classrooms that may either facilitate language acquisition or impose constraints on the interlocutors' verbal behaviour is developed to discuss how such factors can influence teacher-student and student-student interaction. Finally, connections between the teacher' and the students' views, their engagement in classroom discourse and contributions for teacher development are suggested.*

**Keywords:** *EFL; classroom interaction; teacher development.*

We can say, without running the risk of exaggeration, that everything in the universe interacts (...) Physics will deal with the minimal particles which constitute the atomic structure, with the solar system and with the other galaxies. In Applied Linguistics we still talk about the Input Hypothesis, of Vygotsky's ZPD, of Bruner's scaffold, of the collaborative revision, of the discourse communities, of Pienemann's theory of processability (1998), and so forth. I would say that an interactive approach is the most adequate way to see the whole without losing its parts, and how everything is related."  
(Wilson José Leffa)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Podemos dizer, sem exagero, que tudo interage no universo (...) A Física falará das partículas mínimas que compõem a estrutura do átomo; a astronomia, do sistema solar e das galáxias. Na Linguística

## INTRODUCTION

Language classrooms can be seen as sociolinguistic environments (Cazden, 1988) and discourse communities (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000) in which interaction is believed to contribute to learners' language development. According to a review of studies in the area of classroom interaction and language learning presented by Hall and Verplaetse (2000), interactive processes are not strictly individual or equivalent across learners and situations; language learning is a social enterprise, jointly constructed, and intrinsically linked to learners' repeated and regular participation in classroom activities. The authors state that the role of interaction

in additional language learning is especially important. It is in their interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create the intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and the content of the target language as well as the processes and outcomes of individual development (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000, p.10)

According to Allwright's (1984, p.158) claims on the importance of classroom interaction in language learning, in FL lessons it is "inherent in the very notion of classroom pedagogy itself". This view of teaching as interaction is in line with arguments put forward by other authors (for example, Boyd and Maloof, 2000; Ellis, 1984, 1990; Tsui, 1995; Wong-Fillmore, 1985) which support the belief that the quality of observable interactive patterns of student participation in classroom discourse correlate with learning outcomes.

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Aplicada, falaremos da Hipótese do Insumo, da ZDP de Vygotsky, do andaime de Bruner, da revisão colaborativa, das comunidades discursivas, da teoria da processabilidade de Pienemann (1998), e assim por diante. Eu diria que uma abordagem interacional é a maneira mais adequada de ver o todo sem perder as partes e como tudo se relaciona entre si." LEFFA, V.J. Introdução. In: \_\_\_\_\_. (Org.) *A Interação na aprendizagem das línguas*. Pelotas: EDUCAT, 2003, p.1.

Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1985) argues that negotiation of meaning in verbal interactions contributes to the generation of input favourable for second language development, and several studies have built upon the effect of negotiation of meaning on second language acquisition (Gass and Varonis, 1994; Mackey and Philip, 1998; Pica, 1988, 1994, to name a few). In Ellis' review (1999) of the updated version of Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) two views of interaction are incorporated in the revised version of the theory that was presented by Long a decade earlier: an interpersonal process, to help learners notice relevant features in the input, and an intrapersonal activity, which involves different types of processing operations for learners to acquire the negotiated input.

Student participation in classroom oral interaction is seen here also based on Allwright's (1984, p.160-161) three types of oral engagement language lessons. In the most frequent type, called 'compliance', students' utterances are very much dependent on the teacher's management of classroom communication, for example, when they reply to the teacher's questions. In the second type, known as 'navigation', learners take the initiative to overcome communication breakdowns, as in requests for clarification of what has been said. This may be seen as a simpler type of negotiation of meaning that can help comprehension and may contribute to language development. The less frequent type is 'negotiation', and when it occurs, the teacher's and the students' roles may become less asymmetrical, and interlocutors attempt to reach decision making by consensus.

Since the characteristics of classroom discourse in FL lessons have been reviewed more extensively in earlier studies and articles (for example, Consolo, 1996, 2000a, 2001, 2002), in this paper I focus on oral interaction in FL lessons from the perspective of discussing not only interpersonal processes (cf. Long *apud* Ellis, 1999), that is, on the characteristics of teachers' and students' engagement in classroom discourse

but also on implications of reflecting about classroom interaction and its contributions to teacher development.

Firstly the view of language acquisition adopted in this paper is briefly explained. Then the discussion develops by reporting on a study on classroom interaction in an EFL context, henceforth 'Study 1', and discusses some findings from data collected in classrooms and from the analysis of interviews and questionnaires answered by the students in the classes investigated. I depart from earlier accounts of the same study (Consolo, 2001, 2002a,b) and revise the characteristics of classroom oral interaction involving a teacher and his or her students presented in one of those papers (Consolo, 2001, p.57-58). Later I proceed by reflecting on connections between the outcomes of Study 1 and a second investigation on classroom interaction in EFL lessons (Consolo and Nigro, 2002), henceforth 'Study 2', in the scope of teacher education and professional development in FL teaching.

#### LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

The concept of 'acquisition' used in this paper does not necessarily refer to Krashen's (1982, 1985) distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Nor does it refer to differences between processes of language acquisition which do not happen in formal contexts of language teaching, and those which do happen in such contexts, where the target language is usually taught explicitly. I have opted, in fact, to highlight a framework on language acquisition derived from Vygotsky's claims on sociocultural processes (Vygotsky, 1986), about the belief that language-mediated interaction favours the ongoing cognitive process of language internalisation, in the direction of a competence for language use; or, as dealt with by Consolo (2001), a communicative competence in a given language.

Language learning is therefore viewed as being of a socio-interactive nature, based on the assumption that

cognition develops by means of interactive procedures which occur within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is determined by the contact of at least two interlocutors, being one of which usually linguistically more competent than the other.

I would like to point out that a number of research studies on face-to-face teaching / learning processes in the language classroom, in Brazilian contexts (for example, Consolo, 1992; Pinto, 2004; Simão, 2001) and abroad, have avoided their focus solely on 'language acquisition' or 'language learning'. And I shall refer to 'face-to-face' interaction throughout this paper, the one which occurs in (formal) language classrooms, and not to interaction that may happen in virtual spaces on the Internet. Virtual interaction is affected by other specific factors and falls beyond the scope of the discussion presented here.

In the array of the theoretical bases of more recent studies on foreign language acquisition / learning in formal teaching contexts, authors sometimes emphasize the fact that Krashen's claims, on the one hand, do not provide empirical evidence for his hypotheses; and, on the other hand, that his claims have motivated other studies about language input and interaction (for example, Braidi, 1995), as reported by Hall and Verplaetse (2000, p.5). These authors present a collection of studies on second and foreign language learning through classroom interaction, and emphasize that several studies attempt to define the aspects of teacher talk and of oral negotiation of meaning that are essential for comprehensible input. And that such studies have looked carefully into the characteristics of teacher talk — as in studies carried out in contexts of classrooms in Brazil by Consolo, 1996; Fontana, 2004; and Machado, 1992, to name a few — and the influence of other variables, within the classroom environment, over the interaction and its implications for language development.

The book organized by Hall and Verplaetse (2000), together with the most recent one by Boxer and Cohen (2004), represents a major coverage of oral language, verbal interaction and the teaching / learning of foreign languages. While most studies on interaction and language acquisition published in the eighties and nineties tend to focus on form, or on the conditions under which negotiation happens by means of language, as in Crookes and Gass (1993a,b), and Pica (1994), Consolo (1996, 2000, 2002a,b) explores the discourse categories that characterize teacher and student talk in the foreign language classroom, and which may favour language acquisition / learning. This author also investigates teachers' and students' views about language use in language lessons, and some paralinguistic aspects (for example, the contents dealt with in lessons) and socio-cultural aspects that may encourage students to engage in verbal interactions by means of the foreign language.

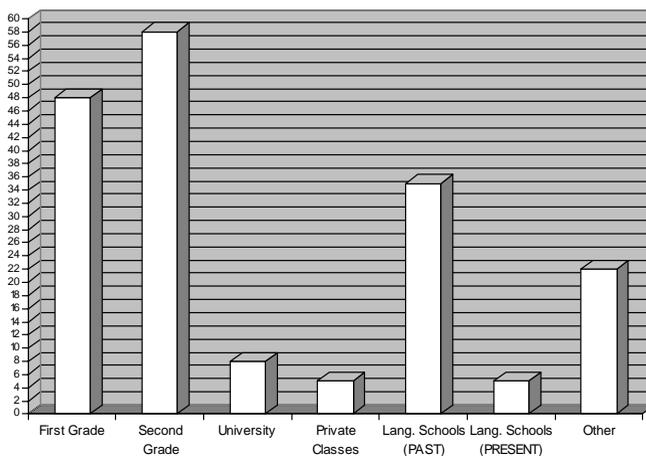
#### DESCRIPTION OF STUDY 1

The study was conducted in the context of EFL courses at a state university in Brazil over a period of two academic years. The research design comprised five classes, referred to as C1, C2, C3, C4, and an extra class (Class E) from which not enough data were obtained. Only a few lessons were observed in Class E and none of them was recorded. Due to methodological constraints in obtaining representative data from this class, it will not be accounted for in the rest of this paper. The participants were four teachers (T1, T2, T3 and T4) and 57 students whose age ranged from 17 to 25 in C1-C3 and from 16 to 49 in C4. Four research assistants (A1, A2, A3 and A4) were involved in data collecting, of whom two also worked on data analysis and produced research reports. T1 was the class teacher in C1, C2 and C3, as well as the senior researcher in charge of the study.

Students in C1, C2 and C3 were in their first year of undergraduate studies. C1 and C2 were from the program leading to a BA in Translation (English and Portuguese) and C3 was from the course on Language and Literature in English and Portuguese towards a degree to become teachers of those languages (henceforth Letters course). Students in C4 were following an EFL course offered by the university for the outside community, in which regular university students (from any area of study) can matriculate as well. Lessons were offered once a week only, for around three hours. When data was collected, there was no strict control (for example, by means of entrance or placement tests) as to the level of students taking the course. This favoured the characteristics of a mixed-ability class, even though the group had been taking the course for over a year, and with the same teacher (T4).

Students' background in EFL, as surveyed by means of a questionnaire, are shown in Fig. 1 below:

**Figure 1: Students' experiences in learning English**  
(From Consolo 2001, p.47)



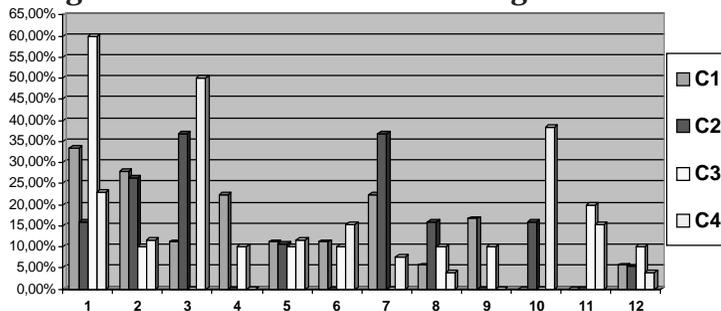
It should be pointed out that the level of English language proficiency of several first-year students of Letters, as in the case of C3, is usually low (Consolo and Nigro, 2002), mainly those students whose previous contact with the language, in formal language teaching, depended solely on their exposure to English in public elementary and secondary schools, as illustrated in Fig.1 for 'First Grade' and 'Second Grade', in the eleven years of regular elementary and secondary education in Brazil. This is a problem that usually interferes with the students' linguistic performance and academic development when they start a university course that aims at preparing EFL teachers in Brazil (Basso-Macowsky, 1993; Barcelos, 1995; Consolo, 2000b; Silva, 2000). As for English language proficiency in all the classes investigated, they had some characteristics of mixed-ability groups and their oral proficiency, according to Consolo (2002a, p.89), "varied roughly between elementary and upper-intermediate at the beginning of the academic year". As for C4, according to Consolo (2001, p.48), not only did the previous experiences in learning EFL of the students differ from those of students in C1, C2 and C3 at the beginning of the courses, but also those students started the language course "with considerably less oral competence than the other students".

The questionnaire was also used to survey the students' aims for learning English in the courses investigated and the results are expressed in the following list of twelve categories, as illustrated in Fig.2:

1. General language development
2. Knowledge of (English) grammar
3. Development of communicative competence
4. Competence in oral production
5. Competence in listening comprehension
6. Competence in reading and writing
7. Competence in vocabulary
8. Revision work

9. Practical content and practical lessons
10. Cultural aspects
11. Perspective to travel abroad
12. Increase in motivation for language learning

**Figure 2: Students' aims for learning EFL**



Although the interpretation of the bar chart in Fig. 2 would require a more detailed analysis for the relevance of the categories for each of the four classes, it indicates that, within their aims, students gave priority, besides 'general language development' (category 1), to 'knowledge of grammar' (category 2), 'development of communicative competence' (category 3), 'competence in vocabulary' (category 7) and 'cultural aspects' (category 10).

According to research reports on the study (Consolo and Rezende, 2001; Rezende, 1999), data from lessons recorded in C1 and C2 revealed an optimistic picture concerning the amount of student oral production and contribution to classroom discourse, which seems to match their aims for developing communicative competence in English. Students' oral participation in whole-class interaction fell in the discourse categories (Consolo, 1996) of clarifications, replies and informatives. It was also observed that

students generally complied with the teacher's proposals (Allwright 1984) [...] and there was not much negotiation (Allwright *op.cit.*) on their part. Students' level of oral

comprehension was very good though, and it certainly contributed towards better communication with T1 and with their peers. (Consolo 2002a, p.91)

Research reports on Study 1 state that the communicative teaching methodology followed by T1 (Rezende, 1999), together with T1's encouraging attitude towards student oral participation and oral corrections (including the use of scaffolding) motivated students to speak English in class. Let us look more closely at a lesson segment recorded in C1 (Ex.1) from Consolo (2002a, p.92-93) in which the majority of the students were at an intermediate level of competence in English. T1 conducts a whole-class discussion in which verb phrases followed by gerund or infinitive forms are expected to be produced in the students' comments about what they 'enjoy', 'like', 'prefer', 'miss' or 'can't stand' in their EFL lessons. This discussion follows previous conversations in pairs or small groups in which students had decided on their likes and dislikes concerning their English lessons. The following symbols are used in the transcriptions in this paper:

?	- rising intonation (as in questions)
ã	- hesitation (as in Portuguese)
WRITing	- (capital letters) emphatic stress
+	- short pause
italics	- Portuguese (L1)
{{ }}	- translation from Portuguese
:	- lengthening of a sound
(INCOMP)	- incomprehensible speech
[...]	- omissions
(I didn't hear)	- what was probably said

- 021 - T1: could you tell me your ideas about I MISS + do you miss something about your process of learning English?
- 022 - St4: I miss having more + listening classes
- 023 - T1: ok + you're going to have more listening comprehension exercises
- 024 - St7: I miss some more compositions
- 025 - T1: you miss writing more compositions
- 026 - St7: WRIting
- 027 - T1: do you agree with (STUDENT'S NAME) ?
- 028 - St4: (I didn't hear)
- 029 - T1: could you tell us again? + what you miss
- 030 - St7: I miss + ah + more writing exercises + more compositions + do you agree?
- 031 - St4: Yes
- 032 - T1: Yes + ok [...]

**Example 1: Segment from C1** (From Consolo 2002a, 92)

Although the patterns of teacher-student interaction in Ex. 1 resemble the typical IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow up) structure of classroom discourse (Cazden, 1988), as for example in turns 021 – 023, and T1 controls the topic around the grammatical structure to be practiced, the turn-taking system develops towards a more conversational style as from turn 024. Students seem to be engaged in discussing the topic of what they like or dislike in their lessons and even interact with their peers, as in turns 030 and 031. However, it can be noticed that the interaction develops under a ‘teacher question’-and- ‘student answer’ type of structure and under the teacher’s management. The content of the interaction is strictly controlled by the teacher, in the sense that the grammatical focus is maintained along the segment. This can be seen in turn 025 in which T1 emphasizes the use of the word ‘writing’ after the phrase ‘I miss’. The teacher’s intervention in the discourse structure does not contribute to changing the meaning previously conveyed by the student’s

utterance in turn 024, “I miss some more compositions”. Negotiation of meaning was nevertheless observed in a number of other segments from the data from C1 and C2, as reported in Consolo (2001, p.50-53).

According to Consolo (2002a, p.95),

student participation in CD [classroom discourse] can be motivated by a combination of factors, ranging from the discourse structure to the content of the lessons, together with the establishment of a favourable environment, especially in terms of an atmosphere of confidence, [sic] in which students will ‘risk’ using the FL for classroom communication.

Turning to the students’ views on their engagement in classroom oral interaction, especially in C1 and C2, samples of their opinions about the contributions of T1’s lessons to their participation in EFL lessons and language learning, as presented in Consolo (2001, p.50), indicate the existence of a ‘favourable environment’ in their lessons. These are listed below:

“The teacher’s methodology has contributed for me to learn (...) we feel motivated when we have classes.”  
“The main factor (...) the stimulus from the teacher.”  
“The teacher is communicative and charismatic.”  
“I think it depends very much on the teacher. There must be some stimuli, and I believe we have it! The students have to feel like talking, they must be motivated to do it (...)”  
“I love it when the teacher talks with the whole class about some topic (...)”  
“The teaching strategies used by the teacher are excellent to motivate the students to learn and to participate more in the lessons.”

In C4 the observations and recordings revealed that the patterns for oral interaction in lessons taught by T4 did not

vary from the whole-class configuration, nearly all teacher-controlled, displaying long turns in teacher talk and very short, simple turns in student speech. Students' turns were short, quite often monosyllabic and usually only in reply to T4's elicitations. From the most typical of the four lessons recorded in C4, a short segment (Ex. 2, from Consolo 2001, p.54-55) was chosen to illustrate one type of student engagement in classroom discourse in the context of that class.

The teacher is revising countable and uncountable nouns, and quantifiers. Since countable and uncountable nouns had been dealt with in an earlier lesson, the content was expected to be a revision of what students remembered about such nouns, adding then further grammatical content on quantifiers:

030 - T4: [...] + what is a quantifier? a quantifier is a word that (INCOMP) the quantity of the noun you want to express + ok? + for the count nouns the first quantifier is a number + ok if I want to express the exact number of the noun I have two friends + I have five brothers + ok I have twenty books so let's put here + I have two brothers + we can use the numeral the number + I have five friends + I have fifty books so I express the exact amount of the noun the number using the number can only be use with count nouns only + *cê não pode dizer eu tenho dois dinheiro + a não ser na Bíblia né + que venderam Jesus por (trinta e três) dinheiros + é assim que fala* {{ you can't say I have two money + except for the Bible + in which it says that Jesus was sold for (thirty-three) moneys + that's how you say it }}

031 - St: Denários

032 - T4: Como?  
{{ sorry? }}

033 - St: Denários

034 - T4: É exatamente no caso da Bíblia + os (trinta e três) dinheiros significava (trinta e seis) moedas parece+ eu não tava lá mas eu sei pela literatura

{{ it's exactly the case in the Bible + the (thirty-three) moneys meant (thirty-three) coins it seems + I wasn't there but I know it from the literature }}

então so the count nouns can be expressed in the in the exact amount using the numbers ok BUT with we may ã want to express an approximate amount not the number for an approximate amount so I have two brothers means that I have a few brothers poucos + amigos if I have five friends I may say that I have several friends Several friends + SEveral friends ok alguns amigos ok diversos amigos IF I have fifty books I may say that I have + many books ok or a lot of books a lot of books ok + this is ã approximate ã amount amount significa + quantidade + ok [...]

{{ means + quantity }}

**Example 2: Segment from C4** (From Consolo 2001, p.54-55)

The limited amount of student speech in turns 031 and 033 contrasts with the much longer turns produced by T4 (030 and 034). However, in turn 031 a student provides the word “Denários”, which was probably not expected by T4. The student’s intervention in the course of a sequence of ideas delivered by the teacher, who had been strictly in control of what was said up to that point, seems to somehow disturb the teacher’s action. Nevertheless, and after making the comment “I wasn’t there but I know it from the literature”, which can be interpreted as an irrelevant, rather silly remark, T4 takes over the agenda and continues ‘lecturing’ on the main teaching point.

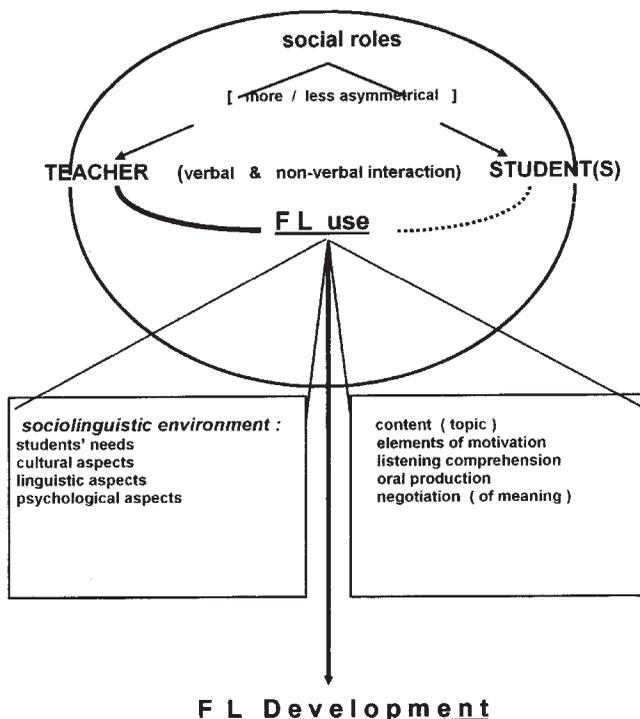
The segment in Ex. 1 confirms findings in the literature, as reviewed in Consolo (1996), about the teacher’s control over classroom discourse and its implications for the characteristics of language and oral interaction in FL lessons. It can be inferred that oral interaction in C4 was limited to listening to the teacher and compliance on the part of the students (Allwright, 1984).

The students' views about lessons in C4 were yet positive. Consolo (2001, p.56) reports that "on the whole, the data from the students' interviews indicated that they were happy about their oral production in class".

*A PICTURE OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN FL LESSONS*

The characteristics of classroom oral interaction in contexts of FL teaching, involving a teacher and his or her students, seem to fall within a scope of facts and factors illustrated in the diagram in Fig. 3. This is a revised version of the diagram presented in Consolo (2001, p.57-58):

**Figure 3: Classroom interaction in FL lessons**



The social roles of 'teacher' and 'student' govern the characteristics of language and patterns of classroom discourse, usually asymmetrical. An atmosphere of cooperation or negotiation may, however, lead to less asymmetrical interactive patterns.

The broken line connecting 'FL use' and 'STUDENT(S)' represents the limitations students face in their oral proficiency when they engage in whole-class interaction. As for the teacher, it is expected that he or she should be not only 'linguistically competent' and proficient in the language but also able to manage classroom interaction in a way to motivate and favour student participation in the lessons. As stated in Consolo (2000b), competence in the target language is one of the requisites for a FL teacher so that he or she can encourage students to participate in oral interaction in the classroom and thus contribute to their oral language development.

The integration and articulation of the factors that determine the sociolinguistic environment of FL classrooms (rectangle on the left), namely students' needs, cultural aspects, linguistic aspects and psychological aspects, and the elements in the rectangle on the right — content, elements of motivation, comprehensibility of language by means of listening skills, motivation generated in the classroom environment, the quality of oral production and the opportunities for negotiation of meaning, may provide for desirable conditions to foster language development.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

The outcomes of 'Study 1' indicate that T1, students and research assistants seem to have benefited from the experience of participating in the investigation, as reported in Consolo (2002b).

Based on the results from 'Study 1' and a theoretical background on cultural aspects that influence EFL lessons in Brazil (for example, Barcelos, 1995; Zaid, 1999), T1 and one of

the research assistants, henceforth 'T', decided to engage in an action research study, 'Study 2', on EFL lessons for the Letters course. In Study 2 the teacher's action on classroom discourse aimed at providing opportunity for student-teachers to develop their FL competence by reflecting on the language in the scope of interactive processes in the classroom (Consolo and Nigro, 2002).

The lesson segment in Ex. 3, from Consolo and Nigro (2002), was extracted from a lesson in which T and students discussed the rules for playing football in Brazil. This segment illustrates the amount of student engagement in classroom discourse and T's verbal actions (in bold) to help the development of oral interaction:

- 305 - St1(E) and you have to kick towards to goal... the ball  
306 - T **towards the goal + which goal? + you have two goals**  
307 - St1 (E) eh::: another's team  
308 - St2 (L) yeah towards the other team's goal  
309 - St1 (E) ((LAUGH))  
310 - T **and then [ / ]**  
311 - St1 (E) and then... you have to:::  
312 - St2 (L) who wins?  
313 - St1 (E) ( ) play ((LAUGH))  
314 - St2 (L) but who wins?  
315 - St1 (E) who:::  
316 - St2 (L) which team wins?  
317 - St1 (E) marks [ / ] marcar I don't know  
318 - T **who?**  
319 - St2 (L) Oh  
320 - T **makes more goals**  
321 - St1 (E) makes more goals  
322 - St2 (L) makes more more goals  
323 - T **or score**  
324 - St1 (E) [[score?]]  
325 - T **[[ more ]]**  
326 - St2 (L) score more

- 327 - T **ok + but you have also a person there that everybody**
- 328 - St1 (E) oh you have a judge
- 329 - St2 (L) oh I – it’s not a judge... it’s not a judge... it’s a + referee
- 330 - T **Referee**
- 331 - St3 (J) {but there is a question}... if there are no goals?332 -  
St2 (L) what?
- 333 - St1 (E) ah::: both ((LAUGH)) both
- 334 - T **( ) be possible?... no this sport you have to play with ( )... this sport... football or soccer you have to play ( )**
- 335 - STS ( )

**Example 3: Segment from Study 2** (From Consolo and Nigro, 2002)

In the lessons investigated for Study 2, T motivated students to display their previous knowledge when a new topic was introduced before adding her explanations and examples. Students contributed to classroom discourse by means of asking questions, asking questions and interacting with their classmates. A good amount of student-student interaction for negotiation of meaning is observed in Ex. 3 as well, between turns 311 and 317, and even when St 1 needs help concerning the word “score” (in Portuguese, marcar, turn 317) he refers to another student (St2) and not to the teacher. This type of reflective work made students more confident to express their ideas and clarify their doubts, and raised good amounts of oral participation in class.

Reflecting on classroom interaction in FL lessons by means of engaging in classroom research has contributed for more ‘culturally sensitive’ teaching in the context of the Letters course and classroom management which is more efficient to engage students in classroom discourse. It has also helped towards improvement in teacher talk and techniques for oral error correction. Given the fact that students

in Letters courses are preparing to be EFL teachers in the future, they have developed in a range of linguistic and professional skills.

The myriad of factors involved in FL classroom interaction can be a motivation for constant reflection and research on what really happens in language lessons. Although sociocultural rules usually determine the characteristics of teacher-student interaction, the teacher's awareness of such rules and factors is essential for him or her to work towards pedagogical achievements. Hopefully, this teacher will be able to improve classroom action so as to contribute for his or her students' development in language learning.

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**Título:** *Interação oral na sala de aula de língua estrangeira: implicações para a formação de professores*

**Resumo:** *Este artigo relata dois estudos sobre interação na sala de aula de inglês como língua estrangeira em uma universidade brasileira. Apresenta-se uma análise das falas do professor e dos alunos, e as visões dos alunos sobre as práticas comunicativas na aula de LE. Um dos pressupostos é que a sala de aula constitui um ambiente sociolingüístico no qual interlocutores utilizam as várias funções da linguagem para estabelecer um sistema de comunicação. Questionários e entrevistas foram utilizados para coleta de dados; aulas foram observadas e gravadas, e transcritas. Desenvolve-se uma reflexão sobre as características da sala de aula de LE que podem facilitar a aquisição de linguagem ou impor limitações ao comportamento verbal dos interlocutores, e se discute como esses fatores influenciam as interações professor-aluno e aluno-aluno. Sugerem-se relações entre as visões de professores e de alunos, seu engajamento no discurso de sala de aula e contribuições à formação de professores.*

**Palavras-chave:** *língua inglesa; interação; formação de professores.*

